



# Saint Mary's Catholic College

## Sunsmart Policy Statement

Reviewed March 2014

To be reviewed 2018

### Rationale

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 in later 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 the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Research shows that severe sunburn contributes to skin cancer and others forms of skin damage such as sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable.

With this in mind, Saint Mary's Catholic College 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.

### Procedures

Our school recognises that winter sun also contributes to skin damage. This policy will therefore be implemented throughout the year.

The purpose of this SunSmart policy is to ensure that all children attending Saint Mary's Catholic College are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

### Our Commitment

Saint Mary's Catholic College should:

- Inform staff, students and parents of the College's SunSmart policy.
  - Include the SunSmart rules in the College handbook.
  - Increase the amount of shade in the College 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 College 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+ broad-spectrum, 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 when appropriate the school dress code to conform with the SunSmart clothing guidelines.
- Encourage SunSmart swimwear for appropriate College activities.
- Ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events.
- Ensure that SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is available for outdoor activities.
- Regularly review the College's SunSmart policy.

## **Our Expectations**

### **Parents/carers should**

- Ensure their child is wearing the College hat to and from the College.
- Ensure that their child applies SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for College.
- Ensure that their child's clothing for events such as camps provides adequate protection from UVR.
- Act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour.
- Support the College's SunSmart policy.

### **Students should**

- Be aware of the College's SunSmart policy.
- Take responsibility for their own health and safety by being SunSmart.
- Comply with SunSmart guidelines by wearing suitable hats, clothing, sunscreen and sunglasses (Where applicable).
- Apply SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors.
- Use shaded or covered areas when outdoors if not wearing College hat.
- Act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour.
- Participate in Sun Smart education programs.