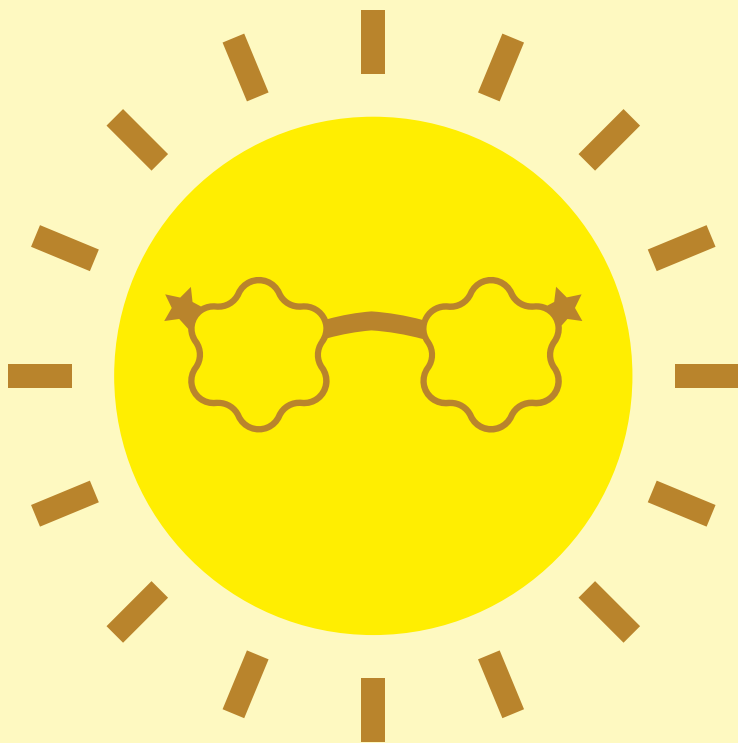# Sun Safety

Effects of the Sun

The sun is very important as it gives us light, heat and also produces vitamin D in our bodies (which is important for our bones).

But the sun can also cause damage to our bodies.

The sun makes UV (ultraviolet) rays which can cause:
- Sunburn.
- Eye damage.
- Skin cancer.
- Ageing of the skin.

Sun Protection

Cover Up
- Wear a hat that gives shade to the back of the neck.

- Wear a t-shirt or other shirt with a close-weave material.

- Wear wraparound sunglasses, they should display the CE mark.

- Seek shade from 11am – 3pm, because UV Rays are at their strongest during this time.

Wear Sunscreen:
- Sunscreen should have a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher and UVA protection.

- Apply 20 minutes before going outside.

- Reapply every two hours but more often if swimming or sweating.

- It is important to remember that we should protect ourselves from the harmful UV rays of the sun every day, not just in the summer.

- Everyone should use a moisturiser with an SPF of at least 15 every day, even in winter.

Skin Cancer

Skin cancer is common in Ireland but it is very curable especially if it is caught early. It is important for each of us to watch for new moles and changes to ones we have already.

Changes in Shape
From a round and regular shape to:
- Irregular shape with one half unlike the other or with ragged edges.

Changes in Colour
From one colour to:
- Many shades of tan, brown or black, sometimes white, red or blue.

Changes in Size
From small (top of a pencil) to:
- Big (larger than the top of a pencil) and growing or shrinking.