

Sunsmart Safety Policy

Rationale

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year, 80 per cent are skin cancers. Given students are at school during peak ultraviolet radiation (UVR) times throughout the day, between 10am and 3pm, schools play a major role in both minimising a 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 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 children are at school. As children will spend a portion of their day outdoors, we are committed to protecting them from the harmful effects of the sun. With this in mind Benowa State High 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

This policy aims to:

- Provide ongoing education that promotes personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early detection;
- provide environments that support SunSmart practices; and
- create an awareness of the need to reschedule work commitments and 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 Safety Policy is to ensure all children attending our establishment are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

Our Commitment

Benowa State High School will:

- inform parents of the school's SunSmart Safety Policy when they enrol their child;
- post the SunSmart Safety Policy statement on the school website;
- 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 of SunSmart behaviour;
- seek ongoing support from parents and the school community for the SunSmart Safety Policy and its implementation, through newsletters and P&C meetings;
- encourage all students and staff wear hats that protect the face, neck and ears and SPF 30+ 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;

- annual alignment of the School Dress Code with The Cancer Council Queensland SunSmart clothing guidelines;
- implement a ‘no hat, no play’ practice for students using the oval, tennis courts and basketball courts;
- ensure wherever practicable that outdoor activities take place before 10am and after 3pm;
- ensure adequate shade is provided at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events;
- ensure SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is included in the school sports kit;
- review the SunSmart Safety Policy annually.

Our Expectations

Students will:

- be aware of the school’s SunSmart Safety Policy;
- use shaded or covered areas when outdoors;
- take responsibility for their own health and safety by being SunSmart;
- comply with the schools SunSmart Safety Policy and guidelines by wearing suitable hats, clothing, sunscreen;
- act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour;
- help to design and regularly update the SunSmart Safety policy; and
- participate in initiatives to protect the school population from excessive exposure to the sun.