

# Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Policy

**Diggers Rest Primary School** recognises it has a responsibility to provide and maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to individual health and welfare. This responsibility extends to all employees, students, parents, contractors and other visitors to the school site.

School management is committed to providing a safe working environment through the implementation of risk prevention and reduction strategies that are integrated into all school activities. A Consultative, co-operative approach between employees and management on OHS issues will be encouraged.

This policy is consistent with:

- (a) the DE&T Mission Statement that schools provide a safe and appropriate teaching and learning environment for both staff and students and
- (b) the school's legal obligations under the Victorian OHS Act 1985 and Common Law duty of care.

## **Policy Objectives**

- to comply with OHS related legislation and DEET directives or guidelines relating to health and safety
- to minimise the occurrence of injury and illness in the school through systematic hazard identification, risk assessment and control
- to investigate accidents (including serious near misses) with a view to preventing recurrence
- to maintain written records on all OHS activities undertaken
- to implement staff health and wellbeing strategies
- to provide a Return to Work (RTW) program for employees in the event of injury or illness.

Adequate resources will be provided to support this policy.

## **Responsibilities**

As employers, the **Principal** and **School Council** have the direct responsibility for ensuring the policy objectives are fulfilled and that the necessary resources are provided to achieve effective implementation.

Employers' direct duties under the OHS Act also include:

- providing and maintaining safe plant and systems of work
- making arrangements for the safe use, handling, storage and transport of plant and substances
- maintaining the workplace in a safe and healthy condition
- providing adequate facilities for staff welfare
- providing such information, instruction, training and supervision to staff to enable them to perform their work in a safe and healthy manner.

## **Implementation**

1. The role of OHS Co-ordinator will be allocated to a senior member of the management team.
2. Relevant OHS responsibilities will be included in all job descriptions and responsibilities will be publicised at least annually. *(pp 15-19)\**
3. Staff will be encouraged to elect a staff Health and Safety Representative (HSR).
4. The elected HSR will be provided with training and practical support to fulfil his/her role effectively (as stipulated in the OHS Act) and will be consulted on changes in the school which may affect staff health, safety or wellbeing. *(p 20)*
5. OHS Issue Resolution Procedures will be developed in consultation with staff or their representatives and these will be documented and publicised in accordance with the OHS (Issue Resolution) Regulations 1999. *(Section 3, pp 54 and 57-59)*
6. OHS considerations will be integrated into the general management practices of the school for example:
  - purchasing guidelines
  - facilities design, upgrades and maintenance
  - contractor management *(p 69)*
  - staff welfare *(Section 6 and Appendix 4 and Health and Wellbeing Kit)*
  - professional development and induction procedures *(Section 4)*
  - staff allotment and timetabling
  - curriculum design *(p 89-90)*
  - program budgeting
7. Risk reduction will be a central goal of the school and the Risk Management program will aim to reduce both the frequency and severity of injury and illness arising from school activities through the implementation of:
  - regular evaluation of compliance with relevant OHS Regulations and DEET directives
  - formal processes for reporting, recording and investigating potential or actual hazards in both the physical environment and work practices
  - reporting and documenting of all injuries and incidents, including near misses
  - investigation of accidents and recording of outcomes
  - periodic analysis of records to identify incident patterns
  - scheduled and documented preventative maintenance programs for plant and equipment
  - provision of appropriate first aid facilities and trained personnel
  - emergency management procedures which are documented, publicised and practised
  - staff support programs
8. A Return to Work Co-ordinator (RTW) will be nominated and given appropriate training. RTW policy and procedures will be developed, documented and publicised. *(WorkCover Management Guide on EDULibrary)*
9. Effectiveness of implementation of the policy will be monitored informally on an ongoing basis and evaluated formally at least once a year.
10. OHS initiatives and performance will be included in the Annual Report.

***\*Unless otherwise stated the italicised brackets correspond to sections or pages in the DEET OHS Guidelines: Support Material for School (1994) to assist in implementation of the Policy. The manual is available in hard copy in schools or in EDULibrary.***

**Responsibility for Occupational Health and Safety has been assigned to .....**

(The Principal is the OHS management representative by default, however a management team member with appropriate seniority may be nominated by the Principal to act as the employer’s OHS representative in an operational capacity (ie. OHS Co-ordinator) but the overall responsibility cannot be delegated. The nominated OHS management representative may **not** also act in the role of elected staff Health and Safety Representative (HSR) as per *section 21 (4ca) OHS Act*).

**Unit Co-ordinators and/or Key Learning Area Co-ordinators** are responsible for the health and safety performance of their team. This responsibility extends to:

- maintaining the workplace in a safe condition and reporting any hazards identified
- actively promoting and implementing agreed OHS procedures
- identifying OHS training needs of both individual staff and the team as a whole.

**All staff** have a responsibility to

- take reasonable care of their own health and safety and the health and safety of others affected by their acts or omissions
- report hazards, accidents or incidents (near misses) in accordance with agreed school procedures
- follow established safe working procedures.

Diggers Rest Primary School is committed to ensuring this policy is publicised and implemented and will regularly monitor and review its effectiveness.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
President of School Council

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Review date/cycle \_\_\_\_\_