



Our Lady of Good Counsel  
Catholic Primary School

*A place of rich history, vibrant growth and promising futures!*

## OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL SCHOOL SunSmart Policy Statement

### **Rationale:**

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Two out of every three Queenslanders will develop some sort of skin cancer in their lifetime. 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 ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable.

Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels are highest during the hours that children are at school. With this in mind, Our Lady of Good Counsel Catholic Primary School, Gatton realizes the need of the school to play an active role in protecting children's skin and in educating 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 practice
- Create an awareness of the need to reschedule work commitments and outdoor activities to support SunSmart practices wherever possible.

## **Procedures:**

Our Lady of Good Counsel School recognizes that winter sun also contributes to skin damages. 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 school are protected from and education about the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

## **Our Commitment:**

Our Lady of Good Counsel School will:

- Inform parents of the SunSmart policy when they enrol their child
- Offer parents a copy of the SunSmart policy statement
- Increase the amount of shade in the school grounds, where possible, by building shelters and planting trees. This has been achieved to some extent by shade cloths, large undercover area for assembly and a large variety of activities
- Maitland Street Pick Up Zone: Staff and students to assemble in Mercy House breezeway during afternoon pick up in Summer months
- Spencer Street Pick Up Zone: Staff and students to assemble in McAuley Under Cover space during afternoon pick up in Summer months
- 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
- Encourage all students and staff to wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears, and SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, when involved in outdoor activities all year round. All staff are provided with a school hat and access to sunscreen for themselves and students
- Direct students without adequate sun protection to sit in shaded or covered areas at recess and lunch times. "If you want to play wear a hat today" "No hat No play today"
- Conform with the Queensland Cancer SunSmart clothing guidelines
- Encourage a SunSmart swimsuit to be worn at school swimming lessons eg Rash vest covering shoulders
- Try to ensure that, wherever practicable, outdoor activities take place before 10am or after 2pm (Australian Eastern Standard Time). This is the ideal and it is acknowledged that it is not always possible to exclude all outdoor activities from 10am to 2pm
- Try to ensure that adequate shade is provided at sporting carnival and other outdoor events eg. tents, shaded grandstands, marquis
- Review the SunSmart Policy annually

## Our Expectations:

Parents/carers will:

- Provide a SunSmart hat for their child and encourage him/her to wear it to and from school. Our school hat is a bucket hat and complies with recommendations from the Queensland Cancer Fund
- Encourage their child to apply SPF 30 or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before leaving for school all year round
- Ensure that their child's clothing provides adequate protection from UVR. The Queensland Cancer Fund recommends clothing that has the following features: dark coloured, collars and sleeves, closely woven fabric, natural fibre. The Our Lady of Good Counsel uniform complies with these recommendations
- 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, clothing, sunscreen and if possible, sunglasses all year round
- Apply SPF 30 + or higher, broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors all year round
- Use shaded or covered areas when necessary
- Act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour.
- Participate in SunSmart education programs

Source: Queensland Cancer Fund (1997) Working towards a SunSmart Queensland: a policy guide for organisations.

