

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY



## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to show that Newmark Primary (the school) recognises its obligation to take all reasonable precautions to provide and maintain, so far as is practicable, a safe and healthy work environment.

The school accepts its responsibilities under the *Occupational Health & Safety Act (2004)* and will take all measures necessary to ensure adherence to safe work practices and conditions.

## GUIDELINES

To meet its obligations, the school will take all reasonable steps to:

- maintain safe and healthy working conditions;
- implement and monitor safety procedures across the school;
- promote workplace safety by education, information and instruction;
- encourage each person in the school to regard accident prevention as an individual responsibility;
- require all staff to apply the general safety rules of the school;
- require that every unsafe incident is reported and investigated, and ensure any action necessary to reduce further risk is implemented; and
- ensure that compliance with all relevant Acts Regulations and Codes of Practice is the minimum acceptable standard for the school.

## LEGAL AND REGULATORY BASIS FOR COMPLIANCE

- Occupational Health & Safety Act (2004)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards

## KEY DEFINITIONS

**Worksafe Victoria:** Victoria's workplace health and safety regulator. Worksafe Victoria is also the workplace injury insurer.

**Contractor:** A person, partnership, company or organisation which provides services under a contract with the school. This includes all subcontractors and their workers. Contractors may

include, but are not limited to: catering staff, cleaners, gardeners, tradespeople (e.g. plumbers, electricians and carpenters), bookkeepers, IT consultants, music tutors, sports coaches, construction or building workers.

**Visitor:** A member of the public who visits the school. Visitors may include, but are not limited to: parents/carers; prospective parents, students and employees; invited speakers and presenters; public officials; persons conducting businesses; health professionals; DFFH employees; auditors; Victoria police; WorkSafe Victoria inspectors.

**Volunteer:** A person who performs work without remuneration or reward from the school.

## SCOPE

The application of the policy is relevant to school staff, contractors, volunteers, visitors and students.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **school board** is responsible for:

- reviewing and endorsing the Occupational Health and Safety Policy.

The **principal, OHS committee and representative** are responsible for:

- developing and implementing the Occupational Health and Safety Policy and practices in the school;
- ensuring staff are aware of:
  - health and safety practices in the school,
  - how to report a hazard and/or accident,
  - how to access first aid in the case of an accident.
- notifying Worksafe Victoria of reportable incidents;
- ensuring incidents are properly documented and safely stored;
- ensuring contractors, visitors and volunteers understand the school's health and safety practices, in light of scope of work;
- ensuring the physical environment is safe from hazards, as much as practicable;
- engaging contractors to fix hazards, where applicable; and
- keeping the school's maintenance schedule up-to-date.

**Staff** are responsible for:

- knowing, implementing and following all health and safety procedures at the school;
- maximising their own health and safety at school;
- taking reasonable care of both their own wellbeing and those they work with, including students, visitors, volunteers and other staff members;
- reporting any safety hazards or concerns to a member of the OH&S committee; and
- participating in professional development in relation to health and safety policy and practices.

**Contractors, visitors and volunteers** are responsible for:

- following the health and safety procedures at the school, applicable to their scope of work;
- providing the school with insurance cover, where requested;
- participating in inductions and/or training, as required by the school;
- complying with the schools Contractors and Visitors Policy;
- complying with the schools Volunteers Policy;
- following the school's Emergency and Critical Incidents procedures;
- reporting any hazards or accidents to the principal (or delegate);
- securing the worksite to ensure the safety of all persons; and
- inform the school of risk management procedures prior to beginning at the school, where applicable.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### **OHS Committee and Representative**

The OH&S committee includes board members, lead team members and school staff. The committee meets once a term, and additional meetings may be called if required. The committee acts as a strategic health and safety body, and aims to facilitate measures that ensure the health and safety of all community members.

School staff select an OHS Representative annually. This staff member is part of the OHS committee, and assists with regular safety hazard walks in the school and management strategies.

### **Contractors**

Contractors must sign in and be inducted so that they understand the school's OH&S procedures and their impact on the work to be carried out. As a part of their induction, they must include required risk management documentation prior to beginning work and give evidence of their insurance cover and ability to complete the work required in a safe manner. They must report any hazards or accidents, and comply with the schools Contractors and Visitor Policy. Failure to comply or observe a direction of the school will be considered a breach of the contract and sufficient grounds for termination of the contract.

### **Visitors and Volunteers**

Visitors and volunteers must comply with the school's OH&S procedures, taking reasonable steps to keep themselves and others safe. Upon signing-in at the Front Office, all visitors and volunteers to the school are made aware of applicable emergency procedures in place. They must report any hazards or accidents and comply with the school's Volunteers Policy and Contractors and Visitors Policy, as applicable to their role. Failure to comply or observe a direction of the school, will result in the visitor or volunteer being asked to leave the school grounds.

### **Staff Training and Consultation**

According to Worksafe Victoria, the most common types of injuries and illnesses in schools can be summarised as psychological injuries and illnesses, and injuries resulting from manual handling and slips, trips and falls. Staff training will include, but is not limited to:

- online courses that are specific to position responsibilities, as requested by the school;

- periodic briefings on the school's health and safety practices; and
- periodic consultation with staff to better understand circumstances that contribute to the common injuries and illnesses in the school and possible controls;

### **Risk Management Plan**

The school uses an OHS Risk Management Plan as a way of assessing and controlling health and safety risks that are common in school environments, as much as practicable.

### **Reporting Health and Safety Hazards**

If a health or safety hazard is observed, the following steps must be taken:

- report the hazard or concern immediately to the principal or business manager; and/or
- log the hazard using the school's hazard reporting system.

Following a report, the following steps will be taken:

- The report will be discussed by members of the OH&S committee.
- An OH&S committee member will consult with the staff member who reported the hazard, if more information is required.
- The school will in no way discriminate against any staff member who reports a health or safety hazard.
- In cases where there is a dispute over the outcome of the report, the OH&S committee will convene a meeting to discuss resolutions.
- In cases where a health and safety inspector is required to attend a particular matter, the school will assist as required, actioning any notices issued by the inspector.

### **Reporting Health and Safety Incidents**

If a healthy or safety **incident occurs** during work hours, the following steps may be taken:

- Seek immediate assistance from the school's First Aid Officer if injured.
- Complete an incident report form (an incident report form should also be completed by the person who witnessed the incident).
- First Aid Officer records incidents in the Register of Injuries.
- A member of the OH&S committee is informed.
- The OH&S committee will:
  - assess if it is a reportable incident, using the Worksafe: Criteria for Notifiable Incidents;
  - ensure the incident scene is not be disturbed until after an inspector arrives, in cases where incidents are reportable;
  - call Worksafe to notify them of the incident;
  - send a written copy of the Incident Notification Form to Worksafe within 48 hours of the incident occurring; and
  - securely store a copy of the Incident Notification Form.
- To make a claim, staff can follow the steps outlined by Worksafe Vic <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/make-claim>

## RELATED POLICIES

- Contractors and Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Supervision Policy
- Outings, Camps and Events Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Infection Control Policy
- Anaphylaxis Management Policy
- Record Management Policy
- Privacy Policy

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Hazard forms
- First Aid Staff Training Register
- Risk Management Plan
- Worksafe Victoria: OHS in schools - A practical guide for school leaders
- DET: Health and Safety Training and Short Course Guide

## POLICY REVIEW

The school board and principal will review the Occupational Health and Safety Policy every second year, or following a major incident.

## ENDORSEMENT

Updated date	May 2023
Endorsed by	School Board
Endorsed on	May 2023