Rationale
Australia has the highest incidence of skin cancer in the world, with skin cancers accounting for around 80% of all new cancers diagnosed each year in Australia. There are four factors, often occurring simultaneously, which contribute to these statistics:
1. The population is predominantly fair-skinned.
2. Ultraviolet light from the sun is of sufficient intensity to induce skin cancer in this susceptible population.
3. For many years social values have supported the belief that a suntan is healthy and attractive.
4. Lifestyle, work, school and recreational habits expose people to the sun for long periods. Skin damage, including skin cancer, is the result of cumulative exposure to the sun. Much of the damage occurs during childhood and adolescence. Research suggests that severe sunburn is a contributor to skin cancer and other forms of skin damage such as wrinkles, sunspots, blemishes and premature ageing. Most skin damage and skin cancer is, therefore, preventable.

The Cancer Council South Australia recommends people protect their skin at times when the ultraviolet radiation (UVR) level is 3 (3 – 5 is the moderate range) and above – this is when the UVR level is strong enough to cause damage to the skin. With this in mind, the guidelines for South Australia are that a skin protection policy be in place from the beginning of September until the end of April. The Cancer Council also recommends that particular care should be taken between 10am – 3.00pm, when the UVR levels are at their highest.

It is important to balance sun protection with safe sun exposure for the production of vitamin D for bone growth and development. During May to August, at times when the UV radiation level is below 3, sun protection for most people is not necessary.

Schools are ideally placed to help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths by encouraging all members of the school community to use effective skin protection.

Aims
The aims of the “Leigh Creek Kindergarten Skin Protection Policy” are to promote among children, staff and parents:
* positive attitudes towards skin protection
* lifestyle practices which can help reduce the incidence of skin cancer and the number of related deaths
* personal responsibility for and decision making about skin protection
* awareness of the need for environmental changes in our centre to reduce the level of exposure to the sun

Implementation
This policy is for implementation from the 1st September to 30th April. Outside of this time care should also be taken when the ultraviolet radiation level is 3 (moderate) and above.
The purpose of the policy is to ensure that all members of our kindergarten are protected from skin damage caused by the harmful rays of the sun.
It is an expectation that all staff, students and parents of Leigh Creek Kindergarten will use the following skin protection strategies:
1. Take particular care if in the direct sun between the hours of 10am and 3pm and when the ultraviolet radiation level is 3 (moderate) and above, outside of these times.
1.1 All outdoor activity sessions will be held in shaded areas.

1.2 Whenever possible, all outdoor activities will be scheduled before 10am and after 3pm, conducted indoors, or in the shaded areas of the kindergarten. Daily UV alert information is available and is saved in the favourites on Internet Explorer at http://www.bom.gov.au/products/UV/Leigh_Creek_SA.shtml

2. Use the shade of trees, pergolas, umbrellas and tents whenever outdoors.
2.1 Trees will be maintained to continue to provide shade and where any losses occur, new trees will be planted to replace them to maintain the level of shade currently available.

2.2 The sandpit and play equipment areas to be priorities for shade.

2.3 The further provision of shade areas will appear as a priority on any forward planning documents for the kindergarten.

3. Wear appropriate clothing that protects the skin.
3.1 Students, staff and parents will be expected to wear a broad brimmed hat, legionnaire style hat, or a bucket hat with a deep crown and a brim width of 6cms whenever they are involved in outside activities. Children not wearing an appropriate hat will be provided with a Kindergarten hat or expected to play in the shade.

3.2 Students will be encouraged to wear shirts with collars and at least elbow length sleeves, longer style shorts/skirts and rash vests or t-shirts for swimming, if using an outside pool.

4. Students will be encouraged to wear a broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen with an SPF of 30+ to clean, dry skin to Kindergarten. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours if outdoors for a prolonged period of time (ie excursions), or more frequently if involved in water activities or perspiring.
4.1 Adequate time must be allowed for students to apply sunscreen before going outdoors.

4.2 Parents will be encouraged to supply sunscreen for their children, although there will be bulk sunscreen packs available.

4.3 Sunscreen application will be encouraged before going out to lunch or any outdoor activity between 10am and 3pm.

5. Reinforcing the SunSmart message in all kindergarten activities and in general kindergarten procedures is an important strategy in the adoption of the skin protection behaviours.
5.1 Staff will be encouraged to routinely role model appropriate SunSmart strategies in all kindergarten activities.
5.2 Skin cancer prevention will be included in the curriculum.
5.3 Staff will be encouraged to keep up to date with new information and resources through contact with The Cancer Council South Australia.
5.4 Information about the kindergarten’s SunSmart Policy will be given to all new staff, students and families.

6. The “Leigh Creek Kindergarten Skin Protection Policy” will be reviewed on a yearly basis with staff and Governing Council input.
6.1 Policy issues will be discussed at Governing Council meetings.