

Policy Statement

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year, 80% are skin cancers. Research indicates that childhood sun exposure is an important contributing factor to the development of skin cancer later in life. Given that students are at school during peak ultraviolet radiation (UVR) times throughout the day, schools play a major role in both minimising student's UVR exposure and providing an environment where policies and procedures can positively influence student behaviour.

Skin damage, including skin cancer, is a 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 aging. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable.

Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels are highest during the hours that children are at school. As children will spend a portion of their day outdoors, we are committed to protecting them from harmful effects of the sun.

With this in mind Highland Reserve State Primary 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.

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. provide ongoing education that promotes personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early detection;
2. provide environments that support SunSmart practices; and
3. create and awareness of the need to reschedule outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices.

Our Commitment

Highland Reserve State Primary School will:

- inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enrol their child
- 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+ broadspectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, when involved in outdoor activities
- encourage students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times
- review the school dress code to conform with the Queensland Cancer Fund SunSmart clothing guidelines
- ensure that SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is included in the school sports kit
- review the SunSmart policy annually

Our Expectations

Parents/carers will:

- provide a SunSmart hat for their child and ensure that they wear it to and from school. The Queensland Cancer Fund recommends the following hats:
 - 8-10 cm broad-brimmed
 - legionnaire-style
 - bucket-style (6 cm brim)
- ensure that their child applies SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for school
- ensure that their child's clothing provides adequate protection from UVR. The Queensland Cancer Fund recommends clothing with the following features:
 - collars and sleeves
 - closely woven fabric
 - natural fibre
- act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour
- support the school's SunSmart policy and help design and regularly update the policy.

Students will:

- be aware of the school's SunSmart policy
- take responsibility for their own health safety by being SunSmart
- comply with SunSmart rules and guidelines by wearing suitable hats, clothing, sunscreen and sunglasses
- apply SPF30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors
- use shaded or covered areas outdoors
- act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour
- help design and regularly update the SunSmart policy
- participate in SunSmart education programs.