Sun Smart Policy

Purpose
This SunSmart policy provides guidelines to:
- create environments and encourage behaviours which reflect a healthy UV exposure balance, ensuring some sun exposure for vitamin D while minimising the risk of skin cancer
- encourage and support staff and students to develop independent sun protection skills to help them be responsible for their own sun protection
- support duty of care requirements
- support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for staff and visitors.

Background
Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Melanoma is the most common cancer in young Australians aged 13-24 years. Yet skin cancer is largely preventable and the use of sun protection measures at appropriate times of the year can help to reduce staff and students’ future skin cancer risk. The sun’s UV radiation is the major cause of skin cancer and the best natural source of vitamin D, which is needed for strong bones and overall health so a balanced UV approach is needed. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is a major factor determining future skin cancer risk.

Procedures
- This policy applies to all school events on and off-site.
- To assist with the implementation of this policy, staff and students are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times via the SunSmart widget on the school’s website, the free SunSmart app, or at sunsmart.com.au or myuv.com.au.
- The sun protection measures listed are used for all outdoor activities during the daily local sun protection times.*

*The sun protection times from the Bureau of Meteorology tell the time of day UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In Victoria, UV levels regularly reach 3 or higher from September to the end of April.

Healthy physical environment

Seek shade
- Maryborough Education Centre (MEC) has a duty of care to ensure there are sufficient shelters and trees providing shade in outdoor areas particularly in high-use areas eg. where students have lunch, canteen, assemblies, sports, outdoor lessons and popular play spaces.
- The availability of shade must be considered when planning all outdoor activities.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or a suitable area protected from the sun.
- In consultation with the school council, shade provision is considered in all planning.
- A shade assessment is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.

Healthy social environment

Slip on sun protective clothing
- Cool, loose-fitting, sun protective clothing made of densely woven fabric is included in MEC uniform/dress code and sports uniform
• Rash vests or T-shirts are encouraged when students are at outdoor events including swimming and sports days.

**Slap on a hat**

• Students and staff are expected to wear broad-brimmed or bucket hats that protect their face, neck and ears, whenever they are outside. During sports classes, baseball caps may be worn where a broad-brimmed or bucket hat may be impractical.

**Slop on sunscreen**

• SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is available for staff and students to use.
• 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 (apply 20 minutes before going outside and reapply every 2 hours especially if sweating or swimming).

**Slide on sunglasses**

• Where practical when outdoors, students 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.

**Learning and skills**

• Programs on sun protection will be included in the curriculum for all year levels.

**Engaging children, educators, staff and families**

• SunSmart behaviour will be regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, school website/intranet, staff and parent meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and at student enrolment/new staff orientation.
• As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, staff, families and visitors will:
  o wear a sun protective hat, sun protective clothing and, if practical, sunglasses
  o apply sunscreen
  o seek shade whenever possible.
• This policy is considered in the planning of all outdoor events such as assemblies, camps, excursions and sporting events.
• New staff are provided with a copy of the school’s UV policy.

**Monitoring and review**

• The school council and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy and revise the policy when required by completing a policy review and membership renewal with SunSmart at sunsmart.com.au.
• SunSmart policy updates and requirements will be made available to staff, families and visitors.

This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis.
Signed: 

Paul Rumpff  
School Council President  

Relevant documents / links  
- DET Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 8.5.5 Shade Areas  
- DET Outdoor activities  
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) Your Child’s Health Wellbeing and Safety (Primary)  
- Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) Managing a school – Health & Safety Compliance Framework: OHS >Sun Protection  
- My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia (2011)  
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF) (May 2016)  
- Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct - Principle 3.2  
- Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST) – Standard 4.4 and 7.2  
- Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools –Final Report  
- ARPANSA Radiation Protection Standard for Occupational Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation (2006)  
- AS 4685.1: 2014 Playground equipment and surfacing – General safety requirements and test methods  

Legislation and Standards  
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004  
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006: Sch.5 Reg. 1 (1.2)