

SUNSMART POLICY STATEMENT ST BRIGID'S PRIMARY SCHOOL



Rationale

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Two out of every three Queenslanders will develop some sort of skin cancer in their lifetime. 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.

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

Our commitment

St Brigid's 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+ or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is available for outdoor activities
- direct students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times
- review the school uniform to conform with the Queensland Cancer Fund SunSmart clothing guidelines
- recommend a SunSmart swimsuit for school water sports activities

- ensure that, wherever practicable, outdoor activities take place before 10am or after 2pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time [AEST])
- ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events
- review the SunSmart policy annually.

Our expectations

Parents/carers will:

- provide a St Brigid's uniform hat for their child and ensure that they wear it to and from school.
- encourage their child to apply SPF30+ or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for school
- 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 and sunscreen
- be able to apply SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen before going outdoors
- act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour
- participate in SunSmart education programs.

Source: Queensland Cancer Fund (1997) *Working towards a SunSmart Queensland: a policy guide for organisations*