

APPLICABLE TO	All schools
DOCUMENT OWNER	CSO Leadership Team
APPROVAL DATE	May 2017
APPROVED BY	CSO Leadership Team
SCHOOL ACTIONS	System Policy – Schools are to ensure their practices are consistent with this policy. A local policy is not required.
LAST REVIEW DATE/S	New document
NEXT REVIEW DATE	2018
RELATED DOCUMENTS	Work Health and Safety Procedures

Purpose

Our WHS vision is to create a workplace where everyone goes home safe and healthy every day. The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for schools, employees, students, volunteers and contractors, and for other persons with a legal right to be on premises controlled or managed by the school, to comply with the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*.

Policy Statement

The Director of Schools, along with the Catholic Schools Office Leadership Team acknowledges that the dignity, safety and wellbeing of people are central to the values of the Catholic schools system. The Director of Schools also recognises that there is a legal duty and accountability for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers and other persons who either enjoy or use the services and facilities of the school, or provide services to each school.

Definitions

The **Act** means the *NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

The Regulation means the *NSW Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*

PCBU means a 'person conducting a business or undertaking' (PCBU) and is a legal term under the WHS laws for individuals, businesses or organisations that are conducting business. A person who performs work for a PCBU is considered a worker.

Officer as defined in the Act means a person who makes decisions, or participates in making decisions, that affect the whole, or a substantial part, of a business or undertaking and has the capacity to significantly affect the financial standing of the business or undertaking. An Officer has a duty to exercise due diligence to ensure their business or undertaking fulfils its health and safety obligations under the Act.

Worker means a person who carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking, including work as:

- a) an employee
- b) a contractor or subcontractor
- c) an employee of a contractor or subcontractor
- d) an employee of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the person's business or undertaking
- e) an outworker
- f) an apprentice or trainee
- g) a student gaining work experience
- h) a volunteer
- i) a person of a prescribed class.

Scope

This policy covers all employees of the Catholic Schools Office, as well as contractors and others engaged at or invited to premises controlled or managed by the school.

Guiding Principles

The *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* is law and therefore schools have a mandatory as well as moral obligation to maintain and continuously improve their work health and safety management systems.

To meet these social, moral, and legal obligations, the CSO Leadership Team and Senior School Leaders are committed to:

- Our identity as a Catholic system of schools.
- Active leadership and sound safety governance.
- Maintaining a contemporary **safety management system** that takes account of people's capabilities.
- **Managing risk** – elimination before minimisation through early intervention in planning and design.
- Creating a just and fair culture that encourages the reporting of hazards and occurrences – near-misses, incidents and accidents to enable organisational learning.
- Empowering workers to participate in creating and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace.
- **Consulting** with workers on health and safety matters.
- **Consulting, cooperating and coordinating** with other Persons Conducting a Business or Undertaking to achieve our common health and safety goals.
- **Continuous improvement.**
- Planning, measuring and reviewing our performance against our objectives.
- The provision and maintenance of a work environment without risks to health and safety.
- The **provision and maintenance of safe plant and structures.**
- **Provision and maintenance of safe systems of work.**
- The **safe handling and storage of plant, structures and substances.**
- The **provision of adequate facilities** for the welfare at work of workers carrying out work for the school including ensuring access to those facilities.

Responsibilities

Director of Schools

The Director of Schools has overall responsibility for managing work health and safety and implementing verification processes to ensure schools are meeting their obligations.

Each school must be committed to ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers, students, and other persons who are legally present on school/college premises.

CSO Leadership Team

The CSO Leadership Team has responsibility for

- providing leadership in this area
- exercising due diligence
- raising with schools any identified health and safety deficiencies
- communicating to schools the work health and safety management expectations
- ensuring schools conform to CSO policies and procedures

Principals

To support this policy and other relevant CSO policies, the Principal will implement and maintain an appropriate work health and safety management system for their school to:

1. develop appropriate planning strategies to ensure that the design and function of facilities at the workplace and plant hired, purchased, or leased for use at the workplace, meets or exceeds the best work health and safety standards.
2. review or develop purchasing policies in relation to other goods, materials, and services purchased for or provided to the school/college workplace that may affect the health and safety of workers and/or other persons.
3. provide the resources, training, information, instruction, and levels of supervision required for all workers, students, and other persons covered by this policy to achieve the policy's objectives.

In order to achieve these aims, and the objectives envisaged by the policy, each school's Principal or delegate shall:

- develop, implement and monitor health, safety and wellbeing strategic plans.
- identify, and assess all existing or foreseeable workplace hazards, then eliminate the hazard, or develop strategies to control risks arising from a hazard that cannot, for practical reasons, be eliminated.
- provide a safe working environment.
- provide and maintain safe systems of work.
- maintain plant and substances in a safe condition.
- develop and implement health and safety related policies and procedures.
- set and measure safety standards.
- implement and maintain an appropriate workplace incident/injury reporting system in accordance with CSO requirements. The school will review this information periodically to identify trends or gaps to help prevent future incidents and work related injury or illness.
- conduct an investigation, where appropriate, of all incidents, and circumstances, that may either expose any person to the risk of injury or illness, or result in injury or illness.
- employ, and contract when necessary, the services of competent and skilled persons who are sufficiently trained, instructed, and informed to meet their obligations under this policy.

To achieve these objectives, the school/college will consult openly with workers and other stakeholders, and provide them with sufficient information to assist in the decision making process. The school/college

will value and acknowledge the outcomes of this consultation.

The school/college shall establish appropriate levels of responsibility and accountability for workers, consistent with their position within the organisation to meet the policy objectives. These levels of responsibility and accountability will be developed in consultation with the respective workers.

The school/college shall require all contractors, visitors and volunteers to comply with any direction, procedure, or specific policy applying to such persons.

Professional Officer (Work Health and Safety)

Key obligations of the Professional Officer (Work Health & Safety) are:

- encouraging workers to report, at the earliest opportunity and without prejudice to any worker, any suspected workplace hazard, risk, and/or work related incident, injury or illness that may affect or has affected themselves or others, using their school's hazard reporting procedures.
- providing guidance, advice and assistance to diocesan Catholic schools to assist them to meet their legislative obligations.
- providing direction to schools on the reporting procedures of all student incidents/accidents.
- providing direction to schools on the development and implementation of the school's WHSMS.
- working closely with return to work co-ordinators.
- developing material in consultation with school and CSO Leadership Team to support the Work Health and Safety Management Systems (WHSMS) in schools.
- coordinating the availability and application of technical and procedural WHS information to the school community and the CSO.
- coordinating the availability of ongoing education and support to further improve the WHSMS.
- assisting in the development and implementation of procedures for schools to follow to manage contractors engaged to carry out work in schools.
- providing guidance and advice to schools when developing standard operating procedures for tasks regularly carried out in schools and for equipment used in schools.
- providing guidance on compliance to WHS legislation and standards by:
 - a) monitoring all relevant government legislation and authority requirements and making recommendation to CSO Leadership Team on any educational policies and procedures that may overlap with WHS legislation;
 - b) facilitating access to SafeWork NSW training programs where mandatory training has been identified in the legislation;
 - c) encouraging schools to maintain their individual school WHS records;
 - d) providing short information sessions to school staff on relevant WHS matters.

Return to Work Coordinator

RTW coordinators provide for the welfare of staff and students and for all injured workers prior to their return to work, in the development of their return to work plans, and in the recovery at work process following their return to work.

Key obligations of RTW coordinators are:

- identifying the needs of injured/ill employees
- understanding any constraints on the employer; and facilitating teamwork between the employee, employer, insurer and treating health professionals to develop and implement a return to work plan.

Workers and Others

All workers while at work, and irrespective of their position, shall:

- take reasonable care for their own safety.
- take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons.
- co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure or the school/college in relation to health or safety at the workplace that has been notified to workers.
- report all incidents, or hazards, that may cause injury or illness, and any damage or maintenance requirements affecting the safety of the workplace or plant used at work.
- attend and participate in any training or in-service seminars arranged by the school/college to support the objectives of this policy.
- engage openly with school/college personnel in any consultation on WHS issues, or information, brought to their attention, to assist the school/college meet its obligations under the *Act*.

Other persons at the workplace shall:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety;
- take reasonable care that their acts or omissions do not adversely affect the health and safety of other persons; and
- comply, so far as is reasonably able with any reasonable instructions given to enable the school/college to comply with the *Act*.

Budget

Each school must provide an allocation of resources annually to ensure all WHS requirements can be met, including ensuring the school makes available for use, and uses, appropriate resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risk to health and safety from work carried out at the school.

Legislative/Professional Guidelines

Australian Standards

Codes of Practice

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011