This policy applies to all school events on and off site.

**Rationale**
Mary Immaculate School is a SunSmart school and as such we support the principles of the SunSmart organisation. 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. Exposure to the sun’s UV during childhood and adolescence is associated with an increased risk of skin cancer in later life. 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.

**Objectives**
This SunSmart Policy has been developed to:
• ensure all students and staff have get some UV exposure for vitamin D
• ensure all students and staff are well protected from too much UV exposure by using a combination of sun protection measures whenever UV levels reach 3 and above
• ensure the outdoor environment is sun safe and provides shade for students and staff
• ensure students are encouraged and supported to develop independent sun protection skills
• support duty of care requirements
• support appropriate OHS strategies to minimise UV risk and associated harms for staff and visitors
• ensure that families and new staff are informed of the school’s SunSmart Policy.

**Measures/ Procedures**
Staff are encouraged to access the SunSmart UV Alert at sunsmart.com.au to find out daily local sun protection times to assist with the implementation of this policy.

We use a combination of sun protection measures for all outdoor activities from **September to the end of April** and whenever UV levels reach 3 and above.

We support the following measures:

**1. Seek shade**
• A shade audit is conducted regularly to determine the current availability and quality of shade.
The school makes sure there is a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in areas where students congregate e.g. lunch, canteen, outdoor lesson areas and popular play areas.

- The availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all other outdoor activities.
- In consultation with the Outdoor Spaces Master Plan Committee shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- Students are encouraged to use available areas of shade when outside.
- Students who do not have appropriate hats or outdoor clothing are asked to play in the shade or in a suitable area protected from the sun.

2. Slip on sun protective clothing

- Sun protective clothing is included in our school uniform / dress code and sports uniform. School clothing is cool, loose fitting and made of densely woven fabric. It includes shirts with collars and longer sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts and rash vests or t-shirts for outdoor swimming.

3. Slap on a hat

- All students and staff are required to wear hats that protect their face, neck and ears, i.e. legionnaire, broad brimmed or bucket hats, whenever they are outside. Baseball or peak caps are not considered a suitable alternative.

4. Slop on sunscreen

- Students must provide their own SPF 30+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen.
- Sunscreen can be applied at least 20 minutes before going outdoors and reapplied every two hours if outdoors.
- Students are reminded to apply sunscreen before going outdoors.
- With parental consent, students with naturally very dark skin are not required to wear sunscreen to help with vitamin D requirements.

5. Slide on sunglasses (if practical)

- Where practical, students and staff are encouraged to wear close fitting, wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian Standard 1067 (Sunglasses: Category 2, 3 or 4) and cover as much of the eye area as possible.

Staff OHS and Role modelling

As part of OHS UV risk controls and role-modelling, when the UV is 3 and above staff:

- wear sun protective hats, covering clothing and if practical sunglasses when outside
- apply SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen
- seek shade whenever possible
Families and visitors are encouraged to use a combination of sun protection measures (sun protective clothing and hats, sunglasses, sunscreen and shade) when participating in and attending outdoor school activities.

**Curriculum**

- Programs on skin cancer prevention and vitamin D are included in the curriculum for all year levels.
- SunSmart behaviour is regularly reinforced and promoted to the whole school community through newsletters, the school website, parent meetings, staff meetings, school assemblies, student and teacher activities and on student enrolment.

**Review**

- Staff regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the SunSmart policy (at least once every three years) and revise the policy when required.

**Relevant Documents / Links**

- DEECD Health, Safety & Workcover
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) Occupational Health & Safety Guidelines
- Independent Schools Victoria (ISV) Compliance Framework
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)
- Building Quality Standards Handbook (BQSH): Section 8.5.5 Shade Areas (Oct 2011)
- Education and Training Parliamentary Committee Inquiry into Dress Codes and School Uniforms in Victorian Schools - Government Response
- Safe Work Australia: Guidance Note for the Protection of Workers from the Ultraviolet Radiation in Sunlight (2008)
- AS 4685.1: 2014 Playground equipment and surfacing – General safety requirements and test methods

This information is based on current available evidence at the time of review. It can be photocopied for distribution.

Date June 2015
Relevant resources

- **SunSmart UV Alert:** The SunSmart UV Alert indicates daily weather forecasts including temperature, local UV levels and times sun protection is or isn’t needed. This is available in the weather section of the newspaper, on the SunSmart website at [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au), as a free iPhone app or as a widget that you can add to your website. It even includes a vitamin D tracker and sunscreen application reminder.

- **Creating effective shade:** This online shade audit tool allows you to assess whether the existing shade at your service is adequate. It also helps you develop a list of practical recommendations to improve both built and natural shade. [sunsmart.com.au/shading-audit/intro](http://sunsmart.com.au/shading-audit/intro)

- **Create your own SunSmart poster:** online SunSmart poster templates where children choose the scene, text, upload an image of their own face to place into the scene and print off their very own poster with them as the SunSmart star. There are sun protection, vitamin D and snow posters to choose from [www.sunsmart.com.au/createposter](http://www.sunsmart.com.au/createposter)

- **SunSmart Millionaire:** How SunSmart are you? An innovative online game-based resource for year 5–7 students that promotes the science behind the SunSmart message. Visit [www.sunsmartmillionaire.com.au/](http://www.sunsmartmillionaire.com.au/)

- **SunSmart Countdown:** song and associated activities [sunsmart.com.au/protecting_others/at_school/sunsmart_countdown](http://sunsmart.com.au/protecting_others/at_school/sunsmart_countdown)

- **Generation SunSmart:** fun and interactive online sun protection modules for teachers – assists with professional learning requirements - school nurses and year 6 - 9 students. Visit [generationsunsmart.com.au](http://generationsunsmart.com.au)