Dear Parents / Caregivers

Like all work places schools are governed by the NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000, Australian / NZ Standard 2012: Safety Protective and Occupational Footwear, and the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation 2001. The Department Education and Communities have directed Principals to ensure that procedures are in place to maintain a safe work environment in accordance with OHS legislation. Principals are required to ensure that staff and students wear shoes that are appropriate to ensure occupational health and safety for any school activity. This specifically mandates the wearing of fully enclosed leather shoes for all students currently studying any Science, Technical and Applied Studies and Visual Arts subjects.

Specific references to mandatory documents are as follows

**Chemical Safety in Schools; section 1.9.1.6 Protective Equipment – Footwear**

“Footwear is an important safety item. Good soles provide a sound grip on the floor preventing accidents from occurring. Footwear can also protect feet from mechanical or chemical damage. **It is mandatory that students carrying out practical activities using chemicals or equipment in schools wear enclosed leather footwear.** Sandals, open footwear or high heeled shoes must not be worn in workshop areas or laboratories.”

**Science**

“Footwear with a stout sole and firm leather uppers provides best protection to students and staff in science. Because hot liquid can enter and be retained by footwear, the footwear chosen should be capable of quick removal. Thongs, open type sandals or shoes, canvas type shoes and/or gym boots must not be worn in practical classes where there is the possibility of injury through spillage of hot or corrosive liquids”.

(https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/assetmanagement/chemicals/section3/322.htm#e1)

**Technical and Applied Studies and Visual Arts**

“Substantial footwear appropriate to a practical activity should be worn. Footwear such as thongs, open weave type shoes, or shoes with openings at toes or heels, platform or high-heel shoes should not be worn in areas which present hazardous situations. Where indicated by a risk assessment, the wearing of safety footwear is mandatory”.


Students will therefore be unable to participate in practical lessons unless they are wearing the appropriate footwear. This will, in practical subjects, prevent the achievement of subject outcomes and could prejudice the awards of external credentials such as the ROSA and HSC.

The current school uniform policy states that **fully enclosed black leather school shoes**. (should fully cover the instep and extend up to the ankle) are the endorsed uniform for the school. This decision was posted in the school bulletin, on the school Facebook page and school website.

Any parents who can demonstrate financial hardship may be eligible for assistance and need to contact the school to discuss their concerns with the Principal.

If any parent wishes clarification of this information please contact Ms Elaine Sadler (HT Science).

Thanking you in anticipation of your support.

Mr R. Nesbitt
Principal