

SUNSMART POLICY STATEMENT (St Elizabeth's Tarragindi)



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 Elizabeth'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.
- create an awareness of the need to reschedule work commitments and outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices.

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 Elizabeth's School will:

- inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enrol their child
- monitor the amount of shade in the school grounds, and increase this, 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, parent meetings etc.
- encourage that all staff wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears, and SPF 50 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, when involved in outdoor activities
- ask students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times – No Hat No Play!
- review the school uniform to conform with the Queensland Cancer Fund SunSmart clothing guidelines
- encourage the wearing of a SunSmart swimsuit into swimming lessons and carnivals

- ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events
- provide reminders to students to reapply sunscreen every 2 hours at sporting carnivals or other outdoor events, including school excursions. **OR** develop and put in place strategies to remind students to reapply sunscreen on a 2 hourly basis e.g. sunscreen monitors or sunscreen buddies
- review the SunSmart policy annually.

Our expectations

Parents/carers will:

- provide a school hat that is SunSmart for their child and ensure that they wear it to and from school.
- ensure that their child applies SPF 50 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for school
- provide their child with SPF 50 or higher, broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for reapplication purposes when attending sporting carnivals and other outdoor events, including school excursions
- ensure that their child's clothing provides adequate protection from UVR.
- act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour
- support the school's SunSmart policy and help to design and regularly update the 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 and sunglasses
- apply SPF 50 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapply every two hours or more frequently if swimming or excessively sweating, for example at sporting carnivals or outdoor school excursions.
- act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour
- participate in SunSmart education programs.

Source: Queensland Cancer Fund