



SUN PROTECTION AND CLOTHING POLICY

1.Purpose:

The purpose of this Policy is:

- To provide guidelines to minimise sun damage to children and staff.
- To increase skin protection awareness for all parents, staff and children.
- To ensure children attending are protected from skin damage caused by ultra violet rays from the sun all year round.
- To develop positive attitudes towards skin protection.
- To develop lifestyle practises which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths.

2.Scope:

This policy applies to:

- Little Saints Early learning Centre (the Service) and
- St Andrew's After School & Vacation Care (the Service)

3.Background:

Queensland has the highest rate of skin cancer in the world. Two out of every three Queenslanders will get some form of skin cancer in their lifetime. Research suggests that at least two-thirds of all melanomas occurring in Australia could be prevented if children were protected from the sun during their first 15 years of life. 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. UVR are at 'Extreme' or 'Very High' for a large part of the day on the Sunshine Coast (between the hours 7.30am-4.45pm).

4.Policy Statement:

As children will spend a portion of their day outdoors, we are required to protect them from the harmful effects of the sun. With this in mind we will take care to protect children's skin and educate them about Sun Smart behaviour, thus reducing the risk of skin damage from exposure to the sun.

5.Rationale:

The Service plays "a vital role in reducing the incidence of skin cancer in Queensland. Skin cancer can be prevented. Skin damage from ultraviolet radiation from the sun causes skin cancer. In fact, it

only takes five sunburns in a person's lifetime to increase their risk of skin cancer. Children don't need to be intentionally exposed to the sun for therapeutic benefits. There are a number of sun safe practices including shade, time, clothing, hats, sunglasses, and sunscreen, that can help in protecting from ultraviolet radiation and preventing skin cancer" (The Queensland Cancer Fund, 2007).

6.Details:

The following practices are in place to ensure that all children attending our service are protected from skin damage caused by harmful ultraviolet rays of the sun throughout the year:

6.1 Activities

- Children must wear hats which protect the face, neck and ears when outside.
- Outdoor activities must be held in shaded areas whenever possible.
- Sun protection practices will occur at all times including the winter months as well as early and late in the day.
- Outdoor activities during the hours between 10am and 2pm will be under shade as much as possible, and limited during the summer months. Indoor play will be encouraged during these times not only due to UV Rays, but also to avoid high temperatures.
- The Service will provide shelters and shade trees as much as possible.
- The Service will incorporate sun and skin protection awareness activities in teaching programmes and staff will have regular discussions with children about sun safety.
- The Service must provide sunscreen to be applied to children before they play outdoors. Any children with sensitive skin must have their own sunscreen supplied by the parents.

6.2 Staff:

- Staff will act as role models for the children and must practice skin-protection behaviour such as wearing protective hats and applying sunscreen. Sunscreen will be provided for the use of staff. It is recommended that staff apply sunscreen when children are having sunscreen applied.
- Staff must ensure children use shaded areas wherever possible.
- If weather becomes too hot during outdoor play, staff must re-direct play inside or on to the veranda.
- Staff must ensure that Children have access to water on a regular basis, both indoors and outdoors.
- Staff must ensure that children apply sunscreen correctly to all exposed parts of their body.

6.3 Parents/Carers

When enrolling a child, parents/carers will be:

- Informed of the Sun Protection and Clothing Policy.
- Requested to provide:
 - Shirts and tops with sleeves.

- Encouraged to practice skin protective behaviour themselves as positive role models for children.
- T-shirt UV protective swimmers.
- Supply a wide brimmed hat for their child.

6.4 Clothing

- You can help your child to relax by letting them wear play clothes for messy play, that is easily laundered and that they can manage themselves (for toileting). Do not send thongs (0-3 years) as thongs inhibit correct movement of the feet. Clothing that has drawstrings around the neck should be avoided as they are dangerous when children are climbing, running, jumping or sleeping.
- We encourage you to dress your children appropriately and safely for the experiences they will have during their busy day (please consider climate and sun safety). Clothing should cover the shoulders and back (no singlets).
- Please remember to name all clothing items.
- Staff will adjust children's clothing during the day to ensure they are dressed appropriately and comfortably for the weather conditions, sleep and rest times and messy activities.
- We respect clothing and dressing preferences due to family beliefs, backgrounds or religious reasons and encourage children and their families to wear the clothing in which they feel comfortable. We feel it is important to encourage this to help others learn about the cultural diversity within our service.
- The Service has a supply of spare clothing and hats in each room for children who may have soiled their clothing and do not have spare clothes. Spare hats will always be provided to children who have forgotten their hats.
- St Andrew's Little Saints hats and t-shirts may be purchased from the office.

6.5 Shoes / Bare Feet

The Service encourages parents to recognise the benefits of barefooted play for children's safety, growth and the development of sensory awareness. Shoes can be a hazard in outdoor play areas. Nerve endings in the feet can sense the variety of textures. Bare feet can grip climbing equipment and promote more effective balance and control (e.g. music and movement sessions or climbing).

7.Measuring Tools:

The following measuring tools will be used:

- Staff must monitor children on arrival to ensure that they have appropriate clothing, a hat, and apply sunscreen.

- Management will monitor staff to ensure that they are applying sunscreen and wearing hats outdoors.

8.Sources and Further Reading:

- Education and Care Services National Law 2011
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012
- Bureau of Meteorology Website
- Cancer Council Queensland (<http://www.cancerqld.org.au/>)
- Sunsmart Earlychildhood.pdf (<http://www.cancerqld.org.au/>)
- FS_Sunsmart.pdf (<http://www.cancerqld.org.au/>)

9.Related Documents:

- Sudden Infant Death and Safe and Comfortable Sleep/Rest Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Workplace Health and Safety Policy