

Sun Safe Policy

Rationale

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year, 80% are skin cancers. Research indicates that childhood sun exposure is an important contributing factor to the development of skin cancer later in life. Given that students are at school during peak ultraviolet radiation (UVR) times throughout the day, schools play a major role in both minimising student's UVR exposure and providing an environment where policies and procedures can positively influence student behaviour.

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 sun spots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable. Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels are highest during the hours that students are at school. As students will spend a portion of their day outdoors, we are committed to protecting them from the harmful effects of the sun.

Aims

This policy aims to:

- provide ongoing education that promotes personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early detection;
- provide environments that support SunSmart practices;
- create an awareness of the need to reschedule work and outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices where possible;
- recognise that winter sun also contributes to skin damage;
- implement the policy throughout the year.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students

- wear appropriate hats and clothing
- utilise sunscreen
- play in shade areas if possible

Staff

- act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour
- remind students to apply sunscreen, wear hats and to play in shaded areas
- involve students in a variety of learning activities which develop knowledge, attitudes and skills relevant to personal skin protection on an annual basis
- use shaded areas for outdoor activities where possible
- encourage students to wear appropriate "wet shirts" for swimming activities
- increase the amount of shade in the school grounds, where possible, by building shelters and planting trees

Parents and Caregivers

- provide appropriate hat and clothing for their student
- encourage their student to apply sunscreen before leaving for school
- act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour
- support the school's SunSmart policy in principle
- wear suitable hats and sun protective clothing when volunteering at school for outdoor activities
- provide a protective shirt for wear during all school water-based activities