



WORK HEALTH & SAFETY POLICY

Scriptural Context

*“Help carry one another’s burdens and in this way you will obey the law of Christ.”
Galatians 6:2*

Rationale: St Patrick’s School is committed to provide a safe and secure environment for our staff, students and visitors.

Aim:

The purpose of this *Policy* is to establish a framework for the school all employees, students, volunteers and contractors, and for other persons with a legal right to be on premises controlled or managed by the school, to comply with the requirements of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011. Work, Health and Safety is the responsibility of everyone in the school community.

Definitions:

WHS; Work, Health and Safety.

PCBU; Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking.

HSC; Health and Safety Committee.

HSR; Health and Safety Representative

PEEP; Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan.

1. Consultation:

Under the Work, Health and Safety Act 2011 there are three options of consultation available in the workplace, the type of consultation selected should be chosen by the majority of employees in that workplace or in the case of a committee, if five or more members of staff request it. This process will take place at the very first staff meeting of the year as part of the agenda. The Options available are as follows;

1.1 Health and safety committees

Health and safety committees bring together workers and management to assist in the development and review of health and safety policies and procedures for the workplace.

The functions of the health and safety committee are:

- a) To facilitate co-operation between the school and workers in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure the health and safety of workers
- b) To assist in developing standards, rules and procedures relative to health and safety
- c) Such other functions prescribed by the regulations or agreed between the PCBU (includes employers) and the committee.

1.2 Health and safety representatives (HSRs)

1.2.1 The role of an HSR is to facilitate the flow of information about health and safety between the school and the workers or staff in the HSR's work group.

1.2.2 HSRs represent workers on health and safety matters through ongoing consultation and cooperation between workers of a work group and a PCBU.

1.2.3 The powers and functions of a HSR are to:

- a) Represent workers in a work group on work health and safety (WHS) matters
- b) Monitor WHS actions taken by the PCBU
- c) Investigate WHS complaints from workers of the work group
- d) Look into anything that might be a risk to the WHS of the workers they represent.

1.3 Other Agreed Arrangements

Other agreed arrangements are flexible alternatives for establishing agreed consultation arrangements that meet a particular schools needs and improve decision making. The school may require a mix of HSRs, HSCs and / or other agreed consultation arrangements tailored to suit the workers and the work environment.

Other agreed arrangements for consultation on health and safety matters could be through:

- a) Regular scheduled meetings
- b) Team/Staff meetings (where work health and safety is always a standing agenda item)
- c) One-off meetings
- d) Face to face discussions with leadership, HSR other relevant person
- e) Briefing sessions.

(For more detail see Diocesan Work Health and Safety Policy.)

2. Management of Risk

All employees of St Patrick's Primary School have a primary duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that staff, students and other persons at a workplace are not exposed to health and safety risks. This means that in every undertaking the school is involved in, risk management is to be of the utmost priority. Whenever it is reasonably practicable to do so, an online risk assessment should be completed for such undertakings.

2.1 Workplace facilities

A safe working environment and adequate facilities must be provided and maintained by the person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU), so far as is reasonably practicable.

This includes ensuring:

- a) Safe entry and exit to and from the workplace
- b) People can move about the workplace without risk to health and safety, under normal working conditions and in an emergency
- c) Sufficient work space for workers
- d) Suitable floor surfaces
- e) Sufficient lighting
- f) Adequate ventilation
- g) Adequate and accessible facilities for the welfare of workers such as toilets, drinking water, eating facilities, secure lockers
- h) Hot and cold environments do not put workers at risk.

2.1.1 When determining requirements for the working environment and the facilities to be provided, the PCBU should consider: a) The work being carried out b) The hazards c) The size, location and nature of the workplace d) The number and composition of the workers and other persons at the workplace.

2.2 Training and instruction

Suitable and adequate information, training and instruction, which is easily understood and necessary, should be provided to all workers by the school.

2.2.1 Information, training and instruction should relate to the:

- a) Nature of the work carried out by the worker
- b) Nature of the risks associated with the work at the time the information, training or instruction is provided
- c) Implemented control measures.

2.2.2 Induction training should be provided when a worker first starts at the workplace.

At a minimum, this should cover information and instructions on:

- a) Emergency procedures
- b) Amenity facilities
- c) First aid
- d) How to report a hazard or other safety issues
- e) How work health and safety is managed in the workplace
- f) The health and safety procedures and policies required for their tasks, such as manuals, safety data sheets, personal protective equipment etc.

2.2.3 The school will develop a WH&S plan that will cover all aspects of required training. See Appendix 1.

2.3 Emergency plans

An emergency plan must be prepared, maintained and implemented by the school for the workplace. See Emergency Management Plan.

2.3.1 The emergency plan must provide procedures including:

- a) An effective response to an emergency
- b) Lockdown procedures
- c) Evacuation procedures
- d) Notifying emergency service organisations promptly
- e) Medical treatment and assistance
- f) Effective communication between the authorised person who coordinates the emergency response and all persons at the workplace.
- g) A personal emergency evacuation plan or peep for any person with additional needs that is likely to be on school grounds in an emergency, including students.
- h) Testing of the emergency procedures, including the frequency of testing.
- i) Information, training and instruction to relevant workers in relation to implementing the emergency procedures.

2.4 First aid

First aid must be provided by the person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) and includes the following:

- a) The provision of first aid equipment
- b) That each staff member must have access to the equipment
- c) An adequate number of staff are trained to administer first aid or workers have access to an adequate number of people who have been trained to administer first aid
- d) Staff has access to facilities for the administration of first aid.

2.4.1 First aid requirements will vary from one workplace and work area to the next. In order to assess how to best provide for first aid in a workplace, a PCBU must consider all relevant factors including the:

- a) Nature of the work being carried out at the workplace
- b) Nature of the hazards at the workplace

3. Staff Bullying

Employers or PCBU's should actively encourage staff to speak out should they believe they are the victim of Staff Bullying. Staff should first speak to their assistant principals or principal regarding issues of Staff Bullying. Further advice is available from School Resource Services at the Catholic Schools Office. Staff should also access the CSO Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy on the CSO intranet. Staff maintain the legal right to report any Bullying directly to Fair Work Commission but are asked to follow the above procedure before doing so.

4. Managing risks to health and safety

Managing risks to health and safety is critical to ensuring a safe workplace. The first step in managing risks is to identify any reasonably foreseeable hazards. The second step is to eliminate those hazards so far as is reasonably practicable. If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk, then action must be taken to minimise that risk so far as is reasonably practicable. The school shall conduct WHS inspections once a semester. The WHS representative and Principal to evaluate the findings and minimize risks.

4.1 The school has a duty to manage risks to health and safety and this should involve consultation with workers. In addition, there are specific risk control measures required for some schools or campuses where activities including hazardous chemicals, plant, and/or construction.

4.2 The school must consider various control options and choose the control that most effectively eliminates the risk.

4.3 When a risk cannot be eliminated, the school must choose the control measures that most effectively minimises the risk. This may involve a single control measure or a combination of different controls that together provide the highest level of protection that is reasonably practicable.

4.4 The hierarchy of control measures that should be used to control a risk are:

- a) Substituting the hazard with something safer
- b) Isolating the hazard so a person is not exposed to the risk
- c) Implementing engineering controls
- d) Minimising the hazard using administrative controls
- e) The use of personal protective equipment.

4.5 The school must ensure that all control measures are effectively implemented and maintained in a way that ensures the risk is minimised.

4.6 Review the Purchasing and Procurement policies in relation to other goods, materials, and services purchased for or provided to the school workplace that may affect the health and safety of workers and/or other persons.

4.7 A school must review and, if necessary, implement changes to the control measures, especially when:

- a) The control measure is not effective in controlling the risk
- b) A change at the workplace is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk and the existing control measure may no longer effectively control the risk
- c) A new hazard or risk is identified
- d) The results of consultation indicate that a review is necessary
- e) A health and safety representative requests a review.

5. Visitors in the workplace

Visitors, parents, friends and family at a school have work health and safety responsibilities and must:

- a) Comply with any reasonable work health and safety instructions at the workplace
- b) Take reasonable care to not put themselves or others at risk.
- c) All parents and visitors to the school are to sign the *Who is on Location* on arrival and departure. This is kept in the administration office. A visitor lanyard is to be worn at all times whilst on school grounds.

5.1 Contractors/ Sub contractors/ Service providers. The school has the same WHS responsibilities to contractor and sub-contractors as it does to all other persons in the school. A Contractor Register is kept in the administration office to be signed on arrival and departure.

6. Work, Health, Safety and Students.

The Work, Health and Safety Act and regulations apply to all students in the schools of the Lismore Diocese. Policies and procedures have been developed that encompass this, including but not limited to:

- a) Establishing that students have a duty of care to each other.
- b) School sport
- c) Outside activities conducted in the name of the school
- d) Bullying, including cyber-bullying
- e) School camps and excursions

7. Employees Obligation

- a) All Employees have a duty of care to ensure the safety of themselves and others in the workplace.
- b) All Employees are obligated to report or make safe any hazard they are aware of in the workplace.
- c) All Employees are obligated to operate all plant and equipment in a safe manner and for the purpose and manner it was intended.
- d) All Employees are to be aware that they have a duty of care to the safety of students.

8. Employers Obligations

- a) Provide a healthy and safe workplace.
- b) Provide a framework for effective consultation between staff and leadership in all WHS matters. This should take the form of a Health and Safety Committee (HSC), a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) or other agreed arrangements. These arrangements, whichever are agreed upon in the school, will be documented.
- c) Work, Health and Safety is a standing item at all staff meetings. This will be minuted and accessible to all staff.
- d) Provide for and implement procedures for the health and safety of students in our schools. Risk assessments will be completed for all excursions and school sports. The school has and implements an anti- bullying policy.

Reflective Materials

- Diocesan Work, health & Safety Policy
- <https://safetynet.lism.catholic.edu.au/>
- Work, Health & Safety Act 2011
- Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures
- Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying in the Workplace Policy
- Visitor & Volunteer Policy
- Out of School Activities/Excursions Policy
- Private Transporting of Students Policy
- Canteen Policy
- Critical Incident Management Plan
- Electrical Policy
- Maintenance Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Digital Technologies User Agreement

This policy was last ratified by St. Patrick's School Board in....

2005
Reviewed in 2012
Reviewed in 2016
Reviewed in 2022