

W.H. & S. POLICY & PROCEDURES

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1. Rationale, Aims and Objectives

1.1 Rationale

In compliance with the NSW Occupational Health and Safety Act of 2000 and the WH&S Regulation 2001, Mumbulla School will ensure that an WH&S Management system is in place and that measures are taken to protect the health and safety of its employees.

The nature of a school community is such that at any time employees may only comprise a small proportion of those on the premises and it is the responsibility of the school's Board of Directors to ensure that measures are taken to protect the health and safety of all.

"The employer must assess the risks such hazards pose to the health and safety of their employees and any other person at the employer's place of work."

From WH&S Regulation 2001:10(1)

This includes paid employees, volunteers, children enrolled, parents, visitors and contractors. This also includes those undertaking school activities outside the school such as taking children on excursions.

1.2 Aims

Mumbulla School aims to:

1. develop and maintain for staff, students and the community a safe, healthy, ordered, secure and caring environment which is conducive to working, learning and the healthy development of children.
2. make every reasonable effort in the areas of accident prevention, risk management, injury prevention and management and health preservation.
3. provide a Return to Work program that meets the needs of employees.

1.3 Objectives

To ensure that:

1. All WH&S responsibilities are clearly expressed and communicated so that those responsible fully understand their particular responsibilities.
2. Equipment is safe and without risks to health
3. The safe use, handling, storage and transport of equipment
4. The information, instruction, training and supervision necessary for safe working practices is provided
5. Employees and other members of the school community are regularly consulted about matters relating to their health, safety and welfare, particularly those matters involved in risk management.

2. MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY

2.1 Board of Directors

The Board will:

- Develop and review WH&S management plans
- Appoint an WH&S group consisting of at least:
 - 1 Board member
 - 1 Teacher
 - 1 Admin staff member
- Allocate budget resources to WH&S.
- Manage contractors coming to school
- Ensure operating procedures are developed and implemented
- Ensure a Return to Work program is developed with suitable duties options.
- Ensure procedures are in place and communicated to all staff, including volunteers.
- Ensure all equipment required for safe work is available
- Ensure employees are trained in procedures
- Bring WH&S issues to the attention of staff as soon as they arise.

2.2 Office

Administration staff will:

- ensure visitor safety
- maintain a First Aid kit and administer First Aid
- report communicable illnesses
- maintain a "Hazard Register"
- maintain a "Maintenance Book"
- maintain a current "First Aid Register"
- Arrange repairs when needed in consultation with the WH&S group
- Make sure machines are maintained
- Know and initiate emergency and evacuation procedures

2.3 Bursar

The Bursar will:

- Allocate budget resources to WH&S

2.4 Cleaning

The Cleaning Coordinator will:

- Make sure cleaning materials are provided
- Safe storage of cleaning materials and equipment
- Maintain hygienic standards
- Train operators in safe procedures

2.5 College of Teachers

The College of Teachers will:

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety and that of others
- Report all hazards to the office and where appropriate fill in Hazard Report form
 - Become familiar with the WH&S policy and the addenda relating to school activities
 - Ensure that children are aware of safe practices relating to their activities
 - Provide an example of good WH&S practice to the children
 - Train and induct new teaching staff, including specialist teachers into safe procedures
 - Know and initiate emergency and evacuation procedures.
 - Ensure that adequate numbers of teachers have a current First Aid Certificate.

2.6 WH&S Group

The WH&S group will:

- Carry out safety inspections at the beginning of each term
- Consult with staff and Building & Grounds group in relation to Risk Management
- Assess risk and set priorities for hazard removal and minimisation.
- In conjunction with the office, arrange for hazard removal and minimisation to be carried out by school employees, contractors, and volunteers at school working bees.
- Report to the Board and make recommendations.
- Review incident/accident reports and investigate incidents and accidents.
- Provide and monitor WH&S Register with Hazard Report forms.
- Monitor numbers of staff having current First Aid Certificate
- Coordinate the provision of information, education and training necessary to ensure a safe and healthy school environment.
- Ensure that Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are available to all staff.

2.7 All Members of the School Community

All members of the school community will:

- take all reasonable care to maintain the health and safety of self and others
- Report injuries
- Report actual or potential health and safety hazards to the office
- Wear personal protective equipment (PPE) and clothing
- Evacuate when instructed
- Notify staff about relevant information relating to individual risk, eg asthma sufferers.

2.8 All Staff

All staff will:

- participate in Return to Work program if injured

3. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board, through its delegated WH&S group, will ensure that the following tasks are carried out, in consultation with staff and the Building and Grounds group:

- Hazard Identification
- Risk Assessment
- Risk Elimination and Control
- Review

3.1 Hazard Identification

A termly inspection will be made of the whole school by the WH&S group. The following will be carefully inspected:

- Fire hazards
- Fire fighting equipment
- Electrical hazards
- Fixed playground equipment
- Non-fixed playground equipment
- Playground surfaces
- Construction & structural hazards
- Flammable liquid storage
- All rooms
- First Aid kit
- Wood storage
- Fencing
- Wood fires

Hazards will also be identified by:

- consulting with staff
- reviewing incident/accident reports
- reviewing maintenance requests
- Hazard Report forms

At the completion of inspection and consultation, specific hazards or problems requiring attention will be recorded in the WH&S Register.

3.2 Risk Assessment

The risks of the identified hazards will be assessed and priorities will be allotted for their elimination or control, based on their likelihood or severity. Risk assessment is best done in consultation with workers. Consultation with College of Teachers will also take place at this point. Assessment means answering two questions :

- How **likely** is it that this hazard will cause injury or illness?

Consider the level of a worker's exposure to the hazard. For example, the more time a worker spends keying on a computer, the more likely that it will cause neck and shoulder pain. A worker who uses strong solvent or glue during frequent craft classes may suffer side effects, such as skin irritation or headaches.

- How **severe** is the injury or illness if it does occur?

Consider the extent of injury or degree of harm that may be caused by a hazard. For example a faulty electrical connection may cause death. An acid spill may cause permanent disability. Lifting a client incorrectly may cause back strain and time off work. Some injuries may only require First Aid.

There may be more than one risk arising from a hazard.

Take into account human differences when assessing risks. Individuals and groups of workers have different skills, experience, training and physical capabilities. Particular needs to be given to young workers, new workers and workers returning from holidays or extended breaks.

Risks to visitors, contractors, customers or other people coming to the school. They may not be as aware of the hazards and could introduce new hazards.

See *Attachment A: Risk Assessment Matrix*

3.3 Risk Elimination and Control

The WH&S group will implement strategies to eliminate or reduce risks using the following hierarchy of control, using the first option wherever possible. If this is not practicable, then in descending order:

- Eliminate the hazard
- Substitute the hazard with something of lesser risk
- Use engineering controls
- Use administrative controls
- Use personal protective equipment

3.4 Review

Review effectiveness of the risk management process through consultation with staff and report to the Board. Was hazard reduced or eliminated? Did it create another hazard?

4. The WH&S Register

The WH&S Register will be provided by the WH&S group and will be held in the office in a place known to all staff. It will include:

- Hazard Report forms (see Sample forms "A")
- Incident Report forms

It is the responsibility of the WH&S coordinator to regularly monitor this Register.

It is the responsibility of the administrative staff to notify the WH&S coordinator of all urgent or major hazards.

ATTACHMENT A RISK ASSESSMENT MATRIX

The following matrix is a quick way of checking out any hazards that have been identified and deciding what priority should be given to fixing (control) them:

How severe might the injury or illness resulting from the hazard be?	How likely is it that an injury or illness will result from the hazard?			
	++ very likely could happen at any time	+ likely could happen, sometime	- unlikely could happen, but very rarely	-- very unlikely could happen but probably never will
Kill or cause permanent disability or ill health	1	1	2	3
!!! Long term illness or serious injury	1	2	3	4
!! Medical attention and several days off work	2	3	4	5
! First Aid needed	3	4	5	6

The numbers show how important it is to do something:

1 top priority: do something immediately

6 low priority: do something when possible

ATTACHMENT B PROCEDURES

- Use of Mowers and other Grass Cutting Equipment
- Safe Use of Electrical Equipment
- Power Points
- Double Adaptors
- Multiple Outlet Boards
- Extension Leads
- Electrical Repairs & Maintenance
- Stress Management
- Manual Handling
- Working Alone

- Bus time policy (See *Supervision policy*)
- Playground supervision and safety (See *Supervision policy*)
- Sun safety (see *Supervision policy*)
- Smoking (See *Code of Conduct*)
- Fire evacuation (See *Emergencies & Evacuations policy*)
- School excursions (See *Excursions & Camps policy*)
- Injury procedure (See *First Aid & Medical policy*)
- Communicable diseases (See *First Aid & Medical policy*)

Use of Mowers and other Grass Cutting Equipment

Those using mowers, brush cutters, trimmers and the like for grounds maintenance at Mumbulla School must be fully aware of safe operational procedures for each piece of equipment used, including safe handling and storage of fuels.

To reduce risk to children and staff, mowing is to be done outside of normal school hours, wherever possible. Mowing during lunch times and other recesses, when children are more likely to be using the school grounds, is to be avoided. If this is not possible, operators must ensure that children and staff do not approach beyond a safe distance.

Stones, pieces of timber, broken branches and other debris are to be removed from the area to be mown, before mowing commences.

Grassed areas near vehicle parking places are to be mown after cars have left the school grounds to obviate damage. When this is not possible cars should be temporarily moved to a safe location whilst mowing is carried out.

In all cases appropriate protective gear is to be worn by the operator.

Safe Use of Electrical Equipment

The following precautions should be observed by anyone using or installing electrical equipment:

Power Points

- Loose and damaged power points should be taped over and not used until repaired or replaced.
- The switch must be turned off when the power point is not in use.
- During long periods of non-use, appliances should have the plug removed from the power point. When removing a plug from a power point, the plug should be held by the body. Do not pull out by the cord. This may loosen the connection to the plug and in time damage the cord.

Double Adaptors

- The use of double adaptors is discouraged, but in instances where no alternative is available, the following safety procedures are to be observed:

- do not overload the circuit. Only two appliances may be used off a double adaptor. Check to ensure that no heat is generated by excess load in the power point or adaptor.
- double adaptors should only be plugged directly into a power point. They should not be plugged into extension leads.

Multiple Outlet Boards

- Multiple outlet boards with individual switches are safer alternatives than double adaptors. Care should be taken to ensure that the load required for the appliance plugged into the multiple outlet board does not exceed the rating of the power point (generally 10 amps or 2400 watts). Ensure that multiple outlet boards are not placed under desks, behind cupboards, benchtops or sinks where they are likely to be damaged, exposed to water or dampness.

Extension Leads

- To overcome the risk of damage to extension leads and reduce the risk of injury, the following should be observed:
- extension leads should never be used in a rolled condition. In the case of retractable extension leads, pull all of the lead out
- plugs fitted to extension leads should be in good condition and fitted correctly to the lead. If there is any sign of damage to the plugs or signs of deformation or damage to the lead, it should be repaired or replaced immediately.
- where leads are being used, they should be suspended above the floor. They should be clipped to walls where possible to avoid damage to the lead or risk of persons tripping and falling. Cable clips should be used for this purpose. It is essential that care be taken to keep leads clear of water or dampness.
- Care should be taken to ensure that the lead is not overloaded. At any sign of heat, by touch or smell, the operation should be discontinued, the power point turned off and the cause of the overload examined.
- Where the use of more than one lead is required the plug connection should be supported to ensure a good joint. Wherever possible lead-connecting devices should be used. Do not tie knots in leads to maintain connection.

Electrical Repairs & Maintenance

- Qualified electrical contractors must undertake all electrical repairs and maintenance. It is important that such repairs and maintenance be completed as soon as possible after the defect has been reported. In circumstances where concern is raised regarding safety of any electrical appliance or equipment, the following procedures must be implemented:
- Isolate power to the item(s). (Unplug portable equipment or isolate fixed equipment at the electrical distribution board).
 1. Remove the item from service.
 2. Attach warning tags to the isolated equipment
 3. Effect repairs immediately.
 4. Regular inspections of all equipment and appliances should be carried out to eliminate the chances of hazards, which could cause injuries and/or accidents.

Stress Management

It is Mumbulla School's policy to maintain a supportive working environment for staff and to minimise unnecessary stress and stress related illnesses amongst workers at the School. Achieving this necessarily relies on the commitment and participation of all staff.

Procedures are in place for addressing:

- personal and professional conflicts within the School; between individual staff, and between staff and members of the wider school community. Options include early

intervention, confidential counselling, mentoring, training and staff development in stress management (see *Grievance Resolution policy*).

- sexual harassment complaints. (See *Code of Conduct*)
- grievance procedures to deal with industrial disputes (see *Grievance Resolution policy*)
- Critical Incident management (see *Emergencies & Evacuations policy*)

Manual Handling

Any manual handling of plant, equipment, furniture or materials that is likely to cause a risk to health or safety must be identified and assessed. If necessary, control methods are to be developed in consultation with the WH&S group and/or co-ordinator to ensure safe handling. Such consultation is to be documented and the OH & S group must document the control methods as decided.

If necessary, it will be the job of the OH & S group to ensure that the relevant staff are trained in such safe manual handling methods.

Working Alone

- All persons who are alone when using the office or any rooms within the school buildings should take steps to ensure they are safe. Work that is considered hazardous should not be undertaken when working alone. If such work is essential, workers should arrange to have a companion working with them.
- If this is not possible, workers should let someone else know they will be working alone and what time they expect to be finishing
- Workers should ensure that the building is secure from time to time and be alert for noises from intruders. They should attempt to work in an area where a telephone is accessible or have the school's mobile telephone handy.

Should a worker suspect that an intruder is present they should ring police immediately. Workers are to avoid confrontation, as this may be dangerous.

Wood Heaters

At present, one classroom only has a wood fired heater.

To ensure the safety of children the teacher must:

- Ensure matches are kept out of reach of children
- Ensure that the fire guard is properly maintained and in place at all times.
- Ensure that the flue is properly maintained
- Ensure that all the children of that class are aware of safety rules (see below).

To ensure the safe handling and best practices of wood-fired heater use:

- The teacher will immediately report any faults to the WH&S group
- No kindling or inflammables are to be stored inside safety surround
- No accelerant (other than approved firelighter) is to be used when lighting the heater
- No object is to be placed on the heater for the duration of the season of use (small amounts of mandarin or orange peel are excepted)

Rules:

- At no time will children open the fireplace door or lean over the fireguard
- No children are to attempt to light the fire.
- Children are not to play running or vigorous games inside near the wood heater.
- Matches are to be used by children only under the immediate supervision of the teacher. This may occur on special occasions such as lighting of the story candle or at a birthday celebration.

To be looked at after Inspection

- Car park safety
- Cubby safety
- Storage
- Woodwork
- Playgroup
- RTW program
- Gas heaters
- RSI management
- Safe use of school kitchens
- WH&S and Zero Waste
- Lifting children