

Workplace Health & Safety Policy

Highfields State Secondary College is committed to providing and maintaining a safe working environment for all members of staff, students, school community and visitors. In accordance with legislation and Education Queensland's policy, procedures and guidelines, safety is managed through a variety of systems that include established procedures, audits, consultations and training.

Legislation

- Laws which govern workplace health and safety in Queensland include:
 - Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011
 - Workplace Health and Safety Regulations 2008
 - Workplace Health and Safety Codes of Practice
- Specific terms used in legislation, policy and procedures denote legislative or Department of Education levels of obligation determining compliance.

Must: denotes mandatory procedures

Should: denotes the preferred and strongly recommended procedures

May: denotes advice to assist in decision making

- The EPPR modules provide up-to-date information on compliance standards.
- The EPPR, WHS Act, WHS Regulations and other relevant documentation can be accessed via the internet or school administration.
- **All persons** have a **duty of care** to ensure the health and safety of themselves and others. Every person must perform their duties in a manner that ensures a safe and healthy environment for all.
- The statutory obligations under the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011 and the common-law duty of care apply to staff and others placed in a position of responsibility, including the supervision of students.

Responsibilities

Under the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011 all members of the school community are responsible for health and safety. The responsibility is proportional to the amount of control a person has over their environment and supervision of others.

Principal

The Principal is obliged to ensure the health and safety of each of their workers, themselves and all other persons entering the workplace. Under Common Law the Principal has a duty of care to provide: a safe place of work, a safe system of work, safe plant and equipment and competent staff.

Staff

All school staff has a duty of care to ensure the health and safety of students while on school premises or participating in official school activities. Departmental employees have an individual responsibility to perform their duties in a manner that ensures a safe and healthy environment for all, and to support management in promoting safe and healthy work practices. This includes assessing risk and minimising hazards, reporting incidents on the appropriate form, reporting incidents to the appropriate person as well as following up on actions taken, meeting the requirements of special needs groups, following employer instructions and behaviour management and supervision.

Workplace Health & Safety Committee

A Workplace Health and Safety Committee was reconstituted in February 2015 as one of the school's Strategic Program Committees proposing a 3-5 year plan to meet legislative and departmental requirements for providing and maintaining a safe workplace. The committee aims to foster consultative practices within the school and is a forum for workplace health and safety issues.

WHS Committee Members

Members of the committee include the Chairperson, Workplace Health & Safety Officers, the BSM and staff nominating themselves because of their particular interest in this area. Staff members are expected to make a commitment to this committee for a minimum of 12 months. Where staff members have been specially trained in the area of WH&S at the school's expense then there is an expectation that staff members would serve for several consecutive years.

The roles of this committee are operational and strategic in nature and include:

- Promoting co-operation in the interests of health and safety
- Encouraging an active interest in health and safety
- Providing advice and information to the Principal and staff
- Considering training and safety issues
- Conducting regular health and safety audits and inspections
- Investigating and reviewing accidents and hazards
- Assisting in the resolution of work and safety issues

Workplace Health and Safety Representatives

A number of staff will be elected to fulfil the role of WH&S Representative. These staff members represent the views of the wider staff across a variety of subject areas. Their position entitles them to access appropriate information and training, and to perform certain safety functions. The role includes: conducting regular health and safety inspections, reporting unsafe conditions to the WHSO, the Deputy Principal, or the WH&S Committee and to participate on the WH&S Committee.

Workplace Health and Safety Officers

A number of staff will be involved in the training to qualify as a Workplace Health and Safety Officer, after which time they receive a certificate and registration card. The number of Workplace Health and Safety Officers required at a workplace is determined by the number of staff working at the location. The role includes conducting assessments and making recommendations through the Deputy Principal.

Reporting Procedures

All Workplace Health and Safety issues can be reported to the WHSO, directly to the Deputy Principal or through the WHS Committee. If **immediate action or urgent attention is necessary** then the hazard or incident should be managed where possible by staff in the vicinity and **reported directly to the Deputy Principal** who will communicate issues to the Principal. As interested staff, members of the WHS Committee are a valuable and accessible link between the Deputy Principal and staff for matters of a non-urgent manner. WHSOs and administrative assistants are also a source of general information for reporting purposes. A data entry form for recording any Health and Safety Incident is available on One Portal. This form can be completed live on the system or printed off (refer to HLS-PR-005: Health and Safety Incident Reporting and Notification at <http://www.education.qld.gov.au/strategic/eppr/health/hispr005/>). The administration office will have multiple copies of this data entry form.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency Administrative staff must be informed immediately so that the appropriate services can be contacted and the correct procedures implemented.

Emergency, evacuation and lockdown procedures are updated at least once each year and distributed to all staff via staff intranet. It is important that staff read the procedures and familiarise themselves with their particular role in the event of emergency. Practice drills are held to establish familiarity with individual roles and to help expedite the process effectively and efficiently.

First Aid Procedures

Highfields State Secondary College has a number of trained First Aid Staff to assist with accidents and injuries. If involved in the offsite supervision (through sporting activities, excursions and camps) of students with identified high risk medical conditions at least one staff member is required to have a Senior First Aid Qualification. First aid kits, a first aid room and first aid staff are located in the Administration building and Resource Centre. First aid kits are also available for school excursions and activities. These can be obtained from Administration staff and must be signed out and signed in on return.

It is important that the First Aider adheres to infection control procedures and applies strict hygiene routines when dealing with accidents and injury to ensure the future safety of both themselves and their patient (e.g. rubber gloves, sterile dressings).

The law requires that all work caused illness, work injury and dangerous events be recorded appropriately (refer to previous reference about data entry form). All accidents and injuries should be taken or reported to the Office. Administrative staff will assess the situation and contact an ambulance and/or family member as necessary.

Risk Management

Risk management is the logical and systematic approach aimed at removing or reducing harmful effects and plays a vital role in providing and maintaining a safe environment. The risk management process provides practical steps that can be used to minimise the risk to health and safety within the school and assist staff to discharge their duty of care responsibilities. **All staff must be familiar with and implement risk management processes** as an integral part of curricula planning.

Provided that teachers use the risk management process effectively and subsequently perform their role with 'due diligence', they will be regarded as having made the decision of a 'reasonable person', and therefore as having discharged their 'duty of care'.

In situations assessed as high risk, staff should document the factors considered when making their risk assessment. Where control measures do not reduce the risk to an acceptable level exposure must be avoided and the Deputy Principal or WHSO should be immediately notified. Such documentation must be kept on file at school for legal and audit purposes.

The Risk Management Process is clearly set out in the WHS Act, the Risk Management Code of Practice and the EPPR HLS-PR-012: Curriculum Activity Risk Management Guidelines. Staff **must** consult the EPPR as part of their activity planning and with the Risk Level information provided.

Where HLS-PR-012: Curriculum Activity Risk Management Guidelines identifies an activity as having a "high or extreme level of risk" a curriculum activity risk assessment must be completed.

Common Law Duty of Care

Those responsible for curriculum activities must take reasonable care to avoid foreseeable risks of injury, for example by:

- making sure that activities are safe and appropriate for the students' age.
- ensuring students are properly instructed and prepared for the activities.
- ensuring all equipment is in a safe condition to use.
- providing adequate supervision.