

Mary MacKillop Catholic School Board



Policy for Being SunSmart

Rationale:

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year, 80 per cent are skin cancers. Research indicates childhood sun exposure is an important contributing factor to the development of skin cancer in later life. Given students are at school during peak ultraviolet radiation (UVR) times throughout the day, between 10am and 3pm, schools play a major role in both minimising a 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 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.

With this in mind Mary MacKillop Catholic 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.

Our school recognises that winter sun also contributes to skin damage. This policy will therefore be implemented throughout the year. The purpose of this SunSmart policy is to ensure all children attending our establishment are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

Values:

Care and concern for the sun safety of all, prevention, ongoing awareness/education.

Policy Statement:

The policy aims to:

- Provide ongoing education that promotes personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early detection;
- Provide environments that support SunSmart practices; and
- Create an awareness of the need to reschedule outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices.

Consequences

Our Commitment at Mary MacKillop Catholic Primary School is to:

- Inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enrol their child;
- Include the SunSmart policy statement in the school parent handbook;
- 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;
- Encourage all teachers and staff to act as positive role models for children in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour;
- Seek ongoing support from parents and the school community for the SunSmart policy and its implementation, through newsletters and parent meetings;
- Ensure all students and staff wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears (**No Hat No Play Rule**) and SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen when involved in outdoor activities, including moving between buildings;
- Encourage students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times;
- Review the school dress code to conform with The Cancer Council Queensland SunSmart clothing guidelines;
- Encourage parents and carers to wear appropriate hats during outdoor activities.
- Incorporate a SunSmart swimsuit into school activities;
- Ensure *wherever practicable* that outdoor activities take place before 10am and after 3pm;
- Ensure adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events;
- Ensure SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is included in the school sports kit and in each classroom; and
- Review the SunSmart policy .

Resource: Education Qld HLS-PR-013 Developing a Sun safety Strategy