

SUN SAFETY 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 Columba's School realises the need to protect children's skin and educate them about Sun Smart behaviours, to reduce 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 Sun Smart practices.
- create an awareness of the need to reschedule work commitments and outdoor activities to support Sun Smart practices, where practicable.

PROCEDURES

Our school recognises that winter sun also contributes to skin damage, as do cloudy / overcast days. The implementation of this policy will therefore be conducted throughout the year.

The purpose of the Sun Smart policy is to provide guidelines so that all children attending our school are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

OUR COMMITMENT

St Columba's School will:

- inform parents of the Sun Smart policy when they enrol their child
- increase the amount of shade in the school grounds, where possible, by building shelters, installing shade sails and planting trees
- incorporate education programs that focus on skin cancer prevention into the school curriculum
- expect all teachers and staff to act as positive role models for children in all aspects of Sun Smart behaviour, for example by wearing a broad brimmed hat whilst on playground duty
- seek ongoing support from parents and the school community for the Sun Smart policy and its implementation, through information and updates in newsletters, the school web site etc.
- encourage teachers to provide students with the opportunity to re apply sunscreen during the course of the day.
- ensure that all students and staff wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears, and SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, when involved in outdoor activities
- pursue a *No hat, no play* position
- review the school uniform to conform with the Queensland Cancer Fund Sun Smart clothing guidelines
- ensure that, wherever practicable, outdoor activities take place before 10am or after 2pm
- ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events
- review the Sun Smart policy, as required.



Sun Safety

OUR EXPECTATIONS

Parents/carers will:

- provide a Sun Smart hat for their child (as per the school uniform) and ensure that they wear it to and from school.
- ensure that their child applies SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for school
- ensure that their child's clothing provides adequate protection from UVR, as per the school uniform. Our St Columba's uniform supports the Queensland Cancer Fund recommendations for clothing in that has the following features:
 - dark-coloured
 - collars and sleeves
 - closely woven fabric
 - natural fibre
- provide a Sun Smart hat for their child (as per the school uniform) and ensure that they wear it to and from school.
- act as positive role models by practising Sun Smart behaviour
- support the school's Sun Smart policy and help to design and regularly update the policy.
- Students will:
 - be aware of the school's Sun Smart policy
 - take responsibility for their own health and safety by being Sun Smart
 - comply with Sun Smart rules and guidelines by wearing suitable hats, clothing, sunscreen and sunglasses
 - apply SPF 30 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors
 - act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of Sun Smart behaviour
 - help to design and regularly update the Sun Smart policy
 - participate in Sun Smart education programs.

*Adapted from the St Columba's Sun Safe Policy, 2007 and... Queensland Cancer Fund (1997)
Working towards a SunSmart Queensland: a policy guide for organisations*