**SunSmart Policy**

**Rationale**

Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world. The duty of care of staff members at St Cuthbert’s Catholic School requires the protection of the health and safety of staff and students particularly in relation to exposure to the sun. However, some skin exposure to the sun’s UV rays is needed for the production of vitamin D, vital for maintenance of healthy bones, teeth and general good health. Insufficient exposure to UV radiation can lead to low vitamin D levels, problem for many Tasmanians.

The school community is committed to a whole of year approach. It means using sun protection in the spring/summer months when the UV is 3 and above (mid-September to Mid-April), and a smart sun exposure for vitamin D in winter/autumn (mid-April to mid-September). This includes providing and extending existing shaded playing areas for the children.

**Aims**

- To ensure that children and staff maintain a healthy UV exposure balance all year round. Encourage sun protection when UV Index levels reach 3 and above and smart sun exposure when UV is low for vitamin D levels.
- To educate the school community about the need to prevent skin damage by limiting exposure to the sun.
- To promote and reinforce the SunSmart message to all members of the school community.
- To provide adequate shade areas for the school community.
- To encourage staff and students to use shaded areas for outdoor activities.
- This policy applies to all school activities and events (on and off site) and is a year round approach. The policy is available in the staff handbook. Also a copy will be made available if requested.
Procedures

➢ Staff are encouraged to check the UV Alert on a daily basis.

➢ Staff and students use a combination of sun protection measures from mid-September to mid-April, when average peak UV levels in Tasmania reach 3 and above:

Clothing
• Sun-safe clothing is part of our school and sports uniform. This includes shirts with collars, sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts and rash vests or T-shirts for outdoor swimming.

Sunscreen
• The use of SPF 30+, broad-spectrum sunscreen is encouraged.
• Where possible SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen is available for use.
• Sunscreen is applied 20 minutes before going outdoors. If outdoors for extended periods sunscreen is reapplied every 2 hours.

Hats
• Students are required to wear bucket hats that protect the face, neck and ears when outside.

Shade
• The school community is committed to providing shade in areas where students gather such as for eating, outdoor teaching and popular play areas. The use of these areas is encouraged.
• The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities.

Sunglasses
• Close-fitting wrap-around sunglasses that comply with Australian Standards AS1067:2003 (Category 2, 3 or 4) are encouraged but optional.

➢ Students without a sun-safe hat or clothing must play in areas protected from the sun.

➢ To help maintain adequate vitamin D levels sun protection will not be used from mid-April to mid-September, when average peak UV levels are below 3 unless in alpine regions, near highly reflective surfaces such as water and snow or outdoors for extended periods.

➢ Staff OHS, role modelling and education
  - When UV is 3 and above staff will role model sun protection behaviours when outside by using the combination of sun protection measures outlined above.
  - Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.
  - Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in teaching programs for all year levels
  - SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school
community through newsletters, meetings, assemblies and upon enrolment.

➢ **Planning**
- Ensure SunSmart policy is reflected in the planning of all outdoor events and excursions.
- Where possible, outdoor activities will be planned away from the middle of the day during the period mid-September to mid-April (when UV levels reach 3 and above).

➢ **Review**
- School’s sun protection policy will be submitted for review to Cancer Council Tasmania once every three years, for updating as new evidence becomes available.

**Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School’s policy review cycle.

Implemented: May 2009

Reviewed: 2nd May 2012
Revised: 10th May 2012
Amended: 17th May, 2012