

# CARRICKFERGUS MODEL SCHOOL



## POLICY FOR SUN PROTECTION IN SCHOOL



## **POLICY FOR SUN PROTECTION IN SCHOOL**

### **INTRODUCTION / RATIONALE**

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. There is enormous potential for schools to help prevent skin cancer in future generations.

Schools are central to protecting children's skin this is 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.
- Pupils and teachers are at risk of sunburn within 10-15 minutes of being exposed to strong sunlight.
- Pupils 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.

The main elements of this policy are:

- Children will be made aware about sun safety and promote a healthy school.
- Education: learning about sun safety to increase knowledge and influence behaviour.
- Protection: providing an environment that enables pupils and staff to stay safe in the sun.

### **EDUCATION**

- At appropriate times during the year children will be reminded about 'How to be Sun Safe'.
- Parents and Guardians will be asked through letters/newsletters to support this policy by encouraging their children to apply sun cream, wear sun hat, drink plenty of water.
- Children will be encouraged to use the shaded areas of the school during playtimes.

### **PROTECTION**

#### **Shade:**

- The school playground has shade provided either by the school building, outdoor huts, picnic benches, shelters and trees.
- Children will be encouraged to use the shaded areas of the school during playtimes when appropriate.

#### **Clothing:**

- The children have a summer uniform to keep them cool. All pupils are encouraged to bring a cap to school.

#### **Sunscreen:**

Parents should apply sunscreen (minimum SPF 30, with broad spectrum UVA protection) before arriving to school. It is not school policy that school staff should apply sunscreen but this can be done in circumstances where a parent has forgotten.

#### **Drinking Water:**

- Children are encouraged to increase their water intake in hot weather and are encouraged to drink water during break times and lunch times. Every child should bring a water bottle to school every day.

Time Outside:

Teaching staff:

- Teaching staff will consider the length of time pupils have outside on very warm days when UV rays will be high. This includes school trips.
- On hot days, teachers will create through drafts by opening as many windows as possible and, if necessary, relocate to cooler teaching spaces. Children and staff are encouraged to drink regularly during the day but, during, hot sunny weather, particular care will be taken to remind them of the need to drink plenty of water.