SUNSMART policy

This policy applies to all school events on and off site.

Rationale
It’s important to have a healthy balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure. Too much UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. Too little UV can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

Objectives
This SunSmart Policy has been developed to:
• Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures for any outdoor activities.
• Work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students, staff and the school community at appropriate times.
• Assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection.
• Ensure that families and new staff are informed of the school’s SunSmart policy.
• We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from September to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

1. Shade
• The school council makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
• The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities. School shade shelter is used for outdoor activities such as sports days.
• In consultation with the school council, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
• Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
• Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

2. Clothing
• Sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform / dress code and sports uniform. School clothing is cool, loose fitting and made of densely woven fabric. It includes shirts with collars and longer sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts.

3. Hats
• All students and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, (i.e. broad brimmed hats) during months of the year with high UV levels. Students are not required to wear hats from May to the end of August. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative.

4. Sunscreen
• The school supplies SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen for staff and student’s use.
• Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies).

Staff OHS and Role modelling
As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, when the UV is 3 and above staff:
• wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
• apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
• seek shade whenever possible

Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

Curriculum
• Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in the curriculum for all year levels.
• SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school homepage, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.

Review
• The school council and staff regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy (at least once every three years) and revise the policy when required.

Next policy review: 2016.
Relevant Documents / Links

- DEECD Health, Safety & Workcover
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) Occupational Health & Safety Guidelines
- Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) Compliance Framework
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
- Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 7.5.5 Shade Areas
- Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools - Government Response
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006)
- Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight

Relevant resources

- **SunSmart UV Alert:** The SunSmart UV Alert indicates daily weather forecasts including temperature, local UV levels and times sun protection is or isn’t needed. This is available in the weather section of the newspaper, on the SunSmart website at sunsmart.com.au, as a free iPhone app or as a widget that you can add to your website. It even includes a vitamin D tracker and sunscreen application reminder.

- **Creating effective shade:** This online shade audit tool allows you to assess whether the existing shade at your service is adequate. It also helps you develop a list of practical recommendations to improve both built and natural shade. sunsmart.com.au/shading-audit/intro

- **Create your own SunSmart poster:** online SunSmart poster templates where children choose the scene, text, upload an image of their own face to place into the scene and print off their very own poster with them as the SunSmart star. There are sun protection, vitamin D and snow posters to choose from www.sunsmart.com.au/createposter

- **SunSmart Millionaire:** How SunSmart are you? An innovative online game-based resource for year 5–7 students that promotes the science behind the SunSmart message. Visit www.sunsmartmillionaire.com.au

This information is based on current available evidence at the time of review. It can be photocopied for distribution. Latest update: October 2011