



# St Paul Lutheran School

## SunSmart Policy

Created: August 2007

Last Reviewed: August 2018

### PHILOSOPHY

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world, with two out of three people developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime.

There are four factors, often occurring simultaneously, which contribute to these statistics:

1. The population is predominantly fair skinned.
2. Ultraviolet light from the sun is of sufficient intensity to induce skin cancer in this susceptible population.
3. For most of the century, social values have supported the belief that a suntan is healthy and attractive.
4. Lifestyle, work, school and recreational habits expose people to the sun for long periods.

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 aging. Most skin cancer and skin damage, is therefore, preventable.

Schools are ideally placed to help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the school community to use effective skin protection measures.

### AIMS

The aims of the "St Paul Lutheran School SunSmart Policy" are to promote among students, staff and parents:

- positive attitudes toward skin protection;

*Living and Learning Together in Christ*

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SCHOOLS

A Christ-Centred Community of K-12 Lutheran Schools

- lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths;
- personal responsibility for environmental changes in schools to reduce the level of exposure to the sun; and
- awareness of the need for environmental changes in schools to reduce the level of exposure to the sun.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

This policy is for implementation throughout the whole school year with particular emphasis in Terms One and Four.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all members of the school community are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful ultraviolet rays from the sun.

All members of the school community will be strongly encouraged to use the following skin protection strategies:

1. Avoid being in direct sun between the hours of 10am and 2pm (11am and 3 pm during daylight saving time)
  - 1.1 Recess periods will be 20 minutes.
  - 1.2 Lunch period will 40 minutes with students eating lunch for 10 minutes in a designated shaded area.
  - 1.3 Whenever possible, all outdoor activities will be scheduled before 10 am and after 2 pm (11 am and 3 pm during daylight savings), conducted indoors or in the shaded areas of the school, if practical.
  - 1.4 School assemblies and whole school gatherings will take place in the school hall.
  - 1.5 Sports Days will commence as early in the day as possible or as late in the day as possible and continue into the early evening.
  - 1.6 Where staffing allows, the library may be open for student use during the lunch period.

2. Use the shade of trees, pergolas, umbrellas and tents whenever possible.
  - 2.1 Tree planting is seen as important, with priority in the first instance being given to play areas, where practical.
  - 2.2 Parasols and shade tents will be made available for use during outdoor activity and/or excursions.
  - 2.3 The building of additional pergola areas and further shaded areas will occur as school funds permit.
  - 2.4 The further provision of shade areas will appear as a priority on any forward planning documents for the school.
3. Wear appropriate clothing that protects skin.
  - 3.1 Students, staff and parents will be expected to wear a broad brimmed or legionnaire style hat, for the months September to April, whenever involved in school activities held outside. Students not wearing a hat during these months will be asked to move to a shaded area of the school.
  - 3.2 'Sensible sun protection does not put people at risk of vitamin D deficiency. But there are times when it's actually important to leave your hat and sunscreen off ... During May to August in South Australia, skin protection is not necessary for most people as UV radiation generally fall below 3. On a normal school day from May to August, where children are outside for relatively short periods of time – ie recess and lunch – the chances of skin damage for most people is low.' – *The Cancer Council of South Australian Primary Schools Newsletter, July 2007.*  
During the months May to August, the wearing of a hat by students, staff and parents when spending time outside for a relatively short period of time will be optional. However, lengthy periods spent outdoors, eg for a Sports Day, during the months May to August, will require the donning of a broad brimmed or legionnaire style hat.
  - 3.3 Students will be given the option to wear sunglasses for eye protection when outdoors.

4. Apply a broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of at least 15 to clean, dry skin, 10-15 minutes before going outdoors. Reapply sunscreen every two hours if outdoors for a prolonged period of time, or more frequently if swimming or perspiring.
  - 4.1 From September through until April, parents will be encouraged to apply sunscreen to children before school in the morning and staff will again encourage application before going out to lunch.
  - 4.2 Students will be provided with sunscreen in each classroom. Parents are also asked to provide sunscreen, preferably in the form of sunscreen blocks, to be kept in the children's bags.
  - 4.3 Students will be encouraged to reapply sunscreen if they are involved in outdoor activities after 11 am from September until April. Adequate time must be allowed for students to do this.
5. Reinforcing the SunSmart message in classroom activities and in general school procedures are important strategies in the adoption of the skin protection behaviours.
  - 5.1 Staff will be encouraged to role model appropriate SunSmart strategies in all school activities.
  - 5.2 Skin cancer prevention will be included in classroom curriculum at all levels.
  - 5.3 Staff will be kept up to date with information and resources through the Anti Cancer Foundation's "Cancer Prevention and Education Primary/Secondary Schools Newsletter", and by regular contact with the ACF Resource Centre.
6. The St Paul Lutheran School SunSmart Policy will be evaluated on an ongoing basis.
  - 6.1 Policy issues will be discussed at staff, SRC, P&F and Council meetings.