6 February 2026

P&C Agenda Item Re. Sun Safety Policy

We presently do not have a process at CHSS whereby the students are encouraged to reapply sunscreen before playing outside during the school day.

I am requesting that the school adopt a sun safe policy that incorporates sunscreen to promote the health and safety of our children. I envision that this could be designed in a way that minimised the burden on teachers through a relatively simple provision, encouragement, and modelling in early years that would become a routine by later years.

Notably, such a step would help to bring CHSS into compliance with state procedure.[1] It would also bring us in line with the approach at neighbouring schools.[2]

Rationale

While I recognise that this is information is well-known, I wanted to set out the basis for my concern, which stems in part from the fact that Queensland is the skin cancer capital of the world and around 2,000 people die from related cancers in Australia every year.[3]

The need for sun protection at school is critical because the hours coincide with the period of the day when UV levels are at their highest. For example, from Nov to Feb (inclusive) the UV index over Brisbane is "extreme"[4] at noon, meaning during this time skin can be visibly damaged in as little as 11 minutes (and, of course, visible damage is not the only concern).

Cancer Council Australia recommends the reapplication of sunscreen every two hours, meaning if parents apply sunscreen when their children leave home (as many of us do), the effectiveness has significantly diminished by about 10am for most students, before the majority of the outdoor time occurs in the school day.

While we are fortunate to have lots of lovely, shaded areas at CHSS, as the Cancer Council of Victoria notes:

> UV rays reflect off surfaces like sand, water and even grass. So while a leafy tree or shade sail will block some UV rays, others will bounce from those sunny areas to reach your skin. That's why you should always use all five sun protection measures – clothing, sunscreen, a hat, sunglasses and shade – for the best protection.[5]

---

[1] Under the Queensland Government Sun safety in state schools procedure v 1.1 (May 2023) the Principal (or delegate) Is required to supply an SPF 30 or higher broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for students to use on uncovered areas of the skin, such as the face and the back of the hands, for all outdoor activities: https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/pp/sun-safety-in-state-schools-procedure

[2] Kenmore State School Dress Code ("Sunscreen is available for the students use."); Indooroopilly State Schol ("Sunscreen is available in all classrooms for student use.")

[3] https://cancerqld.org.au/understanding-cancer/prevention/sunsmart-program/ and https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/be-sunsmart/sunsmart-app

[4] http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/averages/uv-index/?period=feb

[5] https://www.cancervic.org.au/get-support/stories/7-myths-about-sun-protection.html#:~:text=You%20can't%20get%20sunburnt%20in%20the%20shade&text=So%20while%20a%20leafy%20tree,shade%20%E2%80%93%20for%20the%20best%20protection

Action Requested

While the Department of Education already provides a template for a sun safety policy[6], I would be happy to work with the school to update or create a CHSS sun safe policy in such a way that includes making sure sunscreen is part of the school's plan to protect student health and well-being.

The Health and Wellbeing Committee, largely comprising medical professionals, has also offered their assistance in developing the policy.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue.

Sincerely,



Geneviève Murray
CHSS Parent

[6] https://ppr.qed.qld.gov.au/attachment/exemplar-school-sun-safety-policy.docx