



McDOWALL STATE SCHOOL SUN SAFETY POLICY

McDowall State School is a SunSmart School. Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Two out of every three Queenslanders will develop some sort of skin cancer in their lifetime. Research suggests that at least two-thirds of cancerous melanomas occurring in Australia could be prevented if students were protected from the sun during their first 15 years. 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 cancers are therefore preventable.

Ultraviolet radiation (UVR) levels are highest during the hours that students are at school. With this in mind, McDowall State School realises the need to protect student's skin and educate them about Sun Smart behaviour, therefore reducing the risk of skin damage and exposure to the sun. McDowall State School values sun safety. Our school rules make wearing a hat compulsory during breaks and physical education activities that are outside. We strongly recommend that hats are also worn before and after school and that sunscreen be applied at home each morning and reapplied at morning tea and lunch time by our students.

Our school recognises that winter sun also contributes to skin damage. The implementation of the policy will therefore be conducted throughout the year. The purpose of the Sun Smart policy is to ensure that all students attending our school are protected from the harmful effects of the sun throughout the year. If students forget their hat, there are allocated areas that they can go including the library and their year level undercover area.

Our school aims to educate our students about being sun safe in order to develop important, life-long, healthy habits, and acknowledges the important role adults play during and outside school hours to reinforce sun safety with children and young people.

In implementing this policy, our school and community recognise that:

- the policy applies to all school and school-related activities and events;
- the strategies are to be implemented during the whole school day and year-round; and
- a combination of sun safe strategies is more effective than a single approach.

Date of commencement: 2026

Review date: 2029 unless otherwise required.



ELEMENT	STRATEGIES
Clothing requirements	<p>Students are required to wear protective clothing, including appropriate hats, when outdoors during the school day and during school-related activities (for example, excursions/camps) to reduce students' exposure to the sun, including the following strategies:</p> <p>Hats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are required to wear appropriate hats when outdoors. The only exceptions when playing sport are when a hat reduces visibility or interferes with activity skills and therefore poses a risk to students' safety; or when wearing a hat is not possible because other headwear is required to be worn for religious or safety reasons. Under these circumstances, students may remove their hats for the duration of the activity, ensuring they have applied sunscreen to uncovered skin (ideally 20 minutes) prior to participating. • Our school uniform hats are broad-brimmed hats. • Staff remind students to wear hats before and during lunch breaks, and to and from outdoor activities. • Students who do not have hats will play in the shade or an area protected from the sun (year level undercover area). Staff direct children to these areas if they are observed in the outdoor play areas without a hat. • Some spare clean school hats are available for students to borrow if they forget their hat. Please note this is a limited supply. <p>School Uniform</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are required to wear our school uniform which consists of a collared shirt or dress. Our uniform is constructed of material which provides adequate UVR protection and meets the Australian Standard AS4399:2020 for sun protective clothing. <p>Swim shirts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students are required to wear swim shirts/rash vests during all water-based activities occurring at outdoor venues, except during their race/s at competitions and carnivals.
Shade provision and use	<p>Our school maximises the use of available shade for outdoor activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sports activities are rotated during the week between the shed, the hall and the oval. • Temporary shade structures are used as necessary for outdoor events, for example, Under 8s Day, Sports Days. • On days where extreme UVR levels and heat are prevalent, outside activities are adjusted to use more shaded areas of the school or are rescheduled.
Education	<p>Our school provides educational programs on sun safety and preventative measures through the following strategies:</p> <p>Curriculum, teaching and learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sun safety is formally taught as part of the implementation of the Australian Curriculum through Health and Physical Education • Staff include the risk of exposure to UVR in their curriculum activity risk assessments for outdoor activities, which includes ensuring that adequate shade is available for outdoor activities where possible, for example, using temporary shade structures. <p>Incidental teaching and promoting sun safe behaviours</p>



ELEMENT	STRATEGIES
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incidental teaching of personal sun safety strategies occurs in all year levels as part of the school routine on a regular basis, for example, through reminders to students to wear hats and apply sunscreen. <p>Staff professional development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff are informed about the school’s sun safety policy and its requirements on induction. This policy is also reflected in the Staff Handbook. <p>Enrolment procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informing parents of this Sun Smart policy when they enrol their student and to include the Sun Smart policy statement in the school enrolment pack.
Sunscreen provision	<p>Our school recognises the importance of sunscreen use as a sun safe measure and implements the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school supplies SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for student use. Parents/caregivers are encouraged through social media and newsletter items to have their children apply sunscreen before school. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to provide sunscreen for their child if they don’t wish their child to use the school’s sunscreen.
Modelling sun safe behaviours	<p>Our school promotes the importance of parents/caregivers, teachers, ancillary staff, volunteers and other adult supervisors as role models for students using the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff and P&C members are encouraged to consider the use of shade, sun safe hats and clothing, sunglasses and sunscreen when doing their duties, running outside activities, and when on excursions/camps. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to have their children apply sunscreen before they come to school and provide personal sunscreen for their children to use at school.
Cost considerations	<p>The department provides funding for sun safety using the following strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School funding is allocated annually to enable the purchase of sunscreen for each class for the whole school year. Costs for sunscreen will be recovered in line with the Requests for Voluntary Financial Contributions procedure.
Additional strategies	<p>Other strategies our school uses to be sun safe include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sunscreen stations are set up at sports days and swimming carnivals. A no hat, play in the shade, policy is implemented at the school. During breaks in play, students are encouraged to reapply sunscreen at regular intervals. Role modelling – we all have a part to play – staff and parents. Apply sunscreen 20 minutes before school starts.

<p>Endorsed by: John Bradley, P&C President on behalf of the P&C Andrea Cowley, Staff representative</p>	<p>Approved by: Aminta Miller, Principal Date of approval: 4 December 2025</p>
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