

Environment



The following policies provide examples of environment aims and guidelines upon which environment processes and practices are based.

Emergency management

RATIONALE

The effective and efficient management of emergency incidents is critical to the safety and well-being of students, staff and school visitors, as well as essential in minimising damage to school property.

PURPOSES

1. To provide a safe environment for all, irrespective of a variety of emergencies which may occur.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. The school is required to maintain a current emergency management plan which clearly describes how the school will respond during an emergency to ensure ongoing safety of staff, students and visitors.

2. The emergency management plan will be consistent with advice provided by the Department of Education, Employment and Training's 'Managing School Emergencies' publication available at:

<http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au/safety/emergency.pdf>

3. The emergency management plan will be developed in consultation with local emergency services and all staff.

4. Safety of staff, students and visitors will always be the prime focus of the emergency management plan.

5. Adequate counselling and trauma support will be a feature of the plan.

6. One pre-announced and one unannounced emergency evacuation drill involving local emergency services (if available) will occur each year.

7. All emergency or criminal activity in which the safety or well-being of staff or students is at risk, or where there is a threat to property, must be reported immediately to the Department's 24 hour Emergency and Security Management Branch on ph: 9589 6266

8. Incidents which occur during school hours, during camps, excursions or outdoor adventure activities, which occur during travel to or from school, involve the media, or issues for potential negligence or legal liability must also be reported.

EVALUATION

* This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle. The Emergency Management Plan will be reviewed annually, after each unannounced emergency evacuation drill.

Environment

RATIONALE

An awareness of the implications of environmental damage is essential. Therefore schools should take an active leadership role, both through example and through curriculum, to encourage non-polluting practices and the conservation of our resources.

PURPOSE

The College aims to:

1. Encourage all students to take practical responsibility for the future of the earth and raise community awareness.
2. Foster awareness of the consequences of pollution in its varied forms and a range of environmental issues through all areas of the curriculum.
3. Encourage a spirit of conservation through the reduction of energy consumption, the recycling of materials and the adoption of environmentally sound practices.
4. Encourage students as lobbyists, consumers, future voters and individuals to actively seek solutions to environmental problems and to seek to promote changes in the policy of governments.
5. Encourage students to critically examine personal, social and economic values which are contrary to sound environmental practices.
6. Equip students to make well-reasoned choices on issues that affect the future of this planet

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. The College will develop curricula which enhance awareness of environmental issues.
2. The College will encourage students to take practical responsibility for their environment and be responsible for the cleanliness of the College environs.

3. The College will encourage the recycling of appropriate materials by providing at each campus, areas for the storage of cardboard, paper, glass, aluminium cans and plastics.
4. The College will use, when practicable, unbleached, undyed and recycled paper products.
5. Income from the sale of recycled articles will be directed into environmental renewal.
6. The Student Representative Council will be encouraged to take an active role in implementing environmental tasks.

Occupational Health and Safety

RATIONALE

Forest Hill College recognises it has a responsibility to provide a working environment which is safe and without risks to individuals' health and welfare. This responsibility extends to all employees, contractors and visitors to the school site including students, parents and volunteers.

School management is committed to providing a safe working environment through the implementation of risk prevention and reduction strategies, which are integrated into the school's day to day operations. A consultative approach between employees and management on OHS issues will be encouraged.

PURPOSE

- 1 to comply with OHS related legislation and DET directives or guidelines relating to health and safety.
- 2 to minimise the occurrence of injury and illness in the school through systematic risk identification, assessment and control.
- 3 to investigate accidents with a view to preventing recurrence
- 4 to maintain appropriate OHS documentation
- 5 to implement staff health and well-being strategies
- 6 to provide a Return to Work (RTW) program for employees in the event of injury or illness.

GUIDELINES

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 duty under the OHS Act also include:

- * providing and maintaining safe plant and systems of work
- * Making arrangements for safe use, storage and handling of plant and substances
- * Maintaining the workplace in a safe and healthy condition
- * Providing adequate facilities for staff welfare
- * Providing information, instruction, training and supervision to staff so as to enable them to perform their work in a safe and healthy manner

The Principal will nominate the Health Safety and Environment manager to act as the employer's OHS representative in an operational capacity (OHS co-ordinator) but the overall responsibility cannot be delegated.

Program Managers and/or Key Learning Area Managers are responsible for the Health and Safety of their team, in relation 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.

IMPLEMENTATION

1. The role of OHS co-ordinator will be allocated to a senior member of staff.
2. Relevant OHS responsibilities will be included in all job descriptions and responsibilities will be publicised at least annually. (pp 15-19)
3. The Health, Safety and Environment manager will be provided with training and practical support to fulfil their role effectively and will be consulted on changes in the school which may effect staff health, safety or well-being. (p 20)
4. 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) (1989) Regulations. (Section 3, pp 54 & 57-59)

5. OHS considerations will be integrated into the general management practices of the school for example:

- purchasing guidelines
- facilities design, upgrades and maintenance
- contractor management (p69)
- staff welfare (Section 6 and Appendix 4 OHS Guidelines & Health & Well-being kit)
- professional development and induction procedures (Section 4)
- staff allotment and time tabling
- curriculum design (p 89-90)
- program budgeting.

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 DoE directives
- formal processes for reporting, recording and investigating potential or actual hazards in either the physical environment or 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 personnel
- emergency management procedures which are documented, publicised and practised
- staff support programs

7. A Return to Work co-ordinator (RTW) will be nominated and given appropriate training. RTW policy and procedures will be developed, documented and publicised.

8. Effectiveness of implementation of the policy will be monitored informally on an ongoing basis and evaluated formally at least once a year.

9. OHS initiatives and performance will be included in the Annual report.

Student Wellbeing RATIONALE

This school endeavours to promote a healthy, supportive and secure environment for all children and to raise awareness of what makes students resilient, to develop strategies to reduce vulnerabilities and increase coping skills.

PURPOSES

1. The school is a positive environment in which all teachers assume responsibility for student welfare, endeavouring to provide successful experiences for all children and a safe, secure and supportive environment where a sense of belonging and wellbeing are strengthened.
2. Children develop positive social behaviours and problem solving skills.
3. Staff are confident, skilled and proactive in the management of student welfare issues.
4. Communication processes and protocols are clear and well known to ensure the effectiveness of student welfare support.

GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

1. Student Welfare is a shared responsibility between school, home and the community.
1. The school will appoint a student welfare coordinator who will coordinate student welfare across the school.
2. The school will adopt a proactive and strategic stance with issues of student welfare
3. The school will implement welfare support structures and programs which prioritise and address the identified needs of individual students or the school as a whole and that help implement the aims of the policy. Refer to: 'Framework for Student Support Services 1999'.
4. The school will endeavour to implement and maintain programs such as: -
 - * Buddies
 - * Student Awards
 - * Drug Education
 - * Programs across the school to develop resilience, social skills, conflict resolution and problem solving eg: - 'You Can Do It'.
 - * Transition programs.
5. The school will provide the following support structures: -

- * Monitoring of, and responding to, protracted student absences
- * Trauma Management plan
- * Protocol for Mandatory Reporting
- * Student Support Group's for children in need
- * Bullying Survey of students and school environment.

6. The school will also access outside services to provide support for students and staff which include:

- * Psychologist for psychological and academic assessment
- * Mentors - providing support for 'at risk' children
- * Department of Human Services case managers and support workers
- * Social Workers to provide services such as counselling, social skills and anger management programs.
- * Local parent support groups
- * Relevant DE&T support staff
- * C.A.S.A. [Centre Against Sexual Assault]
- * School Nurse

7. The school will endeavour to cater for: -

- * Children identified with specific welfare issues by creating support groups, developing appropriate individual programs including goals, monitoring performance and behaviour, and providing ongoing support.
- * Longitudinal data will be collected regarding frequency and types of welfare issues, so as to measure the success or otherwise of school-based strategies and approaches.