



# Sun Smart 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 a 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 aging. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable.

Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels are highest during the hours that children are at school. As children will spend a portion of their day outdoors, we are committed to protecting them from harmful effects of the sun. With this in mind St John's 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 physical resources to promote sun safe behaviours
- Provide environments that support SunSmart practices
- Create an awareness of the need to reschedule outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices.

## Procedures

St John's 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 that all children and staff attending our establishment are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

## Our Commitment

**St John's School will:**

- Inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enrol their child/ren
- Include the SunSmart policy statement on the school prospectus
- 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
- Include sun protection information regularly in newsletters and in online communication platforms
- Encourage all teachers and staff to act as positive role models for children in all aspects of SunSmart behavior
- Provide sun safe visuals in close proximity to children's classrooms and around outdoor areas where children play. These visuals will be rotated and changed regularly to promote awareness.
- Seek ongoing support from parents and the school community for the SunSmart policy and its implementation, through newsletters, parent meetings etc.
- Ensure that all students and staff wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears.
- SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, be available and application encouraged when involved in outdoor activities.
- 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 Queensland Cancer Fund SunSmart clothing guidelines
  - Incorporate a SunSmart swimsuit into the school uniform for school swimming programs

- Ensure that, wherever practicable, outdoor activities take place before 10am and after 3pm
- Ensure that SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is included in the school sports kit
- Have SPF30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is listed with other items that students are required to buy for the school year
- Review the SunSmart policy annually

## Our Expectations

### Parents/carers will:

- Provide a SunSmart hat for their child and ensure that they wear it to and from school. The Queensland Cancer Fund recommends the following hats:
  - 8-10 cm broad-brimmed
  - legionnaire-style
  - bucket-style (6 cm brim)
- Ensure that their child applies SPF 30+broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for school
- Ensure that their child's clothing provides adequate protection from UVR. The Queensland Cancer Fund recommends clothing with the following features:
  - dark-coloured
  - collars and sleeves
  - closely woven fabric
  - natural fiber
- Act as positive role models by practicing SunSmart behaviour
- Support the school's SunSmart policy and help design and regularly update the policy.

### Students will:

- Be aware of the school's SunSmart policy
- Take responsibility for their own healthy safety by being SunSmart
- Comply with SunSmart rules and guidelines by wearing suitable hats, clothing, sunscreen and sunglasses
- Apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors
- Use shaded or covered areas outdoors
- Act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behavior
- Help design and regularly update the SunSmart policy
- Participate in SunSmart education programs
- Have pump pack near door for use before second lunch.

## Managing Excessive Heat At School

Excessive heat in North Queensland is a foreseeable risk therefore this procedure has been developed to provide St John's with a guideline when dealing with excessive heat.

During very hot and extreme heat conditions students, staff and the school community are at greater risk of health problems. These can be specific heat-related illnesses or a worsening of existing medical conditions. Health risks are greater when high temperatures combine with increased humidity.

### St John's School will:

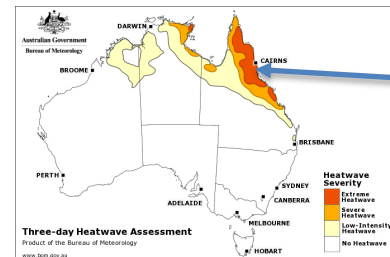
- Provide infrastructure that reduces exposure to heat – room ventilation, access to additional fans, shade provision
- Priority should be given to use of classrooms with functioning air-conditioning units
- Modification to curriculum activities where required
- Provide visuals and equipment so that all staff and students keep hydrated
- Special care and supervision may be provided for students with higher needs, particularly around ensuring adequate hydration.

- If ambient temperature is between 31 and 35 degrees Celsius and the relative humidity is over 50 per cent – planned physical, vigorous activity will be limited in intensity or duration to less than 60 minutes.
  - If ambient temperature is over 36 degrees Celsius and the relative humidity is over 30 per cent – Planned vigorous, physical activity should be postponed to a cooler part of the day.
- Regularly update staff on heat related illnesses and what to look for. These include

- Heat Rash
- Heat Cramps
- Heat Exhaustion
- Heat Stroke



**If heat stroke is suspected, seek medical help immediately, as this is a life-threatening emergency.**



St John's Silkwood is located in a region that poses a high risk for heat related conditions.

## Evaluation

The St. John's SunSmart Policy will be reviewed each year. They will seek to:

- Review the SunSmart behavior of students, staff, parents and visitors and make recommendations for improvement.
- Assess the provision of shade, covered spaces and out-of-door activities and make recommendations as required.