SUNSMART and EXCESS HEAT POLICY – 2015

*To be reviewed: 2018*

This policy applies to all school events on and off site.

**RATIONALE:**

High exposure to ultra violet (UV) rays from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two out of three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before they reach the age of 70. Overexposure to UV during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer.

Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D regulates calcium levels in the blood. It is also necessary for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles.

Students at Our Lady’s are educated about the need for suitable sun protection and hydration whilst at school.

**AIMS:**

- To ensure all students and staff have some UV exposure for vitamin D.
- To plan activities to minimise the risk of exposure to high levels whenever possible.
- To increase student and community awareness of the risk of skin cancer and the practical means of protection.
- To provide a school environment that is sun safe and provides shade for students and staff.
- To ensure that students and staff are well protected from too much UV exposure by using a combination of sun protection measures, i.e. adequate protective clothing, hats, sunscreen and, where practical, close fitting wrap around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067, whenever the UV levels reach 3 and above.
- To increase student awareness of the risks of dehydration and the practical means of prevention.
- To support appropriate Occupational Health and Safety strategies to minimize UV risk and associated harms for staff and visitors.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

**This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the Uniform Policy.**

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Our Lady of Perpetual Help - Ringwood

- Sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform / dress code and sports uniform. School clothing is made of close weave fabric and includes shirts with collars, longer style dresses and shorts.

- All children and staff use a combination of sun protection measures from the beginning of September to the end of April and whenever UV Index levels reach 3 and above. During these months, particular care is taken between 10 am and 2pm (11a.m. and 3p.m. daylight saving time) when UV Index levels reach their peak during the day.

- From the beginning of September until the end of April all students will wear an Our Lady’s school hat when outside. This hat protects the ears, neck and face. From May until August, sun protection is not used unless the UV Index level reaches 3 and above.

- All students and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside. Baseball or peak caps and visors are not considered a suitable alternative.

- Children who do not have an Our Lady’s school hat will be directed to sit on the seats under the verandah.

- Our SunSmart Policy is considered when planning all outdoor events e.g. assemblies, camps, excursions and sporting events. Where possible, outdoor activities or events are scheduled earlier in the morning (i.e. prior to 11a.m.) or later in the afternoon, or we try to use indoor venues.

- The school ensures that there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds, particularly in areas where children congregate.

- In consultation with the Education Board shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.

- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities.

- Children are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.

- When the outside temperature reaches 35 degrees or above and/or the UV rating is 3 or above, all activities will take place indoors. The Principal, or Deputy Principal, is responsible for checking the temperature before breaks on the appropriate government website.

- Students are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day.

- Parents are encouraged to support the SunSmart strategies by providing SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen for their child/children. Students will be reminded to apply and/or reapply sunscreen before going outdoors.

- Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

- Hats are to be washed regularly and repaired when necessary.

- Positive reinforcement of this policy occurs through the school Newsletter, as well as student and teacher activities.

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• We incorporate programs on skin cancer prevention into the Health and Physical Education Domain.

**EVALUATION:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three year cycle or as advised of alterations by the Cancer Council of Victoria.