

## St. Brigid's Catholic Primary School SunSmart Policy Statement

### 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 Catholic Primary School, Rosewood realizes the need of the school to play an active role in protecting children's skin and in educating 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 practice
- Create an awareness of the need to reschedule work commitments and outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices wherever possible.

### Procedures

St. Brigid's School recognizes that winter sun also contributes to skin damages. The implementation of this policy will therefore be conducted throughout the year.

The purpose of this SunSmart policy is to ensure that all children attending our school are protected from and education about 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
- Offer parents a copy of the SunSmart policy statement
- Increase the amount of shade in the school grounds, where possible, by building shelters and planting trees. This has been achieved to some extent by shade cloths, large undercover areas for assembly and morning parade and a large variety of activities. With the school renovations and proposed relandscaping new trees will be planted in the new playground area.
- 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 to wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears, and SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, when involved in outdoor activities.
- Direct students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times. "If you want to play wear a hat today" "No hat No play No fun today".
- Conform with the Queensland Cancer SunSmart clothing guidelines.

- Encourage a SunSmart swimsuit to be worn at school swimming lessons eg Rash vest covering shoulders.
- Try to ensure that, wherever practicable, outdoor activities take place before 10am or after 2pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time). This is the ideal and it is acknowledged that it is not always possible to exclude all outdoor activities from 10am to 2pm.
- Try to ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnival and other outdoor events eg. tents, shaded grandstands, marquis.
- Review the SunSmart policy annually.

### **Our Expectations**

Parents/carers will:

- Provide a SunSmart hat for their child and encourage him/her to wear it to and from school. Our school hat is a green broad-brimmed hat and complies with recommendations from the Queensland Cancer Fund with its' brim being 8cm.
- Encourage their child to apply SPF 30 or higher, 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 that has the following features: dark coloured, collars and sleeves, closely woven fabric, natural fibre. The St. Brigid's uniform complies with these recommendations.
- 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, sunscreen and if possible sunglasses.
- Apply SPF 30 + or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors
- Use shaded or covered areas when necessary
- 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.

CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

ROSEWOOD

In Our God We Grow