



Sun Awareness Policy

Introduction

Sacred Heart College is a Catholic Co-educational secondary school in the Mercy tradition where students thrive in a vibrant learning and caring community. Our Mercy values underpin all our endeavours and in particular, the Mercy value of Respect compels us to take care of both our own personal and community well-being, so that each member can reach and maintain optimal health, and ultimately flourish.

Moderate exposure to the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is important for one's overall health, however balance is vital. High exposure can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage, and ultimately skin cancer. Overexposure to UV rays during childhood and adolescence is now known to be a major cause of skin cancer, with Australia having one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, (Cancer Council, Australia 2016). Too little UV exposure however, can also lead to low vitamin D levels which has been associated with both physical and mental health conditions. It is important therefore that all community members are aware of the risk and protective elements of UV radiation.

Purpose

Our policy is to promote awareness of the need for protection from the sun, especially during high risk periods (UVI 3+), and also the benefits of some daily exposure to low UV radiation. This policy aims to be both educational and preventative in nature so that staff, students and parents/carers take proactive steps to protect and enhance their physical and mental well-being. Sun protection is needed whenever UVI reaches 3+. In Victoria the average UVI is 3+ from September to the end of April. During these months extra care is needed between 10:00am – 3:00pm when UVI levels reach their peak.

Definitions

UV – Ultra Violet

UVI – Ultra Violet Index – A rating of 1 (low) to 11+ (extreme)

Policy Coverage

This policy is intended for all Staff, Students, Parents, Carers and Volunteers within the Sacred Heart College, Kyneton community.

Policy Statement

Responsibility of the College:

Sacred Heart College Kyneton aims to minimize the dangers of high UV exposure for both staff and students, whilst at the same time encouraging all community members to have daily incidental exposure to UV through

- Increasing students' awareness of skin cancer and risk factors.
- Assisting students to adopt practical skin protection measures.
- Discouraging students from remaining in the sun for extended periods during high UVI times
- Working towards a safe school environment which provides shade for students and staff.

- Considering the availability of shade when planning excursions and outdoor activities.
- Encouraging students, parents and staff to wear protective clothing, hats, sunglasses and sunscreen at high risk times, as well as on sports days, excursions and camps.
- Encouraging students to expose themselves to small amounts of sun during low risk periods, e.g. in the morning or late afternoon.
- Informing parents of the College’s Sun Awareness policy.
- Incorporating sun protection and skin cancer awareness programs into appropriate areas of the curriculum.
- Encouraging staff, including coaches, instructors and grounds staff to act as role models by
 - wearing sun protective hats, clothing and sunglasses when outdoors.
 - applying SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen
 - seeking shade whenever possible

Responsibility of Students:

To be sun aware and maximize protection students are to:

- Check the UVI each day when they log onto the College’s intranet home page.
- Avoid deliberate, prolonged sun exposure during high UVI times.
- Wear a hat or be in the shade, especially during Terms 1 and 4.
- Wear a hat to all PE classes and sporting events in Terms 1 and 4.
- Wear sunglasses if there is to be prolonged sun exposure e.g. during sporting events.
- Apply sunscreen when going outside. Sunscreen is available through General Reception, First Aid and Quambi. It is also supplied by the College at all PE and sporting events, e.g. swimming and athletics carnivals.
- Where possible, wear sun protective clothing when on camps and excursions.

Responsibility of families:

As the primary educator of their children, the expectations created by families in relation to sun protection and exposure will have the greatest impact on the wellbeing of students. The role of the family therefore is to:

- Be familiar with the College’s Sun Awareness Policy.
- Ensure their child has the official College sun hat for Terms 1 and 4 and for sporting events and camps.
- Promote sun awareness and support the College in the application of this policy with students.

Related Documents

- Cancer Council Australia

Version	Comments	Date Released	Next Review	Author	Approved
1	Policy Created	2020		Health Centre Coordinator	DP Wellbeing
2		Dec 2023	Jun 2024	Health Centre Coordinator	DP Wellbeing
3		Jun 2024	Jun 2026	Health Centre Coordinator	Principal