Mt. Ommaney Special School
and
Early Childhood Development Program

SunSmart Policy

Review 2012

Principal: Ric Day P&C President: Sondra Vandeleur
All information regarding ‘sun safe’ practices at Mt Ommaney Special School and the Early Childhood Development Program has been sourced from the following link


Our school community refers to HLS-PR-013: Developing a Sun Safety Strategy. This policy provides support to schools to develop a Sun Safety Strategy and outlines how they might implement sun safety strategies to protect students from dangers of over-exposure to the sun.

This policy applies to all school events, on and off site.

RATIONALE:

It’s important to have a healthy balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure. Too much UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage and skin cancer. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. Too little UV can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

OBJECTIVES:

This SunSmart Policy has been developed to:

- Ensure all students and staff get some UV for vitamin D
- Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above to minimise skin and eye damage and skin cancer risk
- Work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students, staff and the school community at appropriate times
- Assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection
- Ensure that families and new staff are informed of the school's SunSmart policy.

Staff and families are encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at sunsmart.com.au or at the Mt Ommaney Special School website, to find out daily local sun protection times and assist with the implementation of this policy.
At MOSS and the ECDP, we use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities.

1. Shade

✓ A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
✓ The school makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
✓ The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.
✓ In consultation with the school, shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
✓ Students are monitored to ensure that they are using available areas of shade when outside.
✓ Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are supervised to ensure that they play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.

2. Clothing

✓ Sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform / dress code and sports uniform.
✓ School clothing is cool, loose fitting and made of densely woven fabric.
✓ It includes shirts with collars and longer sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts and rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming.

3. Hats

✓ All students and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative.

4. Sunglasses [OPTIONAL]

✓ Students and staff are encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.
5. Sunscreen

- Students must provide their own SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen. This is included on the school’s booklist each year.
- Sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors.
- With parental consent, students with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

STAFF OHS AND ROLE MODELLING

As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff:

- wear sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside
- apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible

Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

CURRICULUM

- Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D can be included in curriculum activities across all year levels, as appropriate.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school homepage, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.

REVIEW

MOSS and the ECDP will regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of our SunSmart policy (at least once every three years) and revise the policy when required.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Relevant Documents / Links

- DEECD Health, Safety & Workcover
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) Occupational Health & Safety Guidelines
- Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) Compliance Framework
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
- Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 7.5.5 Shade Areas
- Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools -Government Response
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004
- Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006)
- Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight

RELEVANT RESOURCES

- **SunSmart UV Alert**: The SunSmart UV Alert indicates daily weather forecasts including temperature, local UV levels and times sun protection is or isn’t needed. This is available in the weather section of the newspaper, on the SunSmart website at sunsmart.com.au, as a free iPhone app or as a widget that you can add to your website. It even includes a vitamin D tracker and sunscreen application reminder.

- **Creating effective shade**: This online shade audit tool allows you to assess whether the existing shade at your service is adequate. It also helps you develop a list of practical recommendations to improve both built and natural shade. sunsmart.com.au/shading-audit/intro

- **Create your own SunSmart poster**: online SunSmart poster templates where children choose the scene, text, upload an image of their own face to place into the scene and print off their very own poster with them as the SunSmart star. There are sun protection, vitamin D and snow posters to choose from www.sunsmart.com.au/createposter

- **SunSmart Millionaire**: How SunSmart are you? An innovative online game-based resource for year 5–7 students that promotes the science behind the SunSmart message. Visit www.sunsmartmillionaire.com.au/

- **SunSmart Countdown**: song and associated activities sunsmart.com.au/protecting_others/at_school/sunsmart_countdown

- **Generation SunSmart**: fun and interactive online sun protection modules for teachers – assists with professional learning requirements - school nurses and year 6 - 9 students. Visit generationsunsmart.com.au

This information is based on the current available evidence at the time of review

Latest update: October 2011
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