



St Monica's Primary School

Evatt ACT- 2016



SUNSMART (UV POLICY)

A STATEMENT OF AGREED PRACTICE

RATIONALE

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world with 2 out of 3 Australians developing some sort of skin cancer in their lifetime. Skin cancer is the most common cancer in Australia.

Skin and eye damage including sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing and skin cancer, is the result of cumulative and intermittent exposure to the sun. Skin damage can never be repaired. Much of this damage occurs in childhood and adolescence, but damage does continue during adulthood. Research shows that severe sunburn contributes to skin cancer including melanoma and other forms of skin damage. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable.

Young Australians can be victims of skin cancer not just adults. Children are at school when ultraviolet radiation levels are at their highest, so schools are ideally placed to help reduce the risk and incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the school community to use effective sun protection measures. Practicing sun protection in early childhood and adolescence could prevent many skin cancers.

Under the ACT Education and Training Directorate's Sun Protection Policy SUVPS201512 (2015) Section 1.8. states that 'In meeting their sun protection duty of care objectives, schools are encouraged to join the National SunSmart Schools Program'. Each school must develop implementation guidelines based on this policy and the Cancer Council ACT's National SunSmart School Program recommendations.'

This policy fulfils this role.

AIMS

It is necessary to ensure that all students, staff and visitors to St Monica's school are protected to the greatest extent practicable from skin damage caused by the over-exposure to harmful ultraviolet rays (UVR) of the sun. St Monica's sun protection policy will be implemented from the beginning of August through to the end of May *when* daily UV levels reach **3 and above**- strong enough to damage unprotected skin. Extra care will be taken during the peak UV period of the day (between 10am-3pm).

This policy is designed to ensure all students, staff and visitors to the school are protected from skin damage caused by over-exposure to harmful ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun. A combination of the 5 sun protection measures (Shade, Sun Protective Clothing, Hats, Sunglasses (suggested) Sunscreen) is recommended when UV levels reach 3 and above.

Effective sun protection practices not only reduce a child's risk of skin and eye damage and ultimately skin cancer but should also ensure they maintain adequate vitamin D levels from the sun to allow for healthy bone development and maintenance. Sun protection, including hats and sunscreen, will therefore not be enforced around the June and July period when daily UV levels remain low (under 3) in Canberra unless spending extended time outdoors.

The policy aims to:

- provide ongoing curriculum based education across all year levels
- promote personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early detection (ie workers)
- promote positive attitudes towards skin protection
- raise awareness of the need for environmental changes in the school to reduce the level of direct UV exposure from the sun ie Shade
- provide adequate shade environments that support SunSmart practices including tree planting for future generations
- minimise outdoor activities between 11am and 3pm during the daylight saving/summer period to support SunSmart practices.

Objectives

- To increase student and community awareness of skin cancer
- To assist students to develop strategies which encourage responsible decision-making about skin protection
- To work towards a safe school environment
- To encourage students, parents, teachers and staff to wear protective clothing, hats and sunscreen during high-risk times
- To ensure that parents are informed of our SunSmart Policy.
- To reduce UV exposure amongst students and workers.

IMPLEMENTATION

Schools and centres in Canberra that have been awarded a SunSmart status are required to **implement** their sun protection polices and procedures from **August to the end of May** (when UV levels reach 3 and above), strong enough to damage unprotected skin.

Particular care is taken between 10am – 2pm (**this includes minimising outdoors activities as much as practicably possible between 11am and 3pm during daylight saving time**)

In June and July sun protection is **not** generally recommended in Canberra due to LOW UV levels.

'Most Australians receive the bulk of their vitamin D supply from exposing their skin to small amounts of ultraviolet radiation in sunlight. Due to low levels of ultraviolet radiation in Canberra during the winter months, Cancer Council ACT does not generally recommend sun protection in June and July. This is to reduce the risk of vitamin D deficiency in the ACT region.'

As part of general SunSmart strategies St Monica's Primary School will – be aware of their WH&S responsibilities. Occupational UVR exposure is a serious WH&S hazard for workers who spend part of or most of the day outdoors.

1. regularly reinforce SunSmart behaviour in a positive way through newsletters and website, parent meetings and teaching and learning activities.
2. inform parents of the School's SunSmart Policy when they enrol their child/ren in the school. Information will be provided in the School's Information Booklet and web page outlining SunSmart dress codes and school timetables, which are adapted to maximise the benefits of SunSmart practices.

3. require students to take responsibility for their own health and safety by being SunSmart by adopting a combination of the 5 sun protection measures whenever UVR levels reach 3 and above.
4. our school enforces a **“No Hat, No Play – sit in the Shade”** Policy. From August to May the children are required to wear their hats before and after school when on the school grounds, especially when UV levels are 3 and above (ie Term 1 and 4).

Our school's uniform codes includes: Sun protection clothing: - hats that protect the face, neck and ears ie: legionnaire or a bucket hat with a minimum 5 cm brim for younger children (6cm older children and adults) and deep crown. Shirts with collars and, where possible, minimum elbow length sleeves and longer skirts and shorts. These will form part of the dress code. Children will be required to wear a t-shirt (or rash vest) to all outdoor events such as swimming carnivals. Students who do not have the appropriate head wear or clothing before school and during recess and lunch will be required to sit on a silver seat in the covered areas in the shade.

5. provide **SPF30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen** for staff and student use in most, if not all classrooms. Inform parents through the school newsletter that sunscreen is available for application in every classroom. Students will be encouraged to supply their own if they have an allergy to various ingredients in sunscreen provided by the school.
6. encourage parents to apply sunscreen to children prior to coming to school, sporting events and excursions and to wear their hat to and from school.
7. ask students to put their hats on in the classroom before leaving the room to go outside and encourage them, especially during hot weather, to drink plenty of fluids. Only water to be consumed in the classroom.
8. encourage students to use available shade for outdoor activities. The SunSmart Policy is to be reflected in the planning of all outdoor activities (e.g. camps, excursions, sporting events) on the risk management overview.
9. encourage the daily application of sunscreen by staff and students prior to the recess and lunch breaks if UV levels are forecast to reach 3 and above.
10. Where practicable, students are given opportunities and reminders to apply sunscreen ie before lunch and PE etc.
11. require staff (under WH&S) and encourage parents and visitors to act as positive role models by practising all aspects of SunSmart behaviour when UV levels are 3 and above.
12. implement programs across all grade levels which educate children regarding skin care prevention and incorporate the programs into the school's Health and Physical Education Curriculum. ie online Cancer Council Kidskin resources.
13. promote the sale of school polo shirts (longer sleeves if possible) and sport shirts and clothing in general that provides a high level of UV protection through the St Monica's Uniform Shop.
14. All students will be required to wear a (t-shirt / rash vest) when attending all day outdoor swimming carnivals and events as the risk of sunburn will be significantly increased.
15. *The school displays the SunSmart Widget on its website for staff and families to access.
<http://www.sunsmart.com.au/uv-sun-protection/uv/uv-widget>*

16. *Encourage all staff to choose free Generation SunSmart professional learning modules as their TQI Teacher Identified Activity.*
17. provide parents, teachers and students with information about skin cancer and SunSmart behaviour leading to positive behaviour changes by students, teachers and parents.
18. children who chose to wear sunglasses will be encouraged. A close fitting wrap-around style is recommended. Sunglasses should meet AS 1067- category 2, 3 or 4.

ENVIRONMENT

- The whole school community acknowledges that the position of a shady school environment provides pleasant surroundings to learn in and reinforces the SunSmart messages. To this end, the school community will, where possible, plant trees around the appropriate areas of the school most often used by students and teachers. The school community will also maintain shade structures built over commonly used areas of play and eating areas.
- Where possible, minimise outdoor activities as much as practicably possible between 11am and 3pm during the daylight saving period of the year (this is primarily Term 1 and 4) as UV levels during this period are very intense during these hours and the risk of skin damage is significantly increased. Particular care will be taken when outdoors between 10am and 2pm during the remaining months of the year.
- The following timetable is currently in effect.

9.00 am – 11.00 am	Session 1
11.00 am – 11.30 am	<i>Morning Tea Break (Includes 10 minute eating time in the shade)</i>
11.30 am – 1.30 pm	Session 2
1.30 pm – 1.45 pm	<i>Supervised Eating Time</i>
1.45 pm – 2.20 pm	<i>Lunch Break</i>
2.20 pm – 3.10 pm	Session 3
- Continue to work towards increasing the number of shelters and trees in future years so as to provide adequate and improved shade in the school grounds.

EVALUATION

The Staff and the School Council will review the effectiveness of the policy each year.

They will:

- review the SunSmart behaviour of students, staff, parents and visitors and make recommendations for improvement where needed.
- assess shade provision and usage and make recommendations for increased shade provision where required. *Five sunshade shelter have been purchased for use on excursions.*
- update and promote curriculum material relevant to SunSmart activities through close liaison with organisations such as the Cancer Council ACT. Resources available at:
<http://www.actcancer.org/prevention/sunsmart/act-schools-and-early-childhood-services/national-schools-program/sunsmart-resources/>

- as a member of the Cancer Council's National SunSmart Schools Program our school will submit a copy of this policy every 3 years to be reviewed. We will update it accordingly. Next **Review date October 2018**
- **Teachers and parents can view our school's online SunSmart Certificate here:**
<http://www.actcancer.org/prevention/sunsmart/act-schools-and-early-childhood-services/national-schools-program/view-your-sunsmart-certificate/>

Reviewed and updated – **11 April 2016**

Refer to the

CE Policy – Sun Smart
Work Health and Safety Policy