



FOBS INFORMATION SHEET: Sun Safety

Last year, thanks to your generosity, FOBS were able to contribute £7000 towards the new Adventure Playground which the children, and staff, are thoroughly enjoying. In addition to the smaller projects we continue to help fund around the school, our main aim is to provide sun shelters and sail shades to protect our children from the damaging rays of our wonderful Cornish sun.

Why do we feel this is important?

Cornwall has the highest level of UV (ultraviolet) in the UK and the highest skin cancer rate in the country. In some areas of Cornwall, children and adults can be burned in under 10 minutes due to high levels of UV radiation. These times are generally between 11am and 3pm, and primarily between the months of May – September. A major cause of skin cancer is over exposure to the sun during adolescence and childhood years. Malignant melanoma is the most serious type of skin cancer and the numbers have been rising faster than any other common cancer with almost a third of all cases occurring in the under 50's – and the sad thing is, this cancer can be preventable by being sunsafe.

“Sunsafe”

We all enjoy the sunshine, it lifts our spirits, feels good on our skin, and a lot of people say they feel healthier when they have a tan. However, there are some simple steps we can take to protect ourselves.

- wear loose fitting clothing
- wear a sunhat and sunglasses.
- wear sun cream, and don't burn! (30+ for children and 15+ for adults)
- drink lots of water and stay hydrated
- seek shade between 11am and 3pm
- don't use sunbeds as these seriously damage your skin over time.

The sun produces 3 rays; UVC which presently does not enter the atmosphere, UVB considered the “burning ray” which produces sunburn and penetrates into the outer protective layer of the skin and UVA which is considered the “aging ray”. This makes up 95% of UV light and penetrates deep into the skin. UVB rays reflect off shiny or white surfaces such as water, sand, snow or concrete (apply sun cream under your chin!), and UVA can penetrate glass including car windows!

Sun creams: The right sun cream can provide protection. However no sun cream provides 100% protection from the sun, and with so many creams on the market, what should you look for?

- Chose a minimum SPF 15 (Sun Protection Factor) for adults and SPF 30+ for children under the age of 15
- make sure its water resistant – it only lasts for 20 minutes in water
- check the use by date – is it still current?
- check that it protects against UVA and UVB rays
- check it has a five star UVA rating (turn the bottle over, it's on the back)

Sun cream doesn't have to be expensive. Supermarket brands can be more effective and some have a better UVA rating - compare the UVA star rating against that of a well-known brand! Once a bottle has been open for more than 12 months, it is advisable to dispose of it as the cream loses ½ of its SPF after this time and is therefore not as effective. Zinc blocks contain zinc oxide which reflects the UV away

from the skin as opposed to absorbing it like most sun creams. This can provide additional protection for sensitive areas such as lips, the nose, ears and any moles, and can be obtained from most chemists/pharmacies or surf shops.

Our children spend on average 200 days per year at school, and whilst at school many spend a lot of time outside. To help protect them, please remember to send your child to school with a hat, drinking water, and most importantly, sun cream. Although teachers aren't able to apply the sun cream to your child, they can supervise them applying it themselves. Apply sun cream in the morning before school, and encourage your child to re-apply it, particularly at lunchtime when they will be outside playing and the sun is at its strongest. Younger children find sun sprays easier to use and sun-wipes/roll on creams are also available to buy. Sun pens will shortly be available to purchase and children will be able to "draw" the sun cream onto their bodies before rubbing in! Also encourage your child to drink plenty of water on a hot day so they don't dehydrate.

The Benefits of Vitamin D

Vitamin D is important for children for bone growth and development, and helps absorb calcium. Children get vitamin D primarily from the sun (UVB) but they only need a few minutes of sun on their arms/hands/face every day in summer to get enough (this is roughly 12-15 minutes per day). However, you don't need to burn to get enough Vitamin D, and you should avoid getting it between peak times of 11am-3pm. Foods such as egg yolk, fish and liver also contain vitamin D, and some margarines have had it added to them.

Fund raising for Sun Shading!

The intensity of the UV light varies considerably throughout the day. Seeking shade when the sun is at its strongest provides additional protection from the sun. FOBS main aim is to raise enough money to provide invaluable sun shelters and sail shades around the school to give our children some protection when learning, playing, and eating outside. Our first priority will be to provide sail shades across the courtyard area where the children sit and eat their lunch. This is a very exposed area and can be extremely hot in the summer months. We would like to provide sail shades on the playgrounds and to provide a permanent shelter structure across the front of the school. This would enable those classrooms to be extended out when the weather is warm, and can be used by parents waiting for their children during the cold, wet, wintery months too!

However, these items are expensive so we need your help to raise as much money as we can. The school is fully supportive of our plans and is actively seeking external grant funding which will help us towards our goal.

Please support our funding-raising efforts, you can do this in a variety of ways:

- Volunteer to help out at an event or give your support by attending an event Remember us if you're having a clear out, all good bric a brac will be gratefully received!
- Send in donations to sell at the various Fayres ie cakes, tombola prizes
- Let us have any outgrown school uniform to sell at our second hand uniform stall.
- Pass on any ideas for fund raising projects.

Any help, no matter how little, is always welcomed and greatly appreciated. Contact us via our Facebook page, "Friends of the Blue School" or check out the school website, FOBS page, which we are currently updating.

For more detailed information about sun safety, check out the Sunsafe website, www.sun-safe.org