

Sun Protection Policy

Rationale:

Channing school is aware of the link between sunburn and skin damage that can be caused by the harmful ultra-violet rays in sunlight. This policy is a response to that link.

Malignant melanoma is the second most common cancer in young adults (aged 15-34) in this country. By encouraging sun safe behaviour at school and teaching students about the risks of sunlight we can prevent them burning and contribute towards preventing skin cancer.

The incidence of skin cancer in young people has doubled over the last 15 years. We also know that it is the damage done to the skin when young that increases the incidence of skin cancer in later life. It is important to protect the more delicate skin of young children and teenagers. People with fairer or freckled skin burn more easily and are at greater risk of skin cancer than dark skinned people, who have naturally high levels of protective melanin, the pigment that gives skin its colour, however they must also take care not to burn.

UV rays damage the skin's cells, which means they are at risk of becoming cancerous. Research has shown that three or more severe sunburns double the risk of melanoma.

Melanoma skin cancer is the 5th most common form of cancer in women and 6th for men. Too much UV radiation is the main potentially avoidable risk factor linked to around 86% of malignant melanoma cancers every year. (Cancer Research uk)

More women than men are diagnosed each year. Skin cancer on the legs is the most common in women and in men it is on the chest or back.

It is important to seek shade if possible, particularly during the hours of 11 am - 3 pm and between the months of March to September, when UV radiation levels are at their highest. Remember cloud reduces UV levels but it is still possible to burn under cloud. Daily UV index can be found on the Meteorological Office website.

Dermatologists recommend the use of a high factor sunscreen at least SPF 15 which protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Many sun creams also have UVA protection indicated by a star system graded from one to five. A star rating of five is recommended for the best protection. 'Once a day' sunscreen is ideal for use during the school day.

The sun is a vital source of vitamin D, which we need to keep our bones healthy. Short and regular exposure to sun during the summer is actually good for us and for maintaining a healthy body.

Research has shown that most people do not apply as much sunscreen as they need to. It must also be re-applied regularly.

Aims:

- To inform students and staff of the dangers of excessive sun exposure the school.
- To provide a healthy school environment when sunny.

Actions:

- The school nurses will arrange for a speaker from The Teenage Cancer Trust (or similar) to talk to all students in the senior school in an annual assembly on avoiding sunburn and staying safe in the sun. If this is not possible, form tutors will talk to students about sun safety in the summer term.
- There will be a display on the notice board outside the medical room during part of the summer term, with relevant information.
- Information and leaflets about sun safety is available in the medical room for students and staff.
- An information bulletin reminding parents to apply and supply sun cream, and to ensure girls have sun hats at school, will be put in the Fairseat Bulletin for parents, in the summer term
- The school nurses are available for advice about sun safety for students and staff.
- Staff on duty during breaks to point out shaded areas and remind students they are allowed in their form rooms at break times.
- Staff on duty to actively discourage sunbathing.
- Staff to make use of shade when holding outdoor activities. Schedule work to minimise exposure.
- Staff to set a good example by also regularly applying sunscreen and wearing appropriate clothing, hats, and sunglasses.
- Staff and students should be encouraged to drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. Use of personal water bottles is promoted. Students are allowed to drink in most classes apart from science and I.T. The school provides water at various locations around the school. Staff to remind students where the water points are situated around the school.

- Staff and students should be encouraged to wear suitable hats, preferably with a wide brim or the legionnaire style, to protect eyes, ears and neck, particularly on school trips and sports days when they may be exposed to the sun for long periods.
- Staff and students should be encouraged to keep covered up with light clothing when the sun is at its hottest.
- Encourage students and staff to check regularly for unusual changes in spots or moles and seek medical advice if concerned. The earlier skin cancer is diagnosed the easier it is to treat.
- Staff organising trips must ensure students have their own suncream, plus take a spare supply with them

Mrs Tas Franklin
Senior Nurse
June 2017