

SUNSMART POLICY

Rationale

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with 750,000 new cases and 2,000 deaths recorded each year.

There are four factors, often occurring simultaneously, which contribute to these statistics:

1. The population is predominantly fair-skinned.
2. Ultraviolet light from the sun is of sufficient intensity to induce skin cancer in this susceptible population.
3. For most of this century social values have supported the belief that a suntan is healthy and attractive.
4. Lifestyle, work, school and recreational habits expose people to the sun for long periods.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Most of the damage occurs during childhood and adolescence. Research suggests that severe sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is, therefore, preventable.

However sunlight is also the main source of vitamin D which is vital for the development and maintenance of strong, healthy bones. A balance is required to achieve enough sun exposure to maintain adequate vitamin D levels whilst minimizing the risk of skin cancer.

School can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the school community to take effective skin-protection measures.

Aims

The aims of the Sun Smart Policy are to promote among students, staff and parents:

- positive attitudes toward skin protection, sun exposure and vitamin D
- lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths
- personal responsibility for the decision-making about skin protection
- awareness of the need for environment changes in schools to reduce the level of exposure to the sun

Implementation Strategies for Skin Protection

As part of general skin protection strategies

- Children will wear hats during school hours whenever they are outside (including sport, sports carnivals, outdoor excursions and activities).
- **Only** hats which protect the face, neck and ears will be accepted (e.g. broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hats).
- Children are not required to wear hats or sunscreen between 1 May and 31 July unless the UV is 3 and above. This will assist in achieving enough sun exposure to maintain adequate vitamin D levels.
- Children who do not have their hats with them will sit out in a specified area protected from the sun.
- Children who do not have their hats with them for outdoor activities (eg sport, sport carnivals, outdoor excursions etc.) will be excluded from those activities.
- Children will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities when the UV level is 3 and above.
- Outdoor activities will be held in areas of shade whenever possible when the UV radiation levels are 3 and above.
- Teachers will endeavour to schedule outdoor activities outside the daily sun protection times where possible.
- Staff will be encouraged to act as role models by practising Sun Smart behaviour: e.g. wearing protective hats and appropriate clothing for all outdoor activities using SPF 30+, broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for skin protection, and seeking shade whenever possible.

- Sunscreen should be applied 15-20 minutes before going outside and then reapplied regularly (around 2 hourly) if outside for an extended period of time or during water activities.

Our school will:

- Ensure that students wear approved school hats that are appropriate and satisfy Cancer Council SA guidelines between 1 September and 30 April. (Possibly 1st August depending on weather)
- Endeavour to schedule outdoor activities outside the daily sun protection times each day where possible.
- Ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and outdoor events and extra care is taken during peak UV radiation times, if held when UV levels are 3 and above.
- Endeavour to provide adequate or more shelters and shady trees.
- Encourage the application of SPF 30+, broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen by staff and students, 20 minutes prior to going outdoors when the UV radiation level is 3 and above. Reapplication will take place every 2 hours if outdoors for extended periods or during water activities.
- Incorporate programmes on skin cancer prevention, sun exposure and vitamin D in its curriculum for all year levels.
- Regularly reinforce the Sun Smart Policy in a positive way through newsletters, parent meetings, student and teacher activities.
- Review this Policy regularly (min. every 3 years) so the information remains current and relevant.
- Keep students inside when the temperature at school is over 36 degrees as per the Hawthorndene PS temperature gauge (read from the device in the front office) and all physical activity will be completed prior to recess time.

When enrolling a child, parents will be:

- Informed on the Sun Smart Policy.
Encouraged to purchase a school hat or provide a broad-brimmed, legionnaire or bucket hat for their child's use.
- Encouraged to provide SPF 30+, broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for their child's use.
- Encouraged to practise skin-protective behaviour themselves.

Reviewed 2018