



## **SUN PROTECTION POLICY**

### **VISION**

**Catherine McAuley School is a Catholic Faith community which promotes and celebrates excellence in education.**

**A spirit of reconciliation is encouraged through our experience of faith, growth and unity.**

**We endeavour to prepare children for a life that is lived in justice, dignity and mutual respect.**

# 1 RATIONALE

- 1.1 Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Two out of three Australians will be diagnosed with some form of skin cancer before the age of 70. (*The Cancer Council of South Australia 2016*).
- 1.2 Anyone can develop skin cancer regardless of their skin colour or general health. However the risk is higher for people who have:
- numerous moles on their body
  - dysplastic naevi
  - a personal or family history of melanoma
  - actively tanned or used solariums/sun beds
  - fair skin that burns easily, freckles and does not tan
  - experienced short, intense periods of exposure to UV radiation (such as on holidays or during sport)
  - worked outdoors
  - red or fair hair and blue or green eyes
  - a weakened immune system which could be due to taking certain drugs that suppress the immune system

People with olive or very dark skin have more natural protection against skin cancer because their skin produces more melanin than fair-skinned people. However, because UV radiation is so strong in Australia, very dark and olive-skinned people still need to protect their skin. (*The Cancer Council of South Australia 2016*).

- 1.3 Skin damage, including skin cancer is the result of cumulative exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation.
- much of the damage occurs during childhood and adolescence.
  - research suggests that severe sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing.
  - most skin damage and cancer is therefore preventable.
- 1.4 A balance of ultraviolet (UV) exposure is necessary for good health.
- too little exposure results in a lack of vitamin D and too much exposure results in skin damage (for example sunburn).
  - it is important for schools to ensure that children and workers are exposed to the right balance of UV radiation to promote good health.
  - exposure to ultraviolet radiation is the method by which the human body makes vitamin D. This vitamin is vital for healthy bones, muscles, and teeth. It is necessary for regulating our immune systems, our hormones and our nervous system.
  - lack of vitamin D can result in some very serious illnesses, including diabetes, heart disease and cancer.
- 1.5 An appropriate level of exposure to the sun is vital to maintain our health.
- 1.6 Our school can reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the school community to take effective skin protection measures.

## 2 AIMS

- 2.1 The aims of the Catherine McAuley Sun Protection Policy is to promote among children, staff and caregivers:
- 2.1.1 positive attitudes towards skin protection.
  - 2.1.2 lifestyle practices, which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths.
  - 2.1.3 personal responsibility for decision making about skin protection.
  - 2.1.4 awareness of the need for environmental changes in schools to reduce the level of exposure to the sun.
- 2.2 Catherine McAuley School will seek to ensure the appropriate levels of UV exposure by:
- 2.2.1 accessing the current predicted UV index rating from the Bureau of Meteorology during Term 1 and 4.
  - 2.2.2 encouraging the use of a combination of sun protection strategies.
  - 2.2.3 encouraging safe levels of exposure.
  - 2.2.4 requiring staff to model good sun-safe practices.
  - 2.2.5 allowing students/staff/caregivers to access areas of both sun and shade.
  - 2.2.6 ensuring students/staff/caregivers are informed about the schools Sun Protection Policy.

## 3 ULTRAVIOLET INDEX (UV INDEX)

- 3.1 In consultation with SunSmart and the World Health Organisation, our school has deemed three distinct categories for sun exposure to the children.
- 3.1.1 When the ultraviolet index levels are 1-2, it will be classified as 'safe exposure', meaning minimal protective practices will apply.
  - 3.1.2 When the ultraviolet index levels are 3-10, it will be classified as 'protective exposure' meaning all protective practices will apply.
  - 3.1.3 When the ultraviolet index levels are above 11, it will be classified as 'impractical exposure' meaning it will be impractical to be exposed to the sun.

UV Index	Category	Procedure
01-02	Safe Exposure	Minimal Protective Practices
03-10	Protective Exposure	All Protective Practices
11+	Impractical Exposure	No Sun Exposure

## 4 SUNSMART

- 4.1 In accordance with the SunSmart Policy for Schools, this policy has been constructed closely with the five focus areas seek, slip, slop, slap and slide. This will ensure our school provides a holistic approach to protecting students and staff from sun exposure and minimise skin damage.

#### 4.1.1 **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT (SEEK)**

- When the UV Index is in the safe exposure or protective exposure categories, the school will facilitate activities in areas that have sufficient levels of shade as well as areas that are directly in sunlight.
- When the UV Index is in the impractical exposure category, the school will not allow students to be outside and will provide alternative environments for students to play in that ensures no exposure to sunlight occurs. *(These restrictions are predicted to happen during September to April between the times of 11am and 3pm).*

#### 4.1.2 **PROTECTIVE CLOTHING (SLIP)**

- When the UV Index is in the safe exposure or protective exposure categories, the school will ensure students are wearing protective clothing for sun exposure.
- When the UV Index is in the impractical exposure category, the school will not allow students to play outside.
- In accordance with other policies, students are required to wear appropriate regulation school shoes and therefore their feet should be protected from sun exposure when engaging in outdoor activities.

#### 4.1.3 **PROTECTIVE HATS (SLAP)**

- When the UV Index is in the safe exposure or protective exposure categories, the school will ensure students are wearing their school hats which are either a legionnaire or broad brimmed hat and are suitable for sun exposure.
- When the UV Index is in the impractical exposure category, the school will not allow students to play outside.
- In accordance with the SunSmart Policy for Schools (Cancer Council SA) students are required to wear hats in all year round.

#### 4.1.4 **SKIN PROTECTION / SUNSCREEN (SLOP)**

- When the UV index is in the safe exposure category, sunscreen will not be available for students apply to allow their skin to have safe exposure to the sun and increase their vitamin D levels.
- When the UV index is in the protective exposure category, sunscreen (SPF30+) will be available for students to apply in order to ensure further protection from sun exposure. Students who have allergies will provide their own sunscreen and be required to apply it during this exposure category.
- When the UV Index is in the impractical exposure category, the school will not allow students to play outside.

## 4.2 OVERVIEW (SEEK, SLIP, SLOP, SLAP)

	SAFE EXPOSURE (UV 1-2)	PROTECTIVE EXPOSURE (UV 3-10)	IMPRACTICAL EXPOSURE (UV 11+)
<b>PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT</b>	Outside environments with shade	Outside environments with shade	No sun exposure
<b>PROTECTIVE CLOTHING</b>	School uniforms or practical casual clothes	School uniforms or practical casual clothes	No sun exposure
<b>PROTECTIVE HATS</b>	School hats to be worn.	School hats to be worn.	No sun exposure
<b>SKIN PROTECTION</b>	No sunscreen provided.	SPF30+ sunscreen available for students to apply themselves	No sun exposure

## 5 IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 This policy is for implementation throughout the whole year.
- 5.2 When the UV level is 3 and above, a combination of sun protection measures (board brimmed hat, sun protective clothing, SPF 30 or above broad spectrum sun screen, sunglasses and shade) is recommended when outdoors and sun exposure will be monitored during the hours of 10am and 3pm from August to April.
- 5.2.1 Where temperatures reach and exceed 36°C children will have inside play during lunch periods and shaded/verandah play during recess.
- 5.2.1.1 If the forecast temperature is 36°C or above on a day where there are scheduled whole school events (such as Sports Day) or excursions, the Leadership Team will determine if the activity/excursion needs to be either modified, postponed or cancelled.
- 5.2.2 Staff will organise and/or provide alternative venues for scheduled outdoor activities during impractical exposure when practical. If no suitable venue can be provided the scheduled outdoor activity will be delayed until the UV index reaches an acceptable exposure level.
- 5.3 Use of shaded areas when outdoors.
- 5.3.1 Students are encouraged to play in shaded areas of verandahs, sailed areas, large umbrella and to make use of any shade provided by tress/shrubs during playtimes.
- 5.4 Wearing appropriate clothing which protects the skin.
- 5.4.1 Students are expected to wear a broad brimmed or legionnaire style hat whenever involved in outside school activities including crossing duty at the end of the day.
- 5.4.2 Students not wearing hats will be asked to play in the shaded areas of the school.

- 5.4.3 In accordance with the SunSmart Policy for Schools (Cancer Council SA) students are required to wear hats all year round.
- 5.4.4 Staff are to wear appropriate clothing which protects the skin including hats during outdoor activities. (Staff may use umbrellas as an alternative to wearing a hat). Staff are encouraged to wear protective eyewear when facilitating outdoor activities, including Yard duty.
- 5.5 Application of 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen – apply to clean dry skin, 10 – 15 minutes before going outdoors. Reapply every two hours if outdoors for a prolonged period of time.
  - 5.5.1 During Terms 1 and 4 students will be encouraged to apply sunscreen before school and then again 15 minutes before going out to lunch.
  - 5.5.2 Students are encouraged to apply and supply their own sunscreen.
  - 5.5.3 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen is supplied by the school for staff use.
- 5.6 Reinforcing the Sun Protection Policy in classroom activities and in general school procedures are important strategies in the adoption of skin protection behaviours.
  - 5.6.1 Staff will role model appropriate SunSmart/sun protection strategies in all school activities.
  - 5.6.2 Staff will educate students in SunSmart/sun protection strategies.
  - 5.6.3 Staff will be kept up to date with information and resources through The Cancer Council of South Australia's materials.

## **DATE FOR REVIEW**

**Reviewed** 24 August 2016

**Review Date** 2021