



WORKING OUTDOORS POLICY

College Statement	<p><i>Brigidine College Indooroopilly is a Kildare Ministries Independent Catholic Girls Secondary College for students from Year 7 to Year 12. The College is committed to the Brigidine vision of transformation of society through faith and education. It has a proven record of providing quality and affordable education for the empowerment of young women. The College strives, in the spirit of Brigid, to build a true community of students, parents and teachers, reflecting gospel values. The College motto, Fortiter et Suaviter (Strength and Gentleness) is lived daily in all interactions. There is emphasis on the individual and the common good in all aspects of College life.</i></p>		
Date Approved	2019	Policy Owner	Brendan Cahill
Next Review Due	2022	Author	Jackie Wood
Scope	<p>Employees (including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual), contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience and/or vocational placement. This document is also recommended to other members of our community such as parents and guardians.</p> <p>This Policy applies to all College activities, both on and off campus.</p>		
References	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worksafe QLD Sun Safety • Sun Safety in the Workplace Tool Box Talk 2019 • Work Health Safety Policy • Watch SafeWork South Australia’s film on <u>heat awareness</u>. • Outdoor Activities Policy – Students • Excursions Procedures/Risk Assessments • Check weather warnings at <u>www.bom.gov.au</u> 		
Contact	office@brigidine.qld.edu.au		



1. Purpose

Brigidine College aims to provide a safe environment where employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors can conduct their activities free from the risk of injury or illness.

Brisbane has a subtropical climate, with mild average temperatures and days that are mostly sunny. On occasion however, there are severe weather conditions which may be accompanied by damaging winds, hail and torrential rain. Most College activities are conducted on-campus or in locations around the Brisbane area. Some of these activities are conducted outside. In order to provide a safe working environment, all workers are required to comply with the directives contained within this Policy. Much of this policy is focussed on working in hot weather, which is necessary as the vast majority of activities are conducted in this environment.

Where activities are conducted outside of the Brisbane region, the climate and weather conditions may be significantly different to normal working conditions in the Brisbane region. For example, a camp to the tropical northern parts of Australia, a snow-skiing trip or travelling overseas. In these cases, it is important to ensure that a risk assessment is completed as part of the activity planning process. This must include conducting a risk assessment on the expected weather conditions (including pollution levels and reflective UV radiation) and making plans for inclement weather events.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

The College has a duty of care to, as far as practicable, provide a safe workplace for employees.

While at work, all employees must:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety; and
- take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons; and
- comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with any reasonable instruction that is given by the College; and
- co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure of the College.

Teaching/Coaching employees are responsible for ensuring that students comply with the Outdoor Activities Policy – Students.

Supervisors and Leaders are responsible for ensuring that this policy is complied with.



3. Controlling Exposure to Ultraviolet Radiation

All persons within the scope of this policy are required to limit as far as practicable their exposure to UV radiation. Ways of controlling exposure include:

- working in shaded areas or temporary shade
- where possible move jobs to shaded areas, particularly when UV radiation levels are strongest eg. In the middle of the day, between 10am and 3pm
- having rest or meal breaks in indoor areas or shaded outdoor areas
- rotating between indoor, shaded and outdoor tasks to avoid exposure to solar UV radiation for long periods of time
- being aware of the daily UV index (eg SunSmart app)
- effectively utilising personal protective equipment (PPE), including sunscreen, hats, umbrellas, sunglasses/goggles

4. Personal Protective Equipment

Personal protective equipment (PPE) is clothing or equipment designed to be worn by a person in order to protect them from the risk of injury or illness. To ensure PPE continues to minimise any potential risk for the worker, PPE must be maintained, repaired or replaced and stored correctly. This includes making sure it is clean, hygienic and in good working order.

Employees have a responsibility to correctly care for PPE provided to them. Where items of PPE are worn or damaged, an employee is to contact their supervisor/manager in order to obtain new items. Where damage or loss of items occurs through employee negligence (eg continually losing sunglasses), employees may be required to pay for replacement items.

Note: it is not a requirement to wear PPE i.e. hats/use umbrellas for 'incidental walking'. Incidental walking means walking between buildings or to and from classes. This does not apply to Maintenance workers.

Workers who are on yard duty, conducting outdoor classes, coaching, or who conduct the majority of their work outdoors are required to wear PPE at all times while working outdoors.

4.1 Sun-Smart Clothing, Umbrellas and Sunglasses

UPF stands for Ultraviolet Protection Factor and was created specifically for sun protective fabrics. Garments that have a rating of UPF 50+ allows less than 1/50th of the UV radiation falling on the surface of the garment to pass through it, providing excellent sun protection.



Maintenance Workers

The College shall provide maintenance workers with a range of clothing, hats and sunglasses which must be worn at all times while working. These will be replaced on fair wear and tear. Maintenance workers should discuss replacement items with their supervisor/manager. Clothing features that provide protection from UVR include:

- dark coloured fabrics that inhibit UV light penetration
- close weave fabrics
- long sleeves, collar and long loose trousers

Other Workers

It is highly recommended that individuals wear clothing which will protect them from UVR penetration as outlined above (eg. shirts with longer sleeves, collars, close weave and darker colours).

Hats

PE and Sports Coaches will be provided with appropriate UPF 50 hats which they are required to wear while working outdoors.

'Pool' hats are available from St Brigid's and should be returned there for laundering after wearing. These may be worn by those undertaking yard duty or attending excursions or if a hat has been left at home.

Should an individual choose to wear their own hat, they must ensure that it has a UPF 50 rating, a broad brim (10-12 cms) or has a flap at the back to shade the face and back of the neck, it should also be of close weave and should not have white lining as it will reflect UVR.

Sunglasses

Sunglasses are provided for maintenance workers.

Other workers are required to provide their own sunglasses. It is recommended that a wrap-around style conforming to AS/NZS 1067:2003 is best as it will reduce UVR entering the eye from the side of the face.

Check the UV protection rating. Some sunglasses can be labelled with an eye protection factor (EPF). This is a scale from 1 to 10 which indicates how well a lens blocks UV radiation. If a lens has been tested, it should have an EPF on the label. Sunglasses with an EPF of 9 and 10 provide the best protection.

Safety glasses can provide good UV protection but require tinting for use outdoors. Polarised lenses reduce glare, which is reflected visible light and makes it easier to see on a sunny day – however, this doesn't increase the EPF.

Note: Appropriate sunglasses/goggles will also be required to undertake any snow-based activities. Refer to the event organiser for additional information.



UPF Umbrellas

Individuals who do not wish to wear a hat are able to utilise an umbrella to shield them from the sun. The umbrella must be made of UPF50 fabric.

Umbrella Safety Tips

- Only open umbrellas outdoors or in outdoor areas which are under cover eg a veranda
- Look around to ensure that the umbrella will not connect with a person or object upon opening
- When walking with an umbrella, ensure that the spokes will not come into contact with a person or object. Move the umbrella up or down as required to avoid contact
- When closing an umbrella, ensure that it is securely contained
- Should the umbrella be wet, please ensure that any water which has fallen from the umbrella to the floor is dried up to prevent a slip hazard
- Reconsider the use of an umbrella in hazardous weather conditions, eg extreme wind or storms
- Store the umbrella securely

Sunscreen

Broad-spectrum, SPF30+ water resistant sunscreen shall be provided by the College and will be situated in various locations around the College. Sporting kit bags should also contain appropriate sunscreen which is to be available for use.

All workers undertaking outdoor work must apply sunscreen prior to commencing outdoor work activities, this includes maintenance work, yard duty and sporting/recreational/excursion-based activities.

Should you have any special needs in relation to the type of sunscreen provided (eg allergy to specific types of sunscreen), please contact your supervisor/manager to discuss alternatives.

Tips for the use of sunscreen

- apply liberally before going outside, about a teaspoon per limb and half a teaspoon to the face and neck
- reapply sunscreen at least every two hours

5. Hydration

Employees are strongly encouraged to maintain appropriate hydration levels every day. Drinking water is recommended over other beverages. Additional hydration is highly recommended during times of extreme heat or while undertaking strenuous activities such as, but not limited to, working activities, excursions, and other physical activities, even if these activities are conducted in the water or snow.

Should an employee have any condition which may make them more vulnerable to heat related illness, please ensure that a suitable plan is in place to reduce the likelihood of any adverse event. The College and work colleagues may be notified of what to look out for and what actions to take.

6. Heat Related Illness

Heat-related illness is very serious and can be fatal, but most importantly, is preventable. Heat illnesses occur when the body absorbs more heat from the environment than the body can physically get rid of through perspiration or other cooling mechanisms. Some reasons why workers may experience heat-related illness are:

- if they are exposed to direct sunlight, especially during the hottest parts of the day with no shade relief
- if they are carrying out strenuous tasks or work for sustained long periods in hot conditions
- if they are exposed to reflected heat from construction materials, polished aluminium and glass, or heat build-up in roads and concrete structures
- if they are exposed to additional heat (eg. from machinery)

Other factors that may contribute to heat-related problems at work include:

- inadequate cooling off or rest periods and insufficient water consumption
- climatic conditions (low air movement, high humidity, high air temperature and high radiant heat)
- inappropriate clothing (non-breathable materials)
- individual medication that may affect the body's temperature regulation
- things that may cause dehydration such as poor diet, vomiting, diarrhoea or excessive alcohol and caffeine consumption
- individual medical conditions such as heart problems, diabetes and hypertension
- increasing age, poor general physical fitness or being overweight
- new workers that are not acclimatised or workers who underestimate risks
- workers not recognising symptoms of heat related illness.

There are a range of medical conditions that can arise when the body is unable to cope properly with working in the heat. Heat illness can occur if the individual starts:

- vomiting or feels nauseous
- feeling dizzy or weak
- feeling clumsy, light-headed and/or faints

Heat stroke

Heat stroke can be life-threatening and requires immediate first aid and medical attention. Signs and symptoms to look out for include:

- a high body temperature of 40°C
- flushed and dry skin
- a pounding, rapid pulse



Heat stress

Heat stress can be caused by physical exertion outdoors in hot weather or by working in hot and cramped work areas that have poor ventilation. Symptoms to be on the lookout include:

- pale, cool, clammy skin
- rapid breathing and shortness of breath
- a rapid or weak pulse

Heat discomfort

The more common outcome of living in a hot country like Australia is to experience heat discomfort. This is what many people feel when it is hot, although, unlike heat illness and stroke, it is not a medical condition and isn't considered a risk to health.

Those who work in office-type environments or do minimal physical work are unlikely to suffer from a heat illness. What they experience as a result of higher temperature and increased humidity is most likely heat discomfort.

There are several simple solutions that office environments and other indoor areas can do to properly manage heat discomfort such as:

- increasing air movement
- providing access to cool water
- providing air conditioning (if practical)
- wearing suitable light and loose-fitting clothing

The following general conditions are considered to be comfortable for people working indoors and doing light work and include:

- keeping the air temperature between 23°C and 26°C
- maintaining a relative humidity of 30 to 60 percent
- Plan ahead and ensure all necessary measures for preventing heat illnesses can be implemented when hot weather is predicted. Doing so will ensure the safety and well-being of your workers

Working in the Wind and/or Rain

Working in the wind and/or rain creates a number of hazards, including but not limited to:

- Objects falling from heights
- Being struck by an object which has been lifted and moved by the wind
- Eye injuries caused by flying dust and debris
- Equipment damage
- Dropped loads
- Inability to see clearly in the rain
- Structures tipping over or collapsing
- Overhead powerline movement
- Slips, trips and falls



Eliminating/Mitigating Hazards due to Wind and/or Rain

- Cease work tasks that are hazardous due to the wind and/or rain
- Re-assess PPE required for the task
- Ensure machinery and equipment is parked and/or stored in a safe location
- Avoid reaching for dropping objects as this may result in slips, falls, strains and sprains
- Ensure construction sites/materials and equipment are adequately secured
- Seeking shelter and do not go outside until the wind/rain eases
- Turning off power if required

Working in the Cold

Prolonged exposure to cold can result in hypothermia, a serious condition that requires immediate medical attention. This risk may be eliminated or mitigated by:

- providing heating
- providing protection or working indoors
- providing appropriate PPE
- enabling workers who are not used to working in cold conditions to acclimatise

Should an employee have a condition which may make them more vulnerable to being negatively impacted by extreme cold, please ensure that a suitable plan is in place to reduce the likelihood of any adverse event. The worker may also notify the College or your work colleagues of what to look out for and what actions to take.

Revision History

Document Number	Date	Revision Description	Approval
Version 1	July 2019	Original Version	21 August 2019

Note: Printed copies are uncontrolled

END OF POLICY