

Sun Smart Policy

Scope: This policy applies to all staff, students, parents and visitors of St Mary's School Mackay.

Background: This policy was developed by the School Board in conjunction with the School Principal, staff and students. This policy establishes a protective and educational environment that addresses the region's high UV risk, supports positive health outcomes, and aids the school in fulfilling legal and ethical responsibilities in sun safety. Many benefits of this policy have been identified and include:

- Meeting a duty of care of Workplace health and safety for staff, students, parents and visitors.
- Reducing the risk of skin cancer and sun damage.
- Enhancing community trust and reputation by demonstrating a commitment to student wellbeing.
- Facilitating ongoing education and advocacy about sun protection.
- Provides a framework for continuous improvement with regular policy evaluations.

Policy Statement:

St Mary's considers sun safety a very important element in the life of the school community. St Mary's school is committed to implementing strategies to educate children about the dangers of prolonged exposure to sunlight and ways to reduce the risk of developing skin cancer later in life. The school plays an important role in educating students about, and promoting the importance of, sun-safe practices. The school aims to minimise staff and student exposure to ultraviolet radiation through this sun safety policy, which includes a range of sun-safe strategies and addresses workplace health and safety requirements.

Implementation Issues:

- Students are required to wear the sun-safe school uniform when at school during all outdoor activities. This includes shirts and dresses with collars, no V necks, a tight weave fabric and closed in shoes. Students to wear their broad-brimmed hat when in the sun. *"No hat, no outside play."*
- The school will supply SPF 50+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, and encourage students to apply on uncovered areas of the skin (such as the face, arms, legs and the back of the hands) approximately 20 minutes before outdoor activities. Sunscreen will be reapplied every 2 hours when outdoors for extended periods.
- Whenever practical, prolonged outdoor activities are scheduled to minimise time outdoors during periods when the UV is high to extreme (UV6 or above). The Mackay UV index rating will be displayed on the school sign daily.
- Students to wear appropriate sun-safe clothing while on excursions and camps. Shade

availability will be considered when planning outdoor activities and excursions. St Mary's has shade tents to provide shade for the staff, students and parents where applicable.

- Students to wear swim shirts/rash vests during all water-based activities at outdoor venues, except when racing. Application of sunscreen will be encouraged after swimming, sweating or towel drying. SPF 50+ sunscreen is taken to all events offsite to allow children to reapply sunscreen when required.
- The Sun Protection measures listed above will be used for all outdoor activities when the UV index is 3 or above. In Queensland, this is all year around.
- The school will prioritise the inclusion of artificial and natural shaded areas around the school grounds. Children will be encouraged to use available shaded areas and regular shade assessments will be conducted to determine future needs.
- Staff will reinforce sun-safe messages to students, including learning activities that promote sun protection. Staff are also encouraged to complete the Cancer Council's free online learning modules as part of their yearly Workplace Health and Safety training.
- Staff are role models to students and have a duty of care to do what is reasonably practical to protect themselves and students from the harmful effects of the sun, including wearing sun-safe clothing (overshirt), a broad-brimmed hat, sunglasses and applying sunscreen.
- The principal will communicate sun-safe messages to the school community through newsletter articles, inclusion of this policy on the school website and in daily routines (e.g. lunch time routines). Resources from the Cancer Council will be regularly displayed in the school newsletter to better educate parents and students on the importance of sun safety.
- Parents will support the implementation of this sun smart policy and adhere to the necessary sun-safe requirements for their child. Parents are reminded of the need to be a good role model for their children.
- The Board will commit to maintaining the school's 'SunSmart School' accreditation with Cancer Council Qld.
- The Board will review this Sun Smart policy every 3 years, in line with Sun Smart school accreditation requirements.

Reflection Material:

- RCE: [Workplace Health and Safety Policy](#)
- Education Qld: [Sun Protection Strategy for schools](#)
- Education Qld: [Sun Safety in State Schools Procedure](#)
- Cancer Council [SunSmart Policy Guide](#)
- Cancer Council: [Sun Smart Schools Minimum Standards](#)
- Cancer Council: [SunSmart widget](#)
- Cancer Council: [online learning modules](#)