McIlwraith State School
Sun Protection 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 suggests that at least two thirds of all melanomas occurring in Australia could be prevented if children were protected from the sun during their first 15 years.

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 aging. Most skin cancer is therefore preventable.

Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels are highest during the hours that children attend school. As children will spend a portion of their day outdoors, we are concerned to protect them from the harmful effects of the sun.

With this in mind, McIlwraith State School realizes the need to protect children’s skin and educate them about SunSmart behaviour, thus reducing the risk of skin damage from the exposure to the sun.

Aims:
The aim of this Sun Protection Policy is to:
- Provide a comprehensive worthwhile plan for the reduction of exposure to the sun for children attending this school.
- Attempt to minimize the risk of skin cancer appearing in the children in our care.
- Create an awareness of the need to reschedule work commitments and outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices.

Goals:
1. To provide an effective education on sun sense and preventative measures.
2. To maximize the use of available shade for outdoor activities.
3. To minimize the children’s exposure to the sun between the hours 10:00am and 3:00pm.
4. To provide the maximum amount of shade possible via tree planting and caring programs.
5. To encourage the use of SPF 30+ sunscreen and wearing of protective clothing while exposed to the sun.
6. To provide suitable models for the use of protection against the sun.
**Goal 1 – To provide an effective education on sun sense and preventative measures.**

This school will conduct specific lessons concerning immediate and long term effects of overexposure to the sun within its Health and Physical Education Programs. For specific activities and objectives, reference should be made to the Physical Education and Health curriculum Guides.

Special attention will be paid to this goal during the swimming season of each year.

**Goal 2 – To maximize the use of available shade for outdoor activities.**

Presently pupils are required to sit down in shaded areas for Morning Tea and Lunch Times. This will be continued. Where outdoor sporting activities are being undertaken, children and adults will be required to wear a hat, use suitable sunscreen and wear appropriate clothing when not actually performing, and if practical, while performing the activities involved in sport. Length of time playing the sport should be kept to a minimum and during breaks (eg. half time) children will be required to rest in shaded areas as well as have a drink.

Should a child or adult not have a hat, they will not be permitted to participate in activities in sunny areas. He/she will only be allowed to play in shaded areas.

**Goal 3 – To minimize the children’s exposure to the sun between the hours of 10:00am and 2:00pm.**

This is the period of the day when the sun is most harmful to people’s skin. By slightly re-organising the time table, children will spend a minimum of time (during intermission and lunch break) exposed to the sun. Following is a suggested timetable for a day where time exposed to the sun is as minimum as possible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8:30 – 8:50am</td>
<td>Preparatory activities – getting ready for school day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:55 – 9:00am</td>
<td>Parade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:45am</td>
<td>In class lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:45 – 11:15am</td>
<td>Morning Tea. Children remain seated for 10 – 15 minutes to eat and they are able to play or the remainder of the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:15 – 1:00pm</td>
<td>In class lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:45pm</td>
<td>Lunch. Children remain seated for 10-15minutes to eat and they are able to play for the remainder of the time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:45 – 3:00pm</td>
<td>In class lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:00pm</td>
<td>School concludes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All sports activities/practice (especially swimming) should, where possible occur before 10:00am and after 3:00pm, so as to minimize the time pupils are exposed to harmful rays of the sun.
**Goal 4** – To provide the maximum amount of shade possible via tree planting and caring programs.

A tree planting program has been implemented to provide the maximum amount of shade possible in the school playground. Trees suitable to the school’s soil and climatic conditions will be purchased each year by the student council and planted in strategic areas to provide as much shade as possible while not prohibiting play by children at school.

**Goal 5** – To encourage the use of SPF+ sunscreen and wearing of protective clothing while exposed to the sun.

A broad-brimmed hat (or legionnaires), which is part of the McIlwraith State School Uniform Policy, is an essential item to be worn when playing in unshaded areas. This also with the application of SPF30+ has been shown to minimize the effects exposure to the sun.

During times when children will be in the playground, they must wear a hat (preferably the school broad-brimmed hat) which gives adequate shade to their faces. Any child not wearing a hat will not be able to take part in an outdoor activity, whether in class time or play time. During class time, children must remain seated in the shade area and during morning tea and lunch, children will be required to play in a shaded area. Children are also encouraged to wear a sunscreen of SPF 30+ which will be supplied to the children (at no personal expense) when spending lengthy periods in the sun. Application of SPF 30+ is encouraged and is especially important when attending swimming classes.

**Goal 6** – To provide suitable models for the use of protection against the sun.

All adults involved with this school should provide an appropriate model for the children. It is the adult’s responsibility to bring the children’s attention to harmful effects of overexposure to the sun, and to ensure they form positive habits of providing protection against these harmful effects. When participating in outdoor activities with the children, adults should wear a broad-brimmed hat and SPF 30+ sunscreen protection.

**Procedures:**

Our school recognizes that winter sun also contributes to skin damage. The implementation of this policy will therefore be conducted throughout the year.

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

**Our Commitment:**

McIlwraith State School will:
- Inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enroll their child
- Include the SunSmart policy statement in the school handbook
- Increase the amount of shade in the school grounds, where possible, by building 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 behavior
• 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 SPF30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen, when involved in outdoor activities
• encourage students without adequate sun protection to use shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times
• review the school dress code to conform with the Queensland Cancer Fund SunSmart clothing requirements
• incorporate a SunSmart swimsuit into the school uniform
• ensure that, where ever practicable, outdoor activities take place before 10:00am and after 3:00pm
• ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events
• ensure that SPF 30+ 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:
  - 8-10cm broad brimmed
  - legionnaire-style
- ensure that their child applies SPF30+ 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 fiber
- act as positive role models by practicing SunSmart behavior that support the school’s SunSmart policy and help 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, clothing, sunscreen and sunglasses
- apply SPF30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen 20 minutes prior to going outdoors
- use shaded areas when outdoors
- act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behavior
- help to design and regularly update the school SunSmart policy
- participate in SunSmart education programs

Considered and endorsed by the Principal
Considered and endorsed by P & C Committee
Considered and endorsed by Student Council