

St Peters Lutheran School Blackwood



God in all things

Sun Protection Policy

Reviewed July 2015

Next review due 2018

SUN PROTECTION POLICY

RATIONALE

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world, with 2 out of 3 people developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime.

There are four factors, often occurring simultaneously, which contribute to these statistics:

1. The population is predominantly fair-skinned.
2. Ultraviolet light from the sun is of sufficient intensity to induce skin cancer in this susceptible population.
3. For most of the 20th century social values supported the belief that a suntan is healthy and attractive.
4. Lifestyle, work, school and recreational habits can expose people to the sun for long periods.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. 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. Most skin damage and skin cancer is preventable.

Schools are ideally placed to help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the school community to use effective skin protection measures.

Recent research suggests that the provision of all year sun protection may put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency. On the advice of the Cancer Council South Australia, we have appropriately altered our sun protection policy according to their recommendations.

Rationale for seasonal SunSmart Protection

During May to August in South Australia, skin protection is not necessary for most people as UV (ultraviolet) radiation levels generally fall below 3. During these months sun protection is not required unless there is high exposure to

- highly reflective surfaces (e.g. snow)
- extended periods outdoors
- high altitudes

AIMS

The aims of the St Peters Lutheran School Skin Protection Policy are to promote among students, staff and parents:

- An increased awareness of skin cancer
- Lifestyle practices that can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths.
- Personal responsibility for and decision making about skin protection including wearing sun protective clothing, hats and sunscreen for high-risk times of the day during seasonal times when UVR levels are generally 3 and above.

- Awareness of the need to develop a safe school environment which provides shade for students and staff.
- Awareness of the school's Sun Protection Policy during the student enrolment process.

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is implemented, based on the anticipated seasonal UVR levels and implemented accordingly throughout the whole school year. Special care would be taken from 1 September to 30 April when UV levels are normally 3 and above.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all members of our school community are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays from the sun. Implementation will occur in four related areas – curriculum, behaviour, school organization and the school environment.

Curriculum

- Skin cancer awareness and sun protection strategies are taught at all year levels as part of the studies in Health and Physical Education.
- The programme includes a visit by a speaker from the Cancer Council SA, focusing on the risks of skin cancer and responsible self-managed preventative measures.
- During the months of September to end of April, all outdoor activities, whenever possible are scheduled before 11am daylight saving time, conducted indoors or in a shaded area of the school
- The role of the Health & PE Key Teacher in the school includes taking responsibility for keeping herself and other teachers and non-teaching staff up to date with information and resources through the Cancer Council SA's School Newsletters, and by regular contact with the CCSA SunSmart Team.

Behaviour

- The school uniform includes two hats. One is a broad-brimmed hat which is worn on all field trips. The second is a legionnaire style hat. Either of these hats are to be worn when UV levels reaches 3 and above. We have a no hat-no play policy for these times.

During the months of **May to end of August** hats are **not** required to be worn unless the UV level is 3 and above. This allows for Vitamin D absorption which is necessary for building strong bones and for general well-being.

During the months of **September to end of April** it is a requirement that hats are to be worn for all outdoor activities.

- The student uniform also includes knee-length sports shorts, and a close-weave material sports top with longer sleeves and collar. The day to day uniform includes a collared top for both boys and girls, with longer sleeves for summer and long sleeves for winter.
- Students are encouraged to apply a SPF 30+ or higher, broad spectrum water resistant sunscreen on clean and dry skin 15-20 minutes before heading out and reapply every two hours if staying outdoors for an extended period, e.g. – school excursion, sports days and the like. Sunscreen Containers are also supplied in each classroom.
- At the beginning of each term class teachers instruct students on the correct application of sunscreen. The use of sunscreen is promoted during September – April when UVR levels are anticipated to be 3 and above.

- During the hotter months students are encouraged to apply sunscreen before school in the morning and again before going out to recess and lunch. Adequate time is allowed for students to do this.
- Extra care in the winter months is required on clear, sunny days in early May and late August when the UVR levels may reach 3 and above in the middle of the day and if children are outside for long periods of time e.g. sports days. Discretion is then required by the responsible teacher.
- Students and staff will be encouraged to use sunglasses with EPF 10 or category 2, 3 & 4 when safe and practical.

School Organization

- All school assemblies are held indoors.
- During the hotter months students are sun protected during outdoor physical education and sports classes. They wear sunscreen and their SunSmart hats. Whenever practicable they also work in areas which are shaded either by sails or large shade trees.
- It is a requirement for all students to wear an appropriate rash style garment for any outdoor water activities
- Physical Education Day is held during the autumn months.
- All outdoor lessons are planned to be completed by 11am whenever practicable.
- Suitable hats, sun protective clothing and sunscreen are required for all camps and field trips, and these items are listed on the parent permission form.
- All staff members are required to wear a hat and sunscreen when engaged in any outdoor activity. Parents are also encouraged to model appropriate SunSmart behaviours especially when participating in school program and activities.
- Students sit in a shaded area for 10 minutes to eat their recess and lunch.
- Staff will be encouraged to monitor UV levels on a regular basis to help in planning outdoor activities through the Bureau of Meteorology website at www.bom.gov.au or downloading a SunSmart app on a smart phone which will provide real times on when sun protection is needed.
- Staff and parents will be informed about the SunSmart policy during staff orientation and parent's meetings.

School Environment

- In the initial development of the grounds of this new school, a number of shade trees which will eventually grow into large shade trees were planted. Planting has and will continue with each stage of the building programme, with provision of shade areas being a priority.
- The Facilities Development Committee of the school has a long term shade strategy for the school grounds. Shade sails have been erected over the area where students sit to eat during breaks, as the first stage of the implementation of the plan.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The St Peters Lutheran School Sun Protection Policy will be reviewed on a regular basis.

- Staff will evaluate and update the skin cancer prevention component of the curriculum, as part of the regular review of the Health and PE Policy Review
- Staff and students will regularly assess their own sun protective behaviours, with the aim of developing and maintaining appropriate behaviours, as part of the assessment procedures related to the SunSmart unit of work in Health & PE curriculum area.
- Staff will review the effectiveness of the sun protection strategies in the school and make recommendations for improvement if necessary.

SunSmart status renewed July 2015.