

Health & Safety Fact Sheet

Footwear and Safety at Work

Footwear is essential to the protection of feet against health and safety hazards encountered everyday – not just at work.

Teaching and learning environments in departmental workplaces such as classrooms, kitchens, laboratories, workshops, playgrounds and sporting fields present a range of hazards that may not be encountered in the regular office environment.

Injuries to the feet and ankles include:

Fractures, sprains and strains, crush injuries, cuts and abrasions and burns.

While some tasks require protective footwear due to the inherent risks of the activity, **all** workers should consider the tasks they will undertake during the day and whether their footwear is appropriate. Consideration is to be given to the activities they will be doing during the day and where they will be performing those activities to ensure appropriate footwear is worn to protect the feet and minimise risk of injury. Activities may include:

- traversing uneven ground and loose surfaces (e.g. playground duty)
- entering an Industrial Design and Technology workshops
- supervising sport
- manual tasks e.g. cleaning
- carrying items up and down stairs.

To further prevent slips trips and falls due to footwear, shoes with the following characteristics: slippery soles, poorly secured shoes (e.g. thongs or ill-fitting sandals/scuffs), loose soles or laces or unstable heels should be avoided.

School Specific Information

The uniform for each school is agreed upon in consultation with the school community and it is a reasonable expectation that all staff support their school's uniform policy. Staff can set a positive example for students through their appearance and attire. For example, staff should model equivalent clothing and 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.

Further Information:

Student Dress Code -

<http://ppr.det.qld.gov.au/education/management/Pages/Student-Dress-Code.aspx>