SUN SAFETY & HOT WEATHER POLICY

***This policy applies**: to all employees, students, volunteers, agency staff, parents and carers.*

Introduction and Aims

Dots & Tots Day Nursery is committed to protecting children from ultraviolet (UV) radiation, sunburn, dehydration, overheating and heat-related illness while maintaining safe opportunities for outdoor play.

The nursery will check UV forecasts and weather conditions daily, review changes during the day, and adapt outdoor play according to children's ages, individual needs and the conditions. The UV thresholds below are nursery safety rules, not statutory EYFS limits.

UV Index and Outdoor Safety Requirements

The UV index measures the strength of ultraviolet radiation. Protection is required from UV 3 upwards, even when the weather is cloudy or cool.

UV Index	Risk	Nursery action
0–2	Low	Outdoor play permitted with age-appropriate clothing and shade; babies under six months kept out of direct sun.
3–5	Moderate	SPF 50, hats and shaded play required outdoors. Children without sunscreen consent remain indoors.
6–7	High	SPF 50 and hats mandatory; reduce direct exposure 11am–3pm. Outdoor play in suitable shade only when assessed safe.
8–10	Very high	All children remain indoors in ventilated or air-conditioned areas until UV and conditions are safe.
11+	Extreme	All children remain indoors until UV and conditions are safe.

Management may restrict outdoor activity at lower UV levels when heat, humidity or individual needs make it unsafe.

Shaded Outdoor Areas

The nursery will provide suitable shaded outdoor areas, including, naturally shaded areas, canopies, gazebos or other appropriate structures. Shade must be used alongside hats, sunscreen and protective clothing, not instead of them.

Staff will check the position and effectiveness of shade as the sun moves, monitor the temperature of play equipment and surfaces, and move children indoors where shade or conditions are unsuitable.

Sunscreen Provision and Application

The nursery will provide broad-spectrum SPF 50 sunscreen with high UVA and UVB protection. Written parental consent will be obtained before application. Parents must advise of allergies, sensitivities or medical needs; suitable individual arrangements will be agreed where necessary.

For children aged six months and above, sunscreen will be applied generously to exposed skin before outdoor exposure whenever UV is 3 or higher. It will be reapplied at least every two hours, or more often in line with the product instructions, particularly immediately after water play, towel drying, sweating or any activity that could remove it.

Parents will be encouraged to apply sunscreen before arrival, but staff remain responsible for ensuring protection during nursery hours. Sunscreen will be stored securely and expiry dates checked. Children may practise applying sunscreen independently where appropriate, with adult supervision and help.

Children Without Sunscreen Consent

Where parents have not consented to sunscreen, children aged six months and above will remain indoors whenever the UV index is 3 or above, suitable indoor play and learning will be provided.

Children under six months will not routinely have sunscreen applied and will instead be protected from direct sunlight through shade, clothing and appropriate indoor provision.

Age-Specific Sun Protection

Babies under six months: Babies must be kept out of direct sunlight. Routine sunscreen is not recommended for this age group. Staff will prioritise indoor or reliably shaded environments, protective clothing and appropriate hats, and monitor closely for overheating. Pushchairs must never be covered with blankets or muslins that restrict airflow.

Babies aged six to twelve months: Staff will use SPF 50 sunscreen with consent, hats, suitable clothing and shade, and avoid direct sunlight as much as possible. Hydration, wet nappies, comfort and signs of overheating will be monitored closely.

Children aged one to five years: At UV 3 and above, SPF 50 sunscreen, suitable sun hats, protective clothing and access to shade are required outdoors. Sunscreen will be reapplied at least every two hours and sooner when needed. If a child cannot safely wear the required protection, staff will arrange indoor play.

Accessible cool drinking water will be available to all children at all times during the bursary day. Staff will ensure bottles are regularly refilled and encourage drinking breaks from play throughout the day.

Prevention Of Sunburn

Staff will prevent avoidable sunburn by combining shade, SPF 50 sunscreen, hats, clothing and restrictions on exposure. Children will not be left in direct sunlight without appropriate protection and for short periods of rime appropriate to the UV level at that time.

If sunburn is suspected, the child will be moved out of the sun, assessed and given appropriate first aid. Parents will be informed, medical advice sought where necessary, and the incident recorded and reviewed. Further exposure to affected skin will be prevented.

Hydration and Fresh Drinking Water

Fresh drinking water will be accessible to children at all times. Staff will offer and encourage frequent drinks, especially during hot weather and after activity, without waiting for meal or snack times.

Babies will continue to receive breast milk or formula in accordance with their feeding plans, with age-appropriate additional water only in line with NHS guidance. Staff will monitor for reduced wet nappies, dry mouth, unusual tiredness, irritability and other signs of dehydration and act promptly.

Overheating and Indoor Temperature Control

Dots & Tots has air-conditioning units and shaded outdoor areas to help prevent overheating. Staff will monitor room temperatures and use air conditioning, blinds, ventilation and appropriate clothing to maintain comfortable conditions. Children will not be positioned directly under excessively cold airflow.

Staff will adapt play, reduce strenuous activity, provide frequent drinks and monitor babies and other vulnerable children closely. Sleep arrangements and bedding will be adjusted to avoid overheating. If a room cannot be kept safe, management will arrange an alternative suitable space or take other protective action.

Heat Exhaustion and Heatstroke

Staff must recognise possible heat-related illness, including excessive sweating, hot skin, weakness, headache, nausea, rapid breathing, irritability, confusion or reduced responsiveness.

If heat exhaustion is suspected, move the child to a cool place, begin appropriate cooling, offer age-appropriate fluids where safe and seek medical advice as needed. If heatstroke is suspected, call 999 immediately, begin cooling and follow emergency service instructions. Parents will be contacted and the incident recorded.

Children With Additional Needs

Individual risk assessments and care plans will be followed for children with medical conditions, disabilities, medication-related sensitivities, sensory differences or communication needs that increase vulnerability to heat or sun exposure. Parents and relevant professionals will be consulted as appropriate.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff must check the UV index and follow the nursery's thresholds, ensure required hats and sunscreen are worn, reapply sunscreen at least every two hours or sooner as necessary, maintain access to drinking water, use shade effectively, monitor for sunburn and overheating, and report concerns immediately.

The Nursery Manager will oversee daily implementation, dynamic risk assessments and decisions about restricting or resuming outdoor play.

Policy Implementation and Monitoring

Staff will be informed of this policy during induction. The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner following a serious incident, significant changes to statutory guidance or legislation, or lessons learned requiring improvements.

Amendments will be communicated promptly. This policy should be read alongside the Health & Safety, Risk Assessment, Medication Management, Safe Sleep and First Aid Policies.

Policy Created: October 2026

Policy Review Date: October 2027

Signed: Christie Patton

Company Owner