Sunsmart Policy

Rationale:

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. Sun exposure in the first 10 years of life is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. 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.

Aims

This SunSmart Policy has been developed to:
- Ensure all students and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above.
- Work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students, staff and the school community at appropriate times.
- Assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection.
- Ensure that families and new staff are informed of the school’s SunSmart policy.

Implementation:

- Staff are encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at sunsmart.com.au to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy.
- We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from September to the end of April and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above, the level that can damage skin and eyes.
- A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
- The school council 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 excursions and all other outdoor activities.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- This policy is to be read as part of our Student Dress Code.
- Students will be required to wear Anti-Cancer Council approved close-weave broad brimmed hats (at least 8 cm rigid brim) between September and April whenever they are outside.
- Staff will act as role models by also wearing broad brimmed hats when outside.
- Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative.
- 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.
- 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 are required for outdoor swimming.
• All students and staff are required to wear broad brimmed hats that protect their face, neck and ears whenever they are outside. 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.

• Students are encouraged to provide and use their own SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.

Staff OHS and Role modelling
As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, when the UV is 3 and above staff:
• wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
• apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
• seek shade whenever possible

Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

Curriculum
• Programs 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.

Evaluation:
• Members of the School Community are educated about the importance of sunprotection, balanced with sun exposure for Vitamin D. Sunsmart behaviours are promoted in all school activities.
• All policies will be for 3 year review unless otherwise stated.

References:
• DEEC 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
• Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
• Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006)
• Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight (2008)