

Woongoolba State School - SunSmart Policy Statement

25 February 2010

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 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. As children will spend a portion of their day outdoors, we are concerned to protect them from the harmful effects of the sun.

With this in mind, Woongoolba State School realises the need to protect children's skin and educate them about SunSmart behaviour, thus reducing the risk of skin damage from the 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 this SunSmart policy is to ensure that all children attending our establishment are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

Our Commitment

Woongoolba State School will:

- inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enrol their child
- include the SunSmart policy statement in 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
- 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.
- ensure that all students and staff wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears, and SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, 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
- ensure that, where ever practicable, outdoor activities take place before 10 a.m. and after 3 p.m.
- ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events
- ensure that SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is included in the school sports kit
- have SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen on the school book list
- review the SunSmart policy annually

Our Expectations

Parents/careers 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
- 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 fibre
- 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 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors
- use shaded or covered areas when outdoors
- acts as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour
- help to design and regularly update the SunSmart policy
- participate in SunSmart education programs.

Considered and accepted by the Principal

Considered and accepted by Parents & Citizens’ Committee

Considered and accepted by Student Council