



OHS POLICY

Occupational Health and Safety

Purpose

This policy outlines our schools intention to maintain a healthy and safe working environment. All schools are required to follow The Department's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy endorsed by the Secretary as attached.

Objective

Manchester Primary School along with the Department value and supports its staff and students and is committed to ensuring a healthy and safe working and learning environment. The Department recognises that employee health, safety and wellbeing is integral to achieving excellent educational and work performance outcomes and commits, so far as reasonably practicable to:

- prevent workplace injuries and illnesses
- allocate adequate resources
- enhance workplace culture
- provide transparent and robust information, training, instruction and documentation
- drive continuous improvement in health, safety and wellbeing
- maintain a working environment that is safe and without risks to health.

Policy

To assist schools create and maintain a healthy and safe working environment the Department has developed an Occupational Health and Safety Management System (**OHSMS**) that should be implemented in all schools.

The OHSMS outlines how schools can meet their health, safety and wellbeing obligations. The OHSMS is a translation of legislative and regulatory requirements for schools that need to be managed.

The DET Employee Health, Safety and Wellbeing Division is responsible for updating the **OHSMS** and communicating changes.

Figure 3: Strategic Framework for Action





The Department's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy has been endorsed by the Secretary. This Policy clearly states the Department's overall OHS objectives and demonstrates senior executive commitment to improving OHS performance.

VICTORIA State Government | Education and Training | **Human Resources**

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Scope: This Policy applies to all employees, students, visitors, volunteers and contractors in Department of Education and Training (DET) workplaces and activities, and instances when performing work offsite.

Commitment and Principles: DET values and supports its people and is legally and morally committed to ensuring healthy and safe working and learning environments. DET recognises that employee health, safety and wellbeing (HSW) is integral to achieving excellent educational and work performance outcomes and commits, so far as reasonably practicable to:

<p>Prevent workplace injuries and illnesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by identifying, assessing, controlling, monitoring and reviewing hazards and associated risks under the control of, or as a result of undertakings conducted by DET by promoting the reporting of incidents and hazards and investigating where appropriate, to prevent re-occurrence by providing and maintaining workplaces that are safe and healthy without risks to mental health. 	<p>Enhance workplace culture:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by actively demonstrating and promoting a positive, inclusive and supportive working environment by promoting an HSW reporting and learning culture by recognising the importance of flexible work arrangements and family friendly work practices in maintaining a diverse, adaptive and high performing workforce. 	<p>Consult, collaborate and communicate with employees including health and safety representatives and other groups within DET:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on identified hazards and proposed decisions and changes that may affect the health and safety of persons, including: job role, systems of work, plant and substances and workplace facilities on issue resolution processes on provision of information, instruction, supervision and training by providing employees with a reasonable opportunity to express their views and concerns and taking account views expressed during consultation.
<p>Allocate adequate resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by providing an Occupational Health and Safety Management System that is sustainable and consistent with the risk profile of DET operations by promoting access to support services, information and training by providing and maintaining physically safe and healthy workplaces. 	<p>Provide transparent and robust information, training, instruction and documentation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> on individual health and safety accountabilities for all employees across DET on legislative and DET HSW requirements. 	<p>Drive continuous HSW improvement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> by using evidenced based data to inform DET strategic direction and measureable objectives by monitoring and reporting on HSW performance outcomes by strengthening leadership capability by maintaining, monitoring and reviewing the OHS Management System

DET employees, visitors, students, volunteers and contractors are required to take reasonable care for their own and others' health and safety and will co-operate with DET in adhering to health and safety requirements including following DET policies, procedures or instructions and participating in consultation and training.

DET's OHS Management System sets out how this policy is to be implemented.

Katy Haire
Acting Secretary
19/01/19

Katy Haire

Last Updated: July 2018

DET - Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

[Health Safety and Wellbeing Policy \(Word\)](#) must be displayed on the school's occupational health and safety (OHS) noticeboard.

Manchester Primary will ensure that it follows the DET Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy Checklist

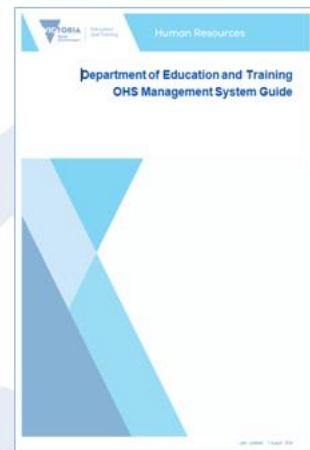
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) Policy has been communicated to all employees
- There is documented evidence that the HSW Policy has been communicated (e.g. signed off OHS Induction Checklist or minuted in employee meeting)
- The HSW Policy is displayed on the OHS Notice Board.



The aim of the OHSMS is for Principals to create healthy and safe workplaces by managing key risks in their school, with support from central and regional offices. Manchester Primary School does this by following a range of policies which are applicable to our school and form part of the Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS):

DET - OHS management provides guidance and support for schools to implement the Occupational Health and Safety Management System (OHSMS) and a number of detailed and extensive resources on PAL – Policy Advisory Library are provided to support and provide additional guidance to Manchester Primary School.

- [OHS management system guide \(Word\)](#)
- [Safe and well in education strategy \(PDF\)](#)
- [Safe and well in education framework \(PDF\)](#)



Leadership

To manage health, safety and wellbeing at Manchester Primary School, the Principal has certain accountabilities including:

- Promoting health, safety and wellbeing
- Preventing risks and injuries, including through embedding appropriate school management and supervision practices for health, safety and wellbeing
- Identifying safety risks (also known as hazards)
- Managing risks, including by implementing controls using the hierarchy of controls
- Responding to risks/hazards, injuries and near misses, including reporting incidents for regional and central office support, and overseeing return to work for employees
- Consulting with employees regarding health, safety and wellbeing (including through Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs), and a Health and Safety Committee, where applicable)
- Reviewing and continuously improving the management of health, safety and wellbeing at our school

The Principal must implement OHSMS requirements for which they have control or responsibility. Staff must perform their work safely and without risk to their health /others.



Capability

At Manchester Primary School we have found the best approach to leading health, safety and wellbeing include having a strong and capable leading team who follow processes, which are covered by the OHSMS elements of:

- OHS Planning
- OHS Consultation and Communication
- OHS Induction and Training

OHS Planning

Being proactive embeds the management of health, safety and wellbeing into normal school operations.

The Principal must use the [OHS Activities Calendar](#) to effectively plan and manage OHS based on their school's profile (for example the particular facilities and OHS hazards in the school). This will ensure that OHS activities are completed and recorded in a timely manner.

Refer to: [OHS Planning Policy](#)

OHS Consultation and Communication

Being transparent and inclusive about the management of health, safety and wellbeing builds mutual trust.

The Principal must involve employees and Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) in proactive consultation around the identification and management of workplace hazards.

Refer to: [OHS Consultation and Communication Policy](#)

OHS Induction and Training

Providing employees with an OHS induction introduces them to the culture of our school. It also provides critical information relating to safety management and key people.

To supplement this, Manchester Primary School recommends that staff are encouraged to attend training which is also key to building employees' knowledge and is a critical component to having a healthy and safe workplace. The Department has a suite of eLearning modules and in-house training available to improve health, safety and wellbeing capability:

- OHS eLearning modules (LearnED)
- [Safety Management for School Leaders](#) (Bastow)

Refer to: [OHS Induction and Training Policy](#)



Risk

Manchester Primary School will follow the [OHS Risk Management Policy](#) as follows.

Definitions

Risk

The likelihood of harm arising from exposure to any hazards and the consequence of that harm.

Risk Assessment

Process undertaken to identify the hazards, risk controls, and level of risk associated with a task or activity.

Risk Control

Describes the implementation of an action that eliminates, prevents, reduces or mitigates the harm from the potential exposure to a hazard.

The Principal in consultation with staff and HSR, must ensure that:

- hazards that persons may be exposed to in the school are identified
- a risk assessment is conducted to determine the risk (likelihood and consequence of injury or harm to a person) resulting from such hazard
- consideration is given to the means by which the risk is addressed through actions, known as controls, to eliminate, or if elimination is not reasonably practicable, to reduce, the risk.

The Principal must understand the school's particular OHS risk profile in order to implement appropriate procedures to control hazards and risks

The Principal must complete an initial review of the [OHS Risk Register](#) in which they identify the applicable hazards for their school and delete any entries that are not applicable.

The review must be undertaken in consultation with the relevant people, including:

- the delegate, if available
- staff who either undertake the task, activity or work in the area or who may be affected by the outcomes of the risk assessment
- Health and Safety Representative (HSR)
- Health and Safety Committee (HSC) member/s, if available

OHS Risk Register must then be reviewed:

- on an annual basis with the review to be scheduled in the [OHS Activities Calendar](#)
- when hazards are reported
- when incidents or near misses occur
- when new hazardous chemicals and/or dangerous goods are introduced into the school, see: [Chemical Management Policy](#), or plant and equipment, refer to: [Plant and Equipment Policy](#)
- when new or additional information regarding a hazard, relevant to the school, is made available or communicated via the regulatory authority, WorkSafe



Continuous improvement

Manchester Primary School and the Department is committed to reviewing health, safety and wellbeing Policies and Procedures every two years to ensure that we are adapting to the differing risk profiles at our school and keeping up with contemporary methods and ensuring legislative compliance.

Audit

Manchester Primary School will maintain compliance of established OHSMS practices, not only do our staff continue to review our own internal practices the Department also conducts an audit of the school to help ensure all safety procedures are maintained to help keep staff and students safe and well.

Following an audit at our school the Principal will:

- complete any corrective actions within the specified timeframes
- seek guidance from the OHS Advisory Service where necessary to identify corrective actions
- report completed corrective actions on the online system within the specified timeframes
- submit sufficient evidence on the online system to demonstrate that corrective actions have been completed

Staff can also contact the Regional OHS Support Officer for assistance pre or post audit.

Definitions

Hazard

Anything with the potential to cause harm, injury, illness, or loss.

Health and Safety Representative - HSR

An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a DWG on matters relating to OHS.

Hierarchy of Controls

There are a number of ways that risks associated with hazards can be reduced however, the effectiveness of each method may vary. The prioritising of approaches in managing the risks associated with a hazard is called the hierarchy of controls and indicates the decreasing level of effectiveness of various approaches. The hierarchy of controls are:

- Eliminating the hazard at the source
- Substituting the hazard with something else that poses a lesser risk
- Isolating the hazard with an engineering control
- Implementing administrative controls and changing the way work is done
- Providing Personal Protective Equipment



Often a number of different approaches are used in conjunction with each other to provide a more effective risk treatment.

OHS Management System (OHSMS)

OHS Management System is a set of plans, actions and procedures to systematically manage health and safety in the workplace. It is actively endorsed by a committed employer.

Hazards

Definitions

Hazard alerts

If a hazard is applicable to the school, then a relevant alert should be printed off and posted on the health and safety notice board and/or in the relevant location or area of the hazard.

Manchester Primary School has an expectation from all staff, (and the school community) to follow the procedures and be compliant when it comes to reporting, acting and reviewing any potential hazards as follows:-

Figure 4: Expected behaviours for Leaders and Managers



<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/Safe%20and%20Well%20Education%20Framework%20V12.pdf>





Manchester Primary School staff, students and parents can all play their part by:-

SAFE AND WELL IN EDUCATION: PLAY YOUR PART IN CREATING A SAFETY CULTURE

What steps can I take as an employee to make my workplace safer?

Health and safety is an issue that affects everyone in the workplace including employees, students, parents, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

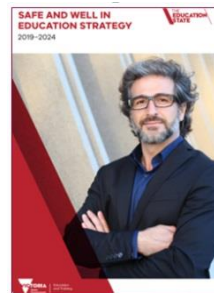
We all need to play an active role in creating safe and healthy work environments. The Department's health and safety management system provides clear guidance and advice on potential workplace risks. The system guides employees and leaders through their health and safety obligations, using practical steps that can be applied to varying local contexts.

Here are key steps you can take to be proactive in making your workplace safe and well.

- 1. Know what a safe workplace looks like** – familiarise yourself with the Department's health and wellbeing procedures and guidelines, introduce yourself to your health and safety representative, complete your safety induction process.
- 2. Build your capability** – the Department offers free health, safety and wellbeing e-learning modules that are designed to help you maintain a safe workplace. You can also access coaching, advice, guidance and support through services like the [Employee Assistance Program](#) (EAP).

- 3. If you see something, report it** – the Department relies on your active engagement to maintain visibility of emerging health and safety risks across the state. Make sure to report your risks on the OHS Management System ([eduSafe](#)) to address these risks and activate relevant supports.
- 4. Have wellbeing conversations in your team** – our team culture and the people we work with have a strong impact on our wellbeing. Make sure to keep wellbeing conversations a part of your regular team meetings. Check in with your colleagues and ask how they're doing. Simply asking "are you okay?" can make a big difference to someone's day.
- 5. Get support early** – the Department has existing supports that are available for you to access. Be proactive and put your own health and wellbeing first – connect and make use of these services to be at your best.

We need your support and involvement in realising the *Safe and Well in Education Strategy*.



<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/Safe%20and%20Well%20Education%20Strategy%202019-2024.pdf>

Further Information and Resources

DET – PAL Policy Advisory Library should be referred to as it has many resources and policies to review.

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/occupational-health-and-safety-management-system-ohsms/policy>

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/occupational-health-and-safety-ohs-risk-management/policy>

Safe And Well In Education Strategy

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/Safe%20and%20Well%20Education%20Strategy%202019-2024.pdf>

Safe And Well In Education Framework

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/OHS/Safe%20and%20Well%20Education%20Framework%20V12.pdf>

Relevant legislation

- [Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 \(Vic\)](#)

OHS Policy Review

Note: All information gathered in this policy has been retrieved from the DET PAL - School Operations OHS Management System (OHSMS) Overview. - DET Reviewed 10 June 2020

As stipulated, Manchester Primary will follow the The Department's Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy as attached.

This policy was updated on:

Date: March 2022

Evaluation and Review: 2024

Meeting # 504