



## **SUN PROTECTION POLICY and IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

### **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 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 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. As children will spend a portion of their day outdoors, we are committed to protecting them from the harmful effects of the sun.

Staff of Mango Hill State School realise the need to protect children's skin and educate them about SunSmart behaviour, thus reducing their risk of skin damage from exposure to the sun.

### **Aims**

This policy and plan 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 and outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices where possible.

### **Procedures**

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

The purpose of this SunSmart policy is to ensure that all children attending Mango Hill State School are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

### **Our commitment**

The staff at Mango Hill State School will

- ensure staff act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour (i.e. wear hats outdoors (broad brimmed), apply sunscreen, wear clothing which provides adequate protection)
- organise special activities which promote and encourage SunSmart awareness (eg. visiting speakers, competitions)
- remind students to apply sunscreen and to play in shaded areas
- enforce the rule that students wear hats as they leave the classroom for outdoor activities, lunch breaks and after school
- insist students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times (a *No Hat-No Play in Sun Policy* is in place at the school)
- involve students in a variety of learning activities which develop knowledge, attitudes and skills relevant to personal skin protection on an annual basis
- use shaded areas for outdoor activities where possible (including erecting the portable shades)
- encourage students to wear appropriate sunshirts for swimming lessons in outdoor pool
- educate students for self-responsibility
- assist parents with ideas to encourage their children to be SunSmart
- educate and raise awareness within the school community about the dangers and long term effects of over exposure to the sun
- take appropriate measures during times of extreme UVR levels (i.e. no oval days)
- inform parents of the SunSmart Policy and Plan 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.
- encourage 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
- ensure the school dress code conforms with the Queensland Cancer Fun SunSmart clothing guidelines.
- ensure that, where practicable, outdoor activities take place before 10.00am. or after 3.00pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time - AEST) as per the Department of Education, Training and the Arts - Education Policy and Procedures Register HLS-PR-013
- ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events
- keep abreast of current research in SunSmart behaviour, i.e. the wearing of sunglasses.

### **Our Expectations**

Parents/caregivers will:

- Our uniform policy ensures a SunSmart hat for every child and ensures that they wear it to and from school.
- encourage their child to apply SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for school;
- ensure that their child's clothing provides adequate protection from UVR.
- act as positive role models by practising SunSmart behaviour
- support the school's SunSmart policy and plan in principle and in practice
- help to design and regularly update the policy and plan
- wear suitable hats and other sun protective clothing when volunteering at school for outdoor activities
- provide a protective sun shirt or T-shirts for wear during all school water-based activities.

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, sunscreen (compulsory) and sunglasses (optional)
- apply SPF 30+ or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen before going outdoors
- use shaded or covered areas when outdoors as much as possible
- act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour
- participate in SunSmart education programs as provided within the curriculum program.

