FOOTWEAR POLICY

June 2015
PURPOSE
The Broken Bay Diocesan Schools System (DSS) through its Work Health and Safety Policy, is committed to providing a safe working and teaching environment for all staff, students and visitors.

Appropriate footwear is essential to the protection of feet against health and safety hazards encountered every day such as slips, trips and falls, falling objects and chemical spillages; and injuries to the feet and ankles like sprains and strains, crush injuries, cuts, abrasions and burns. This policy sets out requirements about footwear that must be worn when engaging in certain types of activity and provides guidance for all staff about footwear that is or is not suitable for general activities on a school site.

Schools that may already have risk management controls in place in relation to footwear should refer to this policy when reviewing and evaluating those controls.

POLICY CONTENT
General requirements
While some tasks require protective footwear due to the inherent risks of the activity, all staff should consider the tasks and activities they will undertake during the day including where they will be performing those activities and whether their footwear is appropriate, to protect the feet and minimise risk of injury. Activities may include:

- traversing uneven ground and loose surfaces (e.g. playground duty);
- supervising sport;
- manual tasks e.g. cleaning, moving teaching resources; and
- carrying items up and down stairs

School staff should consider wearing footwear that is suitable for walking on a number of different surfaces during the working day e.g. stairs, playgrounds, grass, sports fields and concrete.

Footwear which is suitable for the general school environment means enclosed shoes, which are flat with a minimal heel, that have a good grip and fit well. Shoes with slippery soles, poorly secured shoes (e.g. thongs or ill-fitting sandals/scuffs), loose soles / laces or worn / high or thin heels, should be avoided.

Staff can set a positive example for students through their choice of footwear. For example, staff should model equivalent footwear in classes where students have been instructed to wear specific footwear. Principals and staff should discuss the following:

- the importance of setting an example for the students;
- promotion of the safety aspects of shoe choice in the school environment;
- mandating particular types of footwear for high risk activities and environments based on a risk assessment.

Specific activities requiring particular footwear
For some staff, such as school maintenance contractors, wearing enclosed leather footwear throughout the working day is important. The activities undertaken in these kinds of roles mean these staff members need footwear that will assist in preventing slips, trips and falls or protect their feet from falling objects.

Areas where enclosed leather footwear (or other material confirmed by the manufacturer to be suitable, refer to Australian / NZ Standard 2210: Safety Protective and Occupational Footwear) is required are:
• Industrial Arts and trades workshops
• Science laboratories
• Canteen or Food Technology (Kitchen) areas

Sandals, open footwear or high heeled shoes are not permitted in these areas. If students present for a class or activity with inappropriate footwear the student should be offered alternative educational activities until they are wearing appropriate footwear.

Appropriate safe footwear may also be identified as a requirement in relation to other areas or activities such as classrooms, playgrounds and sporting fields and where floors cannot always be kept dry or clean, so a slip resistant shoe may be required.

**Working on non DSS sites**
In addition, other sites on which a school from time to time conduct activities may have specific requirements which should be adhered to, for example some excursion locations and camps. Please liaise with the provider to identify appropriate footwear recommendations.

**Principals’ responsibility**
School principals as workplace managers, are responsible for ensuring procedures are in place to maintain a safe work environment in accordance with the DSS, Work Health and Safety Policy.

In accordance with current WHS legislation, Principals have the authority to require that staff and students wear shoes that are appropriate to ensure work health and safety for the planned activity and to determine types of footwear that meet that test. This includes identified school activities and excursions.

**RELATED DOCUMENTS**
DSS Work Health and Safety Policy
Code of Conduct

**POLICY REVIEW**
This policy will be reviewed not less frequently than once every five years.

**POLICY DATES**
Policy date of completion of formulation and adoption: June 2015
Date of current edition of policy: June 2015
Date of next review: June 2020

authorised by
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