

St. John the Baptist Parish School Occupational Health and Safety Policy

RATIONALE

At St. John the Baptist Primary School we are committed to providing a safe working environment for staff, students and visitors. It is the policy of St. John the Baptist School to make every reasonable effort to prevent accidents, protect employees, clients and visitors from injury and promote the health, safety and welfare of all employees, students, parents, contractors and other visitors to the site.

1. Legislative Framework

The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic.) prescribes a number of measures designed to minimise industrial accidents and work-related illnesses. Among other things it imposes a general duty on an employer to provide and maintain, so far as reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risk to health. It also imposes an obligation on the occupier of the workplace to take such measures as are reasonably practicable to ensure that the workplace, and the means of access to and egress from it are safe and without risk to health.

Section 21 of the Act lists the duties of the employer to its employees. In a school, the principal has the primary responsibility for providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for employees. A safe and healthy workplace includes:

- maintaining safe systems of work
- maintaining safe plant and facilities
- safe use, handling and storage of plant and substances
- employing or engaging suitably qualified person(s) to provide specific advice regarding health and safety
- monitoring conditions in workplaces
- providing adequate information, instruction, training and supervision
- enabling employees to perform their work in a manner that is safe and without risk to health.

Employers need to keep an Incident Report Book to keep track of all workplace injuries. This book should contain details of any incidents. More information regarding safety obligations are outlined in Accident and Safety Legislation.

Section 21(3) of the Act classifies independent contractors and employees of independent contractors as employees for the purpose of section 21 of the Act.

Section 23 of the Act describes the duties of employers to non-employees. Accordingly students and visitors who are in the workplace are not to be exposed to risks to their safety and health.

The Management Representative of this Policy is the School Principal supported by the Deputy Principal and the Occupational Health and Safety Leader.

Employer Responsibilities

The responsibility is as follows:-

- Provide and maintain, so far as practicable for employees, a working environment that is safe and without risk to health

From 1 January 2006 all school Principals have a legal obligation under the OH&S Act to consult employees and the HSR when

- Making decisions about procedures for
 - consulting employees
 - resolving health and safety issues
 - monitoring workplace conditions
 - providing information and training
 - Identifying and assessing risks
- Making decisions about controlling risks.
- Making decisions about staff facilities, eg. staff room.
- Determining membership of health and safety committees.
- Proposing changes that may affect health and safety.

The Act does not specify how this consultation must take place or the precise timing of that consultation, other than it must occur when the above matters arise. At St John the Baptist Primary school consultation will occur during regularly scheduled, formally minuted staff meetings.

Responsibilities of Employees

All employees have the responsibility to:

- Be responsible for their own health and safety and for the health and safety of anyone else who may be affected by his or her acts or omissions at the workplace;
- Adhere to safe work procedures, instructions and rules;
- Co-operate with the employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with any requirement imposed by or under the Act;
- Not wilfully or recklessly interfere or misuse anything provided in the interests of health and safety of any other person in the workforce.
- Report hazards to leadership (see appendix one)

The Tobacco Act Amendment

From 13 April 2015, under an amendment to the Tobacco Act 1987 (Vic.) smoking is banned outdoors within 10 meters of playgrounds and skate parks, sporting venues during under 18s events and within public swimming pool grounds. As well as within school grounds, or within four meters of an entrance to, all primary and secondary schools in Victorian has been banned. It is a legislative requirement that each school installs suitable 'No smoking' signs at all entrances to the school premises.

2. Additional Safety Policies and Procedures in Place

To achieve a healthy working environment, St. John the Baptist School has in place many policies and procedures which should be consulted and enacted (in additional to this document) to ensure that the workplace remains safe.

These procedures include (but are not limited to):

- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Asthma Policy
- Anti – Bullying Policy (Staff)
- Camp Policy
- Child Safety Policy
- Critical Incidents Policy
- Day Excursion Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Displan, Evacuation and Containment policies.
- School Safety, Wellbeing, Pastoral Care and Bullying Policies.
- eLearning Policy.
- Sun Smart Policy.
- Discrimination Free Workplace and Complaints Handling Procedures.
- Resolution of Disputes Procedures.
- Playground Equipment Standards.

3. Specific Policies and Procedures

a. Chemical Management

Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) will be available for all potentially hazardous chemical substances stored on the premises. A copy of the MSDS will be stored with the substance, and a master list will be maintained in the office.

Staff members must only use cleaning products supplied by the school, and are required to store such products out of the reach of children, and accompanied by the relevant MSDS.

School cleaners, office staff and maintenance staff will maintain MSDS registers for their supplies, and are responsible for keeping potentially hazardous substances out of the reach of children.

b. Children with Chronic Illnesses

A file is kept in the sick bay with the names of children suffering from chronic illnesses and their appropriate treatment. This file is upgraded annually or as required.

Children with life threatening conditions (including, but not limited to anaphylaxis) have action plans, including photographs, displayed in the first aid room.

The preparation of a procedure for each known anticipated crisis situation has been developed in collaboration with the parent or guardian, and with the relevant local medical/specialist services prior to enrolment. The procedure is reviewed annually.

c. Classroom Safety

Items in classrooms should generally be stored below head height. Displays in classrooms should not require the use of a ladder to mount. A two platform step ladder is acceptable, and will be supplied by the school. Under no circumstances should any person stand on chairs or tables for the purposes of reaching.

For safety in creative arts areas, it is important that:

- The work areas are adequately ventilated and kept clean.
- Protective clothing is worn by students.
- Washing facilities for students are available.
- There is an awareness that some materials can be potentially dangerous to the health and safety of students.
- Primary students are not permitted to use epoxy glues.

- Sharp cutting implements, i.e. Stanley Knives, are only to be used by students

d. Dead or Dying Trees

Trees within the school grounds are to be inspected annually by an arborist. If a tree appears to be unsafe, an additional inspection may be arranged.

Potentially dangerous, dead or dying trees on the school site are to be removed. Small trees may be removed by school maintenance staff, but tree-loppers must be employed for large trees.

e. Drop off and Pick up / Vehicle Access

Students are to be dropped off and picked up from the lower car park. Staff will supervise drop off and pick up to ensure traffic directions are followed. One staff member supervises drop off, and three staff members supervise pick up.

Vehicles are denied access to school playgrounds during school hours unless escorted.

At after school pick up, hurdles are used to divide the car park so that parents must enter and exit from the same street.

On the Selwyn Avenue side parents must park their car in designated bays, and walk to collect their child. Children are not permitted to cross the car park without an adult.

On the Forest Road side, parents may park in designated bays, and walk to collect their child. Children are not permitted to cross the car park without an adult. They may also remain in their car and line up along the North side of the car park and collect children without parking.

f. Electrical Testing and Tagging

A qualified contractor will test all electrical items used within the school every 12 months. Staff members who bring personal equipment to school must have it assessed by the school's contractor on the same day as all other equipment.

g. First Aid

The First Aid room is located in the main administration building. It is the responsibility of administration staff to maintain stocks of necessary materials (bandages, ice-packs etc) as well as records of all treatment administered.

First aid kits are available for use on camp and excursions. It is the responsibility of the supervising teacher to bring appropriate first aid supplies. See the Camp Policy and Day Excursion Policy for more details.

h. Footwear Policy

Staff members must wear shoes which are safe and appropriate for the tasks undertaken.

For yard duty staff must wear supportive shoes with good grip so that they may move quickly when required.

It is acceptable for staff members to change shoes during the day in accordance with the requirements of their tasks.

i. Gas Cylinders

Gas cylinders (for example those used with a portable barbecue) must be stored in a secure location, not close to flammable materials. They should be stored upright, in a well ventilated area. The lockable storage shed should be used, unless other arrangements have been approved by the principal.

j. Hazard and Risk Identification and Management

Evaluation of risks about the school property is part of the continuing assessment of management responsibilities.

The Principal and/or Occupational Health and Safety Leader will conduct a walk through of the entire school at least twice each year to inspect for possible risks.

Staff members who notice risks or hazards in the course of their work must report these using the online reporting tool on the staff web portal.

The Occupational Health and Safety leader will raise OHS as an agenda item at each General Staff Meeting.

k. Managing Challenging or Aggressive Behaviour

(This section of the policy refers to the behaviour of adults, including staff, parents and visitors to the school. For policies and procedures regarding children, please see the separate Discipline Policy)

Physical violence, threats and verbal abuse are not tolerated at St John the Baptist Primary School. If a staff member feels threatened by another individual they should remove themselves from the situation as soon as possible. Incidents should be reported to the Principal and, if necessary, to the police.

To limit the risk, staff should never meet with parents unless another staff member is nearby.

In the case of a specific concern regarding an individual (for example a parent disputing custody) an action plan should be drawn up in consultation with the Principal and other interested parties.

I. Manual Handling

Improper lifting and carrying can cause significant injury. Heavy or bulky items must not be

- stored in restricted spaces (requiring twisting of the body)
- stored above shoulder height (requiring reaching)
- stored below mid thigh height (requiring stooping)
- filled with unbalanced contents
- carried over long distances

m. Notifiable Incident Reporting

Worksafe must be notified immediately (by calling 132 360) and then in writing within 48 hours for any of the following incidents:

- Death
- Incident requiring medical treatment by a doctor
- Incident requiring treatment as an in-patient in a hospital

Although it is unlikely to arise in the context of primary education, the following incidents must also be notified:

- Incidents involving high risk equipment or plant as listed in the Equipment (Public Safety) Regulations 2007
- Theft of explosives
- Injury caused by explosives
- Release of dangerous goods(e.g. gas leaks or spillage of liquids)

n. OHS Issue Resolution Procedure

Staff members who notice risks or hazards in the course of their work must report these using the online reporting tool on the staff web portal. The Occupational Health and Safety leader will raise OHS as an agenda item at each General Staff Meeting, and report on progress towards resolving concerns.

In the case of an employee being unsatisfied with the employer's response to their concerns, a special meeting should be convened with the employee, the principal and the HSR to discuss a plan of action.

If an issue is not resolved within a reasonable time (in this context, a reasonable time is what parties believe is reasonable in the circumstances), any of the parties attempting to resolve the issue may request that a WorkSafe Inspector attend the workplace to enquire into the issue.

See Appendix One.

o. Oral Medication

Unless alternative arrangements are made with the explicit permission of the Principal, medication is only to be administered by the office staff in the first aid room. Parents requiring children to receive medication at school must complete a Medical Permission Form.

Parents must supply medication in the original packaging. They must provide the name of the child, the dose and the time and manner in which the medication is to be administered. Medication should generally be provided each day, but the Principal may approve medication to be stored at school if it is to be taken on an ongoing basis.

It should be noted that substances prescribed for a particular child are retained solely for the use of that child and under no circumstances given to another.

p. Playground Equipment

Only approved playground equipment may be erected in school grounds. A full list of approved equipment is impracticable, but for general guidance the following have been approved: sandpits, slides, horizontal and vertical ladders, horizontal bars, gymnastic combinations, jungle gymnasiums, scrambling nets with frames, climbing ropes.

All fixed equipment should be erected in accordance with the requirements of Standards Australia. Its standards are recognised as national benchmarks for products and services available in Australia.

The main standards are:

AS 1924	Part 1	General Requirements
AS 1924	Part 2	Design and Construction
AS 2155		Siting, Installation and Maintenance
AS 2555		Supervised Adventure Playgrounds.

AS refers to Australian Standards.

It is the responsibility of the Principal to ensure that playground equipment is safe to use. It should be inspected regularly and repairs and maintenance done as necessary. The Principal may seek the assistance of the maintenance man in this task.

The following items should be checked:

- The base of equipment at ground level for rusting of pipes and exposure of concrete footings.

- Welded joints and equipment attachments for evidence of rusting.
- Wearing points, where pieces of the equipment are attached, eg. eyelets on climbing ropes.
- Weight-bearing joints, particularly in timber equipment.
- Under surfacing, to ensure it is loose and at an average depth of 20 cm.
- Exposed bolt ends and rail ends, to ensure they are properly recessed.
- Protruding rocks, bricks and rubble in mounds. These should be re-covered properly.
- Exposed concrete footings. These should be re-covered properly.
- Concrete pipes, for rough or broken edges and protruding rods. A pine log frame should be fitted to the ends of each pipe, to lessen the risk of serious head injuries.
- When weather conditions make equipment unsafe, its use should be prohibited.

The loose fill around playground equipment must be regularly raked into place to ensure a fill of around 300mm.

q. Slips, Trips and Falls

Floor areas and corridors are to be kept free of clutter. Schoolbags must be stored in cubby holes or hung on hooks.

r. Working Alone

Staff who are on the premises alone must lock building doors. They must carry a mobile phone on their person. They should also (where reasonable) tell another person (such as a family member or friend) that they will be working at the school alone.

At the end of a school day staff will check out and will alert the final staff member on site if the second last member leaves. Unless the principal or their delegate gives explicit permission, staff members will not remain on the premises beyond 6pm.

Appendix One: OHS Reporting and Issue Resolution Procedure

An issue is identified by (or communicated to) any staff member

Issue is logged onto the reporting tool via the **web portal**.

The **OHS leader** and/or **Principal** plans a response.

Issue and response is communicated to staff at a general staff meeting.

Issue resolved?

Yes

Issue, response and consensus are **minuted**.

No

Issue is listed for next **general staff meeting**, and there is an attempt to reach consensus.

Issue resolved?

Yes

No

Request a **Worksafe Inspector** to investigate the issue.

1800 136 089

Appendix Two: OHS Induction Checklist (for new staff, visitors and contractors)

Name: _____ Date: _____

All Visitors, Staff and Contractors:

- I have been shown the location of staffroom, office, first aid room and toilet facilities.
- I am aware of the evacuation procedures and assembly points in case of emergency.
- I understand that the office can be contacted from any internal phone by dialling Administration or Principal.
- I am aware that I have a personal responsibility to monitor my own safety and report any hazards, accidents or near-misses to the office.

Teaching staff only:

- I have been given access to the school's Occupational Health and Safety Policy and I understand the school's protocols with regard to footwear, working alone, and classroom safety.

Signature: _____

**Evaluation:
History of Updates to Policy**

Date	Comment (e.g. major review, minor review)
January, 2018	Read as part of our staff welcome day to the new year
January, 2019	Read as part of our staff welcome day to the new year
January, 2020	Read as part of our staff welcome day to the new year