



# St Joseph's Memorial School Sun Protection Policy

## RATIONALE

Australia has one of the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world with two out of every three people being diagnosed with skin cancer before aged 70.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. UV radiation differs from infrared radiation that we feel as heat. UV levels are determined by a number of factors including angle of earth to the sun, but are unrelated to temperature, and UV levels can be high on cool or cloudy days. Damage from UV radiation is cumulative and irreversible.

Melanoma is the most common cancer in 12-24 year olds, and sun exposure during childhood and adolescence is a critical factor in determining future skin cancer risk.

Cancer Council SA advises people to protect their skin at times when the ultraviolet (UV) radiation level is 3 and above. This is when it is strong enough to cause damage to unprotected skin. For much of South Australia, UV radiation levels are 3 and above every day from the start of August to the end of April and it is during these months that sun protection is necessary.

This policy applies to the whole school community, including Preschool, primary school, OSHC and Vacation Care, on and off site, across all campuses. In line with Cancer Council SA's SunSmart guidelines, sun protection measures are in place from the **1 August until 30 April, and whenever UV radiation levels are 3 and above at other times**. It is highly recommended that UV radiation levels are monitored, particularly from May to July as they may still be 3 or above depending on your location. Cancer Council also recommends that particular care should be taken during the peak UV radiation times of the day, when the UV radiation levels are at their highest.

### **OSHC and Vacation Care implementation times:**

**Before school care:** sun protection is not required, as the UV Index is rarely 3 and above at this time. During Terms 1 and 4 it is recommended to apply sunscreen to assist with sun protection for the remainder of the day.

**After school care:** sun protection is required during Terms 1 and 4, and whenever the UV is 3 and above at other times. Staff are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times to determine if sun protection measures are required during Terms 2 and 3.

**Vacation care:** sun protection is required for all outdoor activities from 1 August to 30 April and whenever the UV is 3 and above at other times.

It is important to balance sun protection with safe sun exposure for the production of vitamin D for bone

growth and development. During May to July, at times when the UV radiation level is below 3, sun protection for most people is not necessary. Sensible sun protection when the UV is 3 and above does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency.

## **AIMS**

The aim of St Joseph's Memorial School Sun Protection Policy is to promote amongst children, staff and all adults,

- Positive attitudes toward skin protection
- encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures

whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above.

- assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- ensure families and new staff are informed of the school's sun protection policy.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

The Sun Protection Policy includes the following action:

- Avoid being in the sun as much as possible between the peak UV times of the day.
- Whenever possible, all outdoor activities should be scheduled outside of the peak UV times of the day, and conducted indoors, or in shaded areas of the school, where practical.
- Use of shady trees, pergolas, verandahs, tents and umbrellas wherever possible.
- Students are actively encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor activities.
- A combination of skin protection measures to be considered when planning outdoor events (e.g. camps, excursions, sporting activities and swimming carnivals).
- When appropriate, the school community will be encouraged to bring umbrellas and shade tents for outdoor activities and excursions.
- The further provisions of shade will appear as a priority on any forward planning documents for the school.
- Appropriate sun protective clothing is included in the school uniform/dress code. This includes clothing that covers as much skin as possible, made of a closely woven material including tops with collars and longer sleeves. Longer-style skirts, dresses and shorts are recommended. No singlet or midriff tops are allowed. Rash tops or t-shirts over bathers are recommended for outdoor swimming activities.

- All members of the school community are expected to wear sun safe hats, or parasols, and sun safe clothing when involved in outdoor activities. Students not dressed appropriately will be asked to move to shaded areas.
- Baseball caps do not provide adequate sun protection and are not considered a suitable alternative. Parents are informed of this at their Parent meetings.
- Students will be required to apply SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to exposed skin 20 minutes before going outdoors, and reapplying 2 hourly if remaining outdoors or more often if washed or wiped off.
- Students who wish to bring their own sunscreen need to be aware and follow the manufacturer recommendations.
- Students are to wear their school bucket hat in Terms 1, 3 and 4 whenever outside. Students are to wear their school bucket hat in Term 2 when the UV rating is advertised as 3 or above for the day. Students who do not have a hat on these days will be required to stay in the shade – No Hat Play in the shade.
- Students with allergic reactions to the sunscreen that the School provides will be required to bring their own and keep it in their bag.
- Students will be encouraged to apply their own sunscreen. Sunscreen is available for children, staff and visitors to use.
- Reinforcing and promoting the Sun Protection Policy will appear in all outdoor plans and parent information sheets, particularly for sporting activities.
- Visitors and parents are encouraged to role model SunSmart behaviours when participating in or attending outdoor activities with the school.
- Staff will role model SunSmart strategies in all school activities when the UV is 3 and above.
- Students are required to bring personal water bottles with water to prevent dehydration. Bottles can be refilled from the School's drinking fountains.
- Skin Cancer Prevention will be an integral part of the school health curriculum across the whole school every year. Information will be age appropriate for Preschool students.
- Staff will be kept up to date with information and resources through Cancer Council SA.
- Staff are educated about the OHS&W risks related to prolonged exposure to UV rays and it is expected that when the UV is 3 and above, staff will seek shade when outdoors, apply sunscreen, sun safe hats and clothing will be worn during daily duties and at other times during the school day. Staff may choose to wear sunglasses that meet Australian Standards 1067:1:2016, or use umbrellas provided during the school day.
- All staff will access the daily sun protection times (on the staff sharepoint) to assist with implementing this policy.

- Should a parent or care-giver object to the application of sunscreen at any time they will need to provide a disclaimer to the Principal. This will then be incorporated in the Medical information for that child.
- The St. Joseph’s Memorial School Sun Protection Policy is to be reviewed regularly, at least every three years, to ensure the information remains current and relevant.
- This Policy will be integrated as part of the induction process, for staff and families and to the St. Joseph’s Memorial School Community.

#### Revision Record

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