



# WARWICK WEST STATE SCHOOL SUNSMART POLICY

## 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 in later 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 harmful effects of the sun. With this in mind, Warwick West State School realises the need to protect children's skin and educate 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 practices
- create an awareness of the need to reschedule outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices.

## Procedures

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

The purpose of this SunSmart policy is to ensure that all children attending our establishment are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

## Our Commitment

Warwick West State School will:

- inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enrol their child
- include the SunSmart policy statement in the school prospectus
- increase the amount of shade in the school grounds, where possible, by providing 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.
- ensure that all students and staff wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears, and encourage the wearing of a broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, when involved in outdoor activities



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- encourage students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times
- ensure that, wherever practicable, outdoor activities take place before 10 a.m. and after 3 p.m.
- aim to have adequate shade at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events
- ensure that broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is included in the school sports kit
- review the SunSmart policy annually.

### **Our Expectations**

#### **Parents/carers will:**

- provide a SunSmart hat for their child and ensure that they wear it to and from school. The Queensland Cancer Fund recommends the following hats:
  - 8-10 cm broad brimmed
  - legionnaire-style
- aim to have their child apply 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 with the following features:
  - dark-coloured
  - collars and sleeves
  - closely woven fabric
  - natural fibre
- 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 and clothing
- aim to apply broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors
- use shaded or covered areas when outdoors
- act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour
- participate in SunSmart education programs.