

# School uniforms and dress code - policy

Read this document with the Sun safety in schools policy.

## Policy

All Northern Territory (NT) Government schools must develop a school dress code in line with this policy and in consultation with the school community on the template provided.

It is compulsory for all students from Transition to Year 12 (T-12), enrolled in an NT Government school, to wear a school uniform whilst attending school and official school activities, both during and after school hours.

Schools must ensure that all families can access affordable school uniform options, including non-branded alternative school bottoms such as shorts, skirts or pants purchased through the school or from other retailers.

All school dress codes must align with the Sun safety in schools policy, and must consider health and safety requirements, such as enclosed footwear and appropriate clothing for educational activities such as physical education, science and technical studies.

## Purpose

The compulsory requirement for students to wear a uniform aims to promote a positive school identity and a safe, inclusive learning environment. The adoption of sun smart uniforms should be made in order to align with the department's Sun safety in schools policy.

## Scope

This policy applies to all NT Government schools and students in Years T-12.

This policy does not apply to:

- distance learning schools and students
- school staff
- NT Government preschool students.

Whilst school uniforms are not compulsory for NT Government preschools, principals are encouraged to consult with their preschool community regarding any proposed implementation of a school uniform. Preschool students are required to adhere to their school's dress code.

## Compulsory school uniform items

Compulsory school uniform items must be clearly described in the school's dress code.

Where a student's clothing or footwear presents a health or safety risk, schools must take reasonable steps to support the student to participate safely in learning activities.

When prescribing a school uniform or dress code, schools must ensure that uniform requirements support student safety, wellbeing and inclusion. This includes meeting Work Health and Safety obligations and aligning with SunSmart principles.

## Optional school uniforms items

Optional school uniform items must be clearly described in dress codes. This may include items such as, shorts, skirts, pants, jumpers, hair ties or sport shirts.

## Support parents to purchase uniforms

Schools must implement equitable support measures to ensure all families can access compulsory school uniforms. This includes providing affordable uniform options, such as non-branded alternative school bottoms.

Support measures may include offering second hand uniforms at a discounted price or allowing families to pay for uniforms in instalments. Principals may also provide flexible payment arrangements where appropriate.

The \$200 Back-to-school entitlement may also be used to purchase school uniforms.

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Principals

Principals are responsible for:

- developing, reviewing and communicating a dress code for their school, in consultation with their school communities
- implementing support measures to assist parents in purchasing uniforms for their children
- ensuring students and families are supported to understand and adapt to any changes to the school's dress code or uniform requirements, including providing clear communication and reasonable transition arrangements
- implementing measures to manage student non-compliance with a dress code
- ensuring that the compulsory school uniform aligns with the department's Sun safety in schools' policy, SunSmart measures provided by the Cancer Council NT, and the *Work Health and Safety Act (2011)*.

## Definitions

Term	Definition
Parent	A child's father, mother or any other person who has parental responsibility for that child, including a person who is regarded as a parent of the child under

Term	Definition
	Aboriginal customary law or tradition. The definition of a parent does not include a person standing in place of the parent on a temporary basis.
School communities	Principals, staff, students, school representative bodies, parents and community members with an interest in the efficient and successful operation of a school.
School uniform	Clothing that identifies a student as belonging to a particular school.
Sun Smart behaviour	<p>The understanding and practice of procedures which help to reduce the harmful risks associated with too much UV, including sunburn and skin cancer. Sun Smart behaviours include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sun protective hat: a wide brimmed hat that shades the head, face, neck and ears</li> <li>• sun protective uniform or clothing: includes cool, loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as practical and has a densely woven fabric</li> <li>• sunscreen: SPF30 or higher broad-spectrum, water resistant sunscreen</li> <li>• sunglasses: wrap around style labelled AS1067</li> <li>• shade: built, natural or portable that creates densely shaded areas.</li> </ul>

## Related Legislation, policy and resources

### Legislation

Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 -

<https://legislation.nt.gov.au/en/Legislation/WORK-HEALTH-AND-SAFETY-NATIONAL-UNIFORM-LEGISLATION-ACT-2011>

### Policy

Sun safety in schools policy - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/health-safety/health-of-students#sun-safety-in-schools>

Complaints management in school policy and guidelines - <https://education.nt.gov.au/policies/complaints>

### Resources

Back to school payment scheme - <https://nt.gov.au/learning/student-financial-help-and-scholarships/back-to-school-payment-scheme>

Cancer Council - National SunSmart Schools Program - <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/be-sunsmart/sunsmart-in-schools>

Cancer Council - Sun protective clothing - <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/be-sunsmart/sun-protective-clothing>

Cancer Council – SunSmart status and recognition for primary schools –

<https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/sun-safety/be-sunsmart/sunsmart-in-schools>

Acronyms	Full form
AS1067	Australian Standards for sunglasses and fashion spectacles
NT	Northern Territory
SPF	Sun protection factor
UV	Ultraviolet

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Version	Date	Author	Changes made
2.0	July 2009	Schools Policy and Operations	EDOC2018/98749
2.1	October 2015	School Support Services	EDOC2015/24708
2.2	April 2016	Quality Systems and Support	EDOC2016/10999
2.3	October 2022	Quality Standards and Regulation – Operational Policy	Administrative amendments to align roles and responsibilities to the structural alignment in effect from 1 July 2022, including NTG template and minor formatting 50:D22:88337
2.4	May 2026	School Operations	Compulsory school uniforms for T-12, alternative school bottoms, updated to new NTG template and minor formatting