

St Mary's School SunSmart Policy

Rationale

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Two out of every three Queenslanders will develop some sort of skin cancer in their lifetime. Research suggests that at least two-thirds of all melanomas occurring in Australia could be prevented if children were protected from the sun during their first 15 years.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Research shows that severe sunburn contributes to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable.

Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels are highest during the hours that children are at school.

With this in mind St Mary's School realises the need to protect children's skin and educate them about SunSmart behaviour, thus reducing the risk of skin damage from exposure to the sun.

Aims

The policy aims to:

- provide ongoing education that promotes personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early detection.
- provide environments that support SunSmart practices.
- support practices that support SunSmart promotion

PROCEDURES

Our school recognises that winter sun also contributes to skin damage. The implementation of this policy will therefore be conducted throughout the year.

The purpose of the SunSmart policy is to ensure that all children attending our school are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

Our commitment

St Mary's School will:

- inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enrol their child
- include the SunSmart policy statement in the school prospectus and website.
- increase the amount of shade in the school grounds, where possible, by building shelters and planting trees
- incorporate education programs that focus on skin cancer prevention into the school curriculum
- Provide SPF30+, broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen in all classrooms
- Require parents to indicate on the school enrolment form if their child is allergic to particular sunscreens
- encourage all teachers and staff to act as positive role models for children in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour.

- ensure that all students and staff wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears, and SPF30+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, when involved in outdoor activities
- encourage students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times
- ensure that our school uniform conforms with the Queensland Cancer Fund SunSmart clothing guidelines
- ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events
- review the SunSmart policy annually.

Our expectations

Parents/carers will:

- provide a SunSmart hat for their child
- The Queensland Cancer Fund recommends the following hats:
 - 8-10cm broad-brimmed
 - legionnaire-style
- ensure that their child applies SPF30+, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for school
- ensure that their child's uniform complies with St Mary's School Uniform Policy.
- act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour
- support the school's SunSmart policy .

Students will:

- be aware of the school's SunSmart policy
- take responsibility for their own health and safety by being SunSmart
- comply with SunSmart rules and guidelines by wearing suitable hats, clothing, sunscreen
- apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors
- act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour
- participate in SunSmart education programs.

Source: Queensland Cancer Fund (1997) *Working towards a SunSmart Queensland: a policy guide for organisations*