Sun Safe/Protection Policy

Rationale

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage, and skin cancer. Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer during their lifetime. Overexposure to the sun during childhood and adolescence is known to be a major cause of skin cancer.

The goals of the GEPS Sun Safe/Protection policy are to:

• Increase student and community awareness about skin cancer and sun protection.

• Encourage the entire school community to use a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV Index levels are 3 and above.

• Work towards a safe school environment that provides shade for students, staff and the school community.

• Assist students to be responsible for their own sun protection.

GEPS Sun Safe/Protection strategies are as follows:

The sun protection action plan should be implemented all year and a combination of sun protection measures used when the UV Index levels are 3 and above.

Particular care is needed from the beginning of August until the end of May during the peak UV times of 10 am to 2 pm (11 am to 3 pm daylight saving time) including:

Scheduling outdoor activities

• Where possible, GEPS will schedule outdoor activities (e.g. assemblies, sport and physical education lessons) outside peak UV times of 10 am – 2 pm (11 am – 3 pm daylight saving time) and plan activities to take place in the shade or indoor areas.

• GEPS will consider sun protection when planning all outdoor events. Where possible, we have outdoor activities or events earlier in the morning or later in the afternoon, or we try using indoor venues.
Shade

- GEPS is committed to providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.
- The Principal will consult with the school community about future plans for shade.
- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside. The COLA is used by students eating their lunch and recess.
- Students who do not have sun safe hats are asked to play under the COLA.

Hats

- Students are encouraged to wear hats that protect their face, neck, and ears, i.e. broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside.

GEPS staff will enforce the rule *No Hat = Shade*. Throughout terms 1 & 4 students without a school hat are required to play under the COLA so that they are protected from the sun. Throughout terms 2&3 school beanies are sufficient due to the cooler season.

Clothing

- Sun safe clothing is included in our school uniform and sports uniform. School clothing is made of close weave fabric and includes shirts with collars and longer sleeves.
- When swimming GEPS will encourage students to wear rash vets and/or tee shirts.

Sunscreen

- SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen is available for staff and students’ use. Where possible, sunscreen is applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours.
- Where possible, staff will remind children to apply sunscreen before arriving at school, before recess, lunch and going outside.

Sun Glasses

- Sun glasses are optional. If GEPS students wear them, they are encouraged to wear wrap around glasses that meet with the Australian standard.

Role modelling of staff

Staff will be requested to role model good sun protection behaviours by:

- Wearing sun safe hats, clothing and sunglasses when outside.
- Applying SPF 30+ broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen.
• Seeking shade whenever possible.

**Curriculum**

• Teachers will be encouraged to include skin cancer prevention principles across all year levels.

**Information to the school community**

• Skin cancer prevention information is regularly promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, staff meetings, school assemblies and on student enrolment.

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

**Review**

• School parent body, staff and students will regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the sun protection statement/action plan (at least once every three years) and revise the policy when required.

*Next policy review is due 2015*

*This policy has been discussed and approved by the GEPS P&C Association, November, 2013.*

*Bede Darcey*
*Principal*
*November, 2013*