SUN PROTECTION POLICY

SUNSMART POLICY

RATIONALE:

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. The higher altitude and clear air of Canberra contributes to higher UV levels than for most other populated areas of Australia.

Skin damage, including skin cancer is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Much of the damage occurs during childhood and adolescence. Research suggests that severe sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is, therefore, preventable.

Therefore, at St Bede’s Primary School we believe:

- students need to become aware of the responsibility we all have to look after and protect ourselves from foreseeable harm;
- we have a responsibility to care for the physical well-being of our students and develop a healthy attitude towards sun protection
- schools are responsible for creating a learning environment that ensures the safety and well-being of students;
- adult members of the community should endeavour to model sun smart practices.
- the school and its workers are aware of the dangers associated with occupational UVR exposure. The school has a duty of care to protect its workers from any foreseeable harms including over-exposure to UVR

GOALS:

At St Bede’s Primary School we aim to:

- promote and practise positive attitudes towards, and practices that ensure, skin protection;
- teach children about lifestyle practices that can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer;
- encourage children to accept personal responsibility for skin protection.

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IMPLEMENTATION:
A combination of the 5 sun protection measures are used at St Bede’s when UV levels reach 3 and above. This policy will be reflected in the planning of ALL outdoor activities and events. It will be implemented from the beginning of August through to the end of May when daily UV levels will reach 3 and above, a sign that sun protection is recommended.

During school hours general skin protection strategies that are used at St Bede’s Primary School include the following:

- students will wear broad-brimmed or bucket hats which protect the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside e.g. sport, sports carnivals, outdoor excursions and activities.
- students who do not have their hats with them will be directed to play under the pergola or other shaded areas. The ‘No Hat - Play in the Shade’ rule will be enforced;
- sun protection clothing will be included and outlined in our school’s uniform/dress code policy.
- students will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities;
- outdoor activities will be held in areas of shade whenever possible;
- the school will ensure there is appropriate shade throughout the school and/or is committed toward developing further shade for the future.
- The school will minimise outdoor activities between 11am and 3pm during the daylight saving time as much as reasonably practicable.
- particular care will still be taken when outdoors between 10am and 2pm during the remaining months of the year.
- sun protection behaviour will not be enforced around June and July due to ‘Low’ UV levels in Canberra during this time of the year. This will also assist students and staff maintains adequate vitamin D levels during the winter period.
- the school encourages and supports the use of SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen for students and workers;
- students and workers will have access to sunscreen throughout the day. Young children may need assistance or reminded to apply sunscreen.
- sunscreen should be applied 15 or 20 minutes before outdoor experiences and reapplied after 2 hours.
- the library and computer room will be open most days to allow students access to areas out of the sun during the lunch period;
- teachers are required to act as role models by practising SunSmart behaviour i.e. wearing protective hats and appropriate clothing for all outdoor activities, using SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen for skin protection, seeking shade whenever possible and wearing sunglasses;
- the school will incorporate programs on skin cancer prevention in its curriculum in at least 3 primary school levels eg Kidskin.

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- students who decide to wear sunnies outdoors will be encouraged and supported. A close fitting, wrap-around style that meets AS 1067 will offer best protection.
- this policy and the SunSmart messages will be actively promoted to all staff and parents throughout the year.
- the school will aim to be awarded SunSmart status by joining the National SunSmart Schools Program. On being awarded SunSmart status it will submit a copy of this policy to Cancer Council ACT every 3 years to be reviewed. The school will update this policy if necessary to maintain high national SunSmart standards. Policy review points will also be included in this policy.
- encourage staff and teachers (senior students) to access the daily SunSmart UV Alert to assist them with the daily implementation of this policy.

Parents will be:
- informed of the SunSmart Policy;
- requested to purchase a school hat for their child and clothing that protects their child’s skin;
- encouraged to provide SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen for their child’s use;
- encouraged to act as role models by practising SunSmart behaviour i.e. wearing protective hats and appropriate clothing for all outdoor activities, using SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water resistant sunscreen for skin protection, wearing sunglasses and seeking shade whenever possible and wearing sunglasses.

FURTHER INFORMATION:

REFERENCES
Cancer Council ACT National SunSmart Schools Program. [www.actcancer.org](http://www.actcancer.org)

The Occupational Health and Safety (CEO policy) can be found at: [http://www.ceo.cg.catholic.edu.au/policies/sun_smart.htm](http://www.ceo.cg.catholic.edu.au/policies/sun_smart.htm)