Rationale

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Of all new cancers diagnosed in Australia each year, 80% are skin cancers. Given that students are at school during peak ultraviolet radiation (UVR) times throughout the day, schools play an important role in both minimising 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 that 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 middle of the day. 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, QASMT realises the need to help children realise the importance of properly protecting their skin and educate them about SunSmart behaviour, thus reducing the risk of skin damage from exposure to the sun.

Aims

The policy aims to demonstrate a commitment to:

- provide ongoing education that promotes personal responsibility for skin cancer prevention and early detection
- provide environments that support SunSmart practices
- 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 policy is to ensure that all children attending our establishment are aware of the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year.

Our Commitment

QASMT will at various times:
✓ inform parents of the school’s SunSmart policy
✓ 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 policy and its implementation, through newsletters, parent meetings etc.
✓ encourage all students and staff to 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
✓ endeavour to provide shade at sporting carnivals and other outdoor events
✓ encourage the wearing of sunglasses where appropriate
✓ prioritise the use of SPF 30+ broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, for example, in the school sports kit
✓ consider new approaches in sun safety as they evolve.

**Our Expectations**

Students should be:

✓ be aware of the school’s SunSmart policy
✓ use shaded or covered areas when outdoors when applicable and possible
✓ take responsibility for their own health and safety by being SunSmart
✓ act as positive role models for other students in all aspects of SunSmart behaviour