

# **SUN PROTECTION POLICY**

(Formerly SunSmart Policy)



**St Francis Xavier College  
Berwick, Beaconsfield & Officer  
Ratified by Board of Management February, 2000  
Amended May, 2005  
Ratified by College Board July, 2005  
Amended August, 2008  
Ratified by College Board September, 2008  
Amended June, 2011  
Ratified by College Board June, 2011**

**PREAMBLE:**

SunSmart is a term used to describe an initiative of the Anti Cancer Council designed to promote human protection from the harmful effects of ultraviolet radiation from the sun. The initiative acknowledges the role of clothing, hats, sunglasses and sunscreen lotions in assisting protection. The Secondary School Sun Protection Program incorporates all aspects of SunSmart within a Secondary School context.

**RATIONALE:**

Too much exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun causes sunburn, skin and eye damage and increases the risk of developing skin cancer. Australia has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world.

Adolescence and childhood are critical periods during which sun exposure is likely to contribute to skin cancer later in life. It is estimated that more than 75% of all skin cancers could be prevented by practising sun protection in childhood and adolescence.

This policy has been developed as part of our commitment to a safe school environment, to reduce the risk to students and staff of exposure to UV radiation from the sun.

Schools have the potential to have a major impact on the level of sun exposure that students may sustain for the following reasons:

- children are at school throughout the high risk period each day for five days a week.
- the crucial period for sustaining damaging levels of sun exposure occurs during the school years.
- schools can play a significant role in the changing behaviours through education.

This Policy encourages the College to minimise the danger of excessive UV radiation exposure for both staff and students to ensure a healthier environment with long term benefits.

Skin cancer protection strategies are implemented at St Francis Xavier College in the interests of student and staff health, and in the development of a healthy College environment.

**FORMULATION:**

St. Francis Xavier College's Sun Protection Policy has been developed by Staff, Parents and Student Representative Council Leaders to promote the protection of all students and staff, from exposure to the sun's ultraviolet radiation.

**OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this sun protection policy are to:

- increase student and whole-school awareness of skin cancer and other damage caused by exposure to UV radiation.
- work towards a safe College environment that provides shade and other sun protective measures for the entire College community.
- encourage the entire College community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above.
- ensure that families and new staff are informed of the College's sun protection policy.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Strategies 1–4 (clothing, sunscreen, scheduling, role modelling) will be implemented from the beginning of September until the end of April, as this is when UV Index levels are high enough (3 and above) to damage the skin and lead to skin cancer.

Ultra-violet (UV) radiation is part of the sun's light which burns and damages the skin. Most children and adults can be sunburned after only ten (10) minutes exposure to the sun, particularly at times when the UV radiation levels are higher, that is, between 10am and 2pm (11am-3pm daylight saving time). UV radiation increases sharply from October, reaches its peak in January and decreases during March.

Strategies 5–7 (shade, curriculum, professional development for staff) are ongoing and will therefore be implemented at various times throughout the year.

### 1. CLOTHING

Sun protective clothing is included in our College uniform/dress code and sports uniform in the following ways:

- The summer uniform/dress code includes a collar that sits close to the neck, above the collarbone.
- The summer uniform/dress code includes longer style skirts/shorts/pants at least to the knee.
- The sport uniform/dress code includes a shirt that covers the shoulders well and a collar that sits close to the neck, above the collarbone.
- The sport uniform/dress code includes longer style skirts/shorts/pants at least to the mid-thigh.
- Students and staff are strongly encouraged to wear approved hats that protect their face, neck and ears (i.e. broad brimmed or bucket hats), whenever they are outside. If students are not wearing hats, they are to be actively encouraged to move into shaded areas. No hats are to be worn in class.
- Staff members are to model appropriate SunSmart behaviours while on Yard Duty in Terms 1 & 4.
- Wearing of an approved hat by students participating in physical education, is **compulsory**. During sports classes, baseball caps may be worn where a broad brimmed or bucket hat is impractical.
- Teachers of Physical Education are to wear protective headwear while taking Physical Education classes outdoors in Terms 1 & 4.
- Suitable clothing, hat and sunscreen are required for all camps and excursions.
- Rash vests or T-shirts are strongly recommended for outdoor swimming, when students are waiting to compete.
- 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. No sunglasses are to be worn in class.

### 2. SUNSCREEN

- SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen is available for staff and students' use and students are encouraged to bring their own sunscreen to school.
- Staff encourage students to use sunscreen and provide time for students to

apply sunscreen before going outside.

- The school community is educated about the correct use of sunscreen and the level of protection it provides.

### **3. SCHEDULING**

- This policy is considered in the planning of all outdoor events such as assemblies, camps, excursions and sporting events.
- Where possible, outdoor activities/events will be scheduled earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon, or indoor venues will be considered.

### **4. ROLE MODELLING**

- Staff are encouraged to act as role models by using a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when outside.
- 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.

### **5. SHADE**

- The College ensures shade is available in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate – for example, lunch areas, canteen and outdoor lesson areas.
- The College ensures shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- Processes for the planning of outdoor activities and excursions include the consideration of shade.
- Students are encouraged to use shade when outside particularly if they are not wearing appropriate hats or clothing.

### **6. CURRICULUM**

- Sun protection and educational programs are incorporated into appropriate areas of the College curriculum.
- Students are encouraged to be involved in initiatives to promote and model sun protection measures to the whole College community.
- Sun protective behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole College community through a variety of channels such as newsletters, staff meetings and assemblies.

### **7. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR STAFF**

- Sun protection is included in staff training to enable staff to work safely outdoors and to encourage them to be positive role models.
- Sun protection information is included in staff booklets.
- New staff are given a copy of this policy.

### **8. REVIEW OF POLICY**

- The Staff, Parents and Student Representative Council Leaders regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the sun protection policy (at least every three years) and revise the policy when required.