Doncaster Gardens Primary School
SunSmart Policy

Philosophical Basis:
Australia has one of the highest incidences of skin cancer in the world. At Doncaster Gardens Primary School, the SunSmart policy will develop an awareness of the need for skin protection. This policy is implemented from the beginning of September to the end of April (when average UV levels are 3 and above in Victoria). During these months, particular care is taken between 10am-2pm (11am-3pm) daylight saving time when UV levels reach their peak. A balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much of the sun’s UV can cause sunburn, skin and eye damage, and skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first 10 years of life is a major factor in determining future skin cancer risk. Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for healthy bones and muscles, and for general health.

Guidelines:
NB The SunSmart Policy is implemented from 1 September to 30 April when UV levels are highest in Victoria.
As part of the SunSmart strategies, our school will focus on:

Behaviour:
• Students will wear the school hat, which protects the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside (eg recess, lunch and sport).
• A ‘no hat, no play’ policy will be implemented, except in circumstances governed by culture/religion, in which case the students will be encouraged to wear an appropriate hat or head covering, with the written agreement of parents.
• Students will have the option of wearing suitable sunglasses (labelled AS1067) when they are outside on days of high sun glare.
• School clothing will be made of close weave fabric and include shirts with collars, longer sleeves, longer dresses and shorts
• Rash vests/t-shirts will be required for outdoor swimming and for outdoor water activities at camps and excursions.
• Students will be encouraged to bring, and reminded to use SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen, as recommended by the Anti-Cancer Council, whenever possible. Students are not permitted to share sunscreen with others.
• Students will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor activities.
• Staff and visitors will act as role models by participating in the development and implementation of SunSmart policies.
• Sun protection is used whenever the UV index level reaches 3 and above and particular care will be taken when UV levels reach their peak.

Implementation:
Curriculum:
• Programs on skin cancer prevention will be incorporated into the health and physical education curriculum.
• SunSmart behaviour will be regularly reinforced through student and teacher activities.
• The community will be kept informed and updated via the Newsletter and leaflets from accredited organisations (eg The Cancer Council) in regard to research & initiatives, eg providing information on the use of sunglasses.
• Parents will be informed via notices and/or the newsletter when activities are to occur which will require students to be outside in the sun for prolonged periods of time, and reminded to send appropriate sunscreen on these days, eg, interschool sport days.

Environment:
• The school will work towards increasing and/or maintaining shade eg trees, 'sails', shade structures.
• Outdoor activities will be scheduled wherever possible so that direct sun exposure is minimised particularly during peak UV periods (daily levels can be viewed on the DGPS website – SunSmart Widget). At times when this is unavoidable, students will be reminded to wear their hats and to apply sunscreen.
• Outdoor seats and the time out seat will be located in shady areas.
• Outdoor activities will be conducted in areas of shade whenever possible.
• Students will remain indoors at recess and lunchtime on days of extreme heat, above 34 degrees C.

Evaluation:
The following will be monitored:
• The children’s participation and enthusiasm for wearing hats when outdoors.
• The children’s utilisation of other sun protection strategies
• The transfer of knowledge to other situations eg. excursions
• Ongoing evaluation of strategies to enhance student awareness of skin protection will be undertaken.
• This policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the policy review cycle.

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