



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL, ASCOT VALE SUNSMART POLICY

July 2016

St Mary's School has a strong commitment to child safety as is reflected in our Vision Statement: *"Each child has the right to feel happy, safe and valued"*. We continually strive to ensure that every child is safe from harm including all forms of abuse. We exercise zero tolerance to abuse.

This policy applies to all school events on and off site.

Purpose

This SunSmart policy provides guidelines to:

- Ensure all students and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- Ensure all students and staff are well protected from too much UV exposure by using a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.
- Ensure the outdoor environment is sun safe and provides shade for students and staff.
- Ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills.
- Support duty of care requirements.
- Support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for staff and visitors.

Background

A balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun's UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Exposure to the sun's UV during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer in later life. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

Legislation and Standards

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Education and Training Reform Act 2006: Sch.5 Reg. 1 (1.2)

Procedures

- Staff and students are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times at sunsmart.com.au or on the School Website www.smascotvale.catholic.edu.au or use the free SunSmart app to assist with the implementation of this policy.
- A combination of sun protection measures is used for all outdoor activities from September to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

Healthy physical environment

1) Seek shade

- A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- The school makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning all other outdoor activities and excursions.
- In consultation with the school personnel, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

Healthy social environment

2) Slip on sun protective clothing

- Sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform / dress code and sports uniform. School clothing is cool, loose fitting and made of densely woven fabric. It includes shirts with collars and elbow length sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts and rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming.

3) Slap on a hat

All students and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside. Baseball or peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

4) Slop on sunscreen

- Students and staff must provide their own SPF 30 or higher broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.
- Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes (where possible) before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors.
- Strategies are in place to remind students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors (e.g. reminder notices, sunscreen monitors, sunscreen buddies).
- With parental consent, students with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

5. Slide on sunglasses [if practical]

- Where practical students and staff are encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Learning and skills

- Programmes on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in the curriculum for all year levels.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school homepage, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.

Engaging children, educators, staff and families

Staff and families are provided with information on sun protection and vitamin D through family newsletters, noticeboards and the service's website.

As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, when the UV is 3 and above staff, families and visitors:

- wear a sun protective hat, covering clothing and, if practical, sunglasses when outside
- apply sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible

Monitoring and review

- The school staff regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy (at least once every three years) and revise the policy when required by completing a policy review and membership renewal with SunSmart at sunsmart.com.au.
- SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families and visitors.

Next policy review: August 2015

Relevant documents / links

- The Compact: Roles and Responsibilities in Victorian government school education: Principle 3 (2012)
- DEECD School Policy & Advisory Guide (SPAG) Sun & UV protection (2011)
- DEECD Health, Safety & WorkCover
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) Occupational Health & Safety Guidelines
- Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) Compliance Framework
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
- Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 8.5.5 Shade Areas (Oct 2011)
- Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools -Government Response
- Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight (2008)
- AS 4685.1: 2014 Playground equipment and surfacing – General safety requirements and test methods

EVALUATION:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle.