



Palmerston District Primary School SunSmart Policy

Palmerston District Primary School is a SunSmart school and meets the requirements to be called a SunSmart school.

Rationale:

Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world with 2 out of 3 Australians developing some form of skin cancer in their lifetime.

Skin damage, such as sunspots, blemishes, premature ageing and skin cancer is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Research shows that severe sunburn contributes to this. Most skin damage and skin cancer is therefore preventable. Most of this damage occurs in childhood and adolescence. Because children are at school when ultraviolet radiation levels are at their highest, schools are ideally placed to help reduce the risk of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the school community to use effective skin protection measures.

Aims:

This policy aims to:

- Provide ongoing education and promote personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early protection
- Promote positive attitudes towards skin protection
- Raise awareness of the need for shade provision in schools to reduce the level of exposure to the sun

Implementation:

As part of general SunSmart strategies, Palmerston District Primary School has developed this policy which will be active all year round and which has been developed in consultation with the whole school community.

It will:

- Inform parents of the SunSmart Policy when they enrol their child
- Recommend and encourage children to wear hats when they are outdoors. Hats must protect the face, neck and ears, therefore either wide brim or legionnaire style
- Recommend that shirts with collars and elbow length sleeves, longer skirts and longer shorts be worn
- Encourage children to use available shade for outdoor activities
- Require staff and encourage parents to act as positive role models by practising all aspects of SunSmart behaviour, including wearing sun protective hats for all school related outdoor activities
- Recommend that parents apply sunscreen/ make sunscreen available before school
- Incorporate programs on skin cancer prevention into the curriculum at all year levels
- Regularly reinforce SunSmart behaviour in a positive way through newsletters, parent meetings, student and teacher activities.

- Ensure that SunSmart policy is reflected in the planning of all outdoor events (camps, excursions, sporting events etc.)
- Whenever possible, schedule outdoor activities outside the hours of 11am – 3pm (terms 1 & 4) and 10am – 2pm (terms 2 & 3), to avoid being in the sun during peak UV time. Whenever possible organise outside activities to be held in areas with ample shade. When outdoor activities necessitate children being outside for long periods, preference will be given to the younger children having their activities out of peak UV time
- Maintain shelter and trees so as to provide adequate shade in the school grounds
- During August, the school will actively encourage children to reengage with hat wearing

The Cancer Council ACT has declared that during the months of June and July, in the ACT region only, any sun protection does not need to be implemented. This is because of the following reason as stated by the Cancer Council ACT;

“Most Australians receive the bulk of their vitamin D supply from exposing their skin to small amounts of ultraviolet radiation in sunlight. Due to low levels of ultraviolet radiation in Canberra during the winter months, The Cancer Council ACT does not recommend sun protection in June and July. This is to reduce the risk of vitamin D deficiency in the ACT region.”(The Cancer Council ACT, August 16th 2006)

Evaluation

The Health/ PE committee, in consultation with the whole school community (through the School Board) and Cancer council, will review the policy every two years.

The school will:

- Review the SunSmart behaviour of students, staff, parents and visitors and make recommendations for improvement
- Assess shade provision and usage and make recommendations for increases in shade provision
- Update and promote curriculum material relevant to SunSmart activities