



**“Guided by Jesus Christ, our teacher, we journey together,  
learning to dream, believe and achieve”**

## **ST CLARE’S RC PRIMARY SUN PROTECTION POLICY**

### **Introduction**

Skin cancer is now the most common form of cancer in this country, with over 40,000 new cases registered every year, and it is almost always caused by the sun. Young children with fair skin are the most vulnerable, particularly when they spend the hottest part of the day in the playground.

### **Aims of this Policy**

Too much exposure to ultraviolet light (UV) radiation from the sun causes sunburn, skin damage and increases the risk of skin cancer. Sun exposure in the first 15 years of life contributes significantly to the lifetime risk of skin cancer. As there is enormous potential for schools to help prevent skin cancer in future generations. St Clare’s RC have made protecting our children’s skin a matter of priority because:

- Children are at school five out of seven days a week at times when UV rays are high.
- Most damage due to sun exposure occurs during the school years.
- Schools can play a significant role in changing behaviours through role modelling and education.
- Students and teachers are at risk of sunburn within 10-15 minutes of being exposed to strong sunlight.
- Students spend an average of 1.5 hours outside per school day, more if involved in sports and outdoor activities.
- Skin cancer is largely preventable through behaviour modification and sun protection during early years.

### **To protect our children we will carry out these sun protection strategies:**

- Encourage our families to ensure that all school uniform is made of close weave fabric and includes shirts with collars and longer sleeves, longer style dresses and shorts.
- We ensure that all children who participate in PE outdoor wear suitable sports clothes; this does not include vest style tops.
- We encourage all students and staff to wear protective clothing during summer term and send ‘sun safety’ reminders out on days on hot summer days.
- We encourage the children to wear wide brimmed hats (6-10cm) that protect their face, neck and ears such as legionnaire or bucked hats, when they are outside.

Covering up and seeking shade are the most important sun protection measures. In addition, sunscreen can provide protection to exposed skin. However, we are aware that sunscreen should not be used to increase the amount of time spent in the sun. Therefore, we ask that all of our pupils apply sunscreen before school starts – SPF 30 or above and then encourage our families to send in sunscreen to be reapplied at lunchtime before the children go out to play.

If you would like your child to apply their own sun-cream whilst at school we ask that you:

- Bring a bottle of 30+ sun cream into school with your child's name and class clearly labelled on the bottle. This will be kept in a container that will be stored out of reach of the children.
- Ensure that your child has the appropriate sun cream factor applied in the morning before they attend school.
- Model how to apply sun-cream safely, avoiding contact with their eyes, etc when applying sun cream by themselves.

#### **Additional action which will be taken by the school:**

##### **Shade**

- As a school we will ensure that there are a sufficient number of shelters and trees providing shade in the school grounds particularly in the larger areas where children congregate.
- We will work in consultation with the education department, to ensure that shade provision is considered in plans for future buildings and grounds.
- We review availability of shade is considered when planning excursions and all outdoor activities.
- Staff will ensure that the children are making use of available shaded areas when outside.
- Lunchtime organisers and support staff will encourage the children to seek shade during breaks and dinner hour.
- We will endeavour to provide permanent or temporary shady structures within school grounds for summer days. This will involve staff, students and parents in the development and implementation of this policy.

##### **Role modelling**

Our staff will act as role models by;

- Wearing protective hats and clothing when outside.
- Applying SPF 15+ broad spectrum, water resistant sunscreen to prevent any sun damage to their own skin.
- Seeking shade on hot summer days.
- Families and visitors will be encouraged to use a combination of these sun protection measures when attending and participating in outdoor activities.
- Outdoor activities and events – Additional measures will be taken if the temperature exceeds 22°C
- In the Spring 2 term the children will have an assembly on skin care and being safe in the sun.
- Encouraging parents to support the school by acting as role models and providing protection for their children.
- Making sun protection strategies fun, by involving everyone, and providing choices for the children when helping the children protect themselves from the sun(den building etc).

The use of sunscreens is an effective way of preventing sunburn. The Health Education Authority recommends the use of a sunscreen with a sun protection factor of 15 or above. This sun safety policy promotes the self-administration of sunscreen by all of the pupils at St Clare's. Most children, apart from the very youngest and those with special needs, will be able to do so under supervision.

Teachers will not be required to apply sunscreen to pupils due to the potential for allegations of abuse being made against teachers and other staff who have agreed to apply sunscreen. In special circumstances where we do as a school, decide to allow staff to apply sunscreen onto our pupils skin, parental consent will be obtained. Teachers and other staff who do wish to do so must only apply the sunscreen to the face, neck and arms of pupils.

Policy Agreed on

16<sup>th</sup> November 2015

Signed by:

*W Ryan*

W. Ryan, Chair of Governors