

OHS Procedures

P-8-4

PROCEDURES FOR OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

0 AIM

0.1 The Aim of this document is to detail the School's procedures for ensuring our obligations are met under the NSW Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Regulation 2001.

0.2 Since September 2001 OHS obligations of employers and employees in all businesses have increased. Everyone employed in the School must be aware of the key concepts which are outlined below.

0.3 This document will be up-dated as details are developed.

0.4 A copy of the OHS Regulation can be found on the Workcover web site at www.workcover.nsw.gov.au.

1 OHS AND INJURY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

1.1 The management of OHS is a "whole of school" responsibility. Every staff member, contractor, volunteer, student and visitor ('personnel') who engages in activities on school property has a responsibility to themselves and others for a safe working environment and prevention of injury and illness.

1.2 The School Council of Governors and Executive Principal have the ultimate responsibility for OHS policy, implementations and evaluation. Executive staff have to implement the policy and everyone else in the organisation must acknowledge and comply with these procedures and those contained elsewhere in hand books, manufactures' instructions, and standard operating procedures (SOP). All personnel have a responsibility to discharge their duty of care.

1.3 All staff have a responsibility to report hazards, injuries and incidents in a timely manner to an appropriate person. Risk reduction and elimination is a responsibility which must occur at every level from classroom teacher or individual worker to senior management. Statements of Duties will be altered over time to reflect each person's OHS responsibilities. Personnel behaviour and performance in terms of OHS are to be actively considered during review and assessment of individual performance

1.4 Staff in a promotion position at any level have additional responsibilities for OHS in all aspects of the work and people they supervise.

1.5 Every activity is to have a SOP. Generic SOPs can be developed for mundane tasks but specific SOPs are required for operation of equipment, particularly hazardous equipment. SOPs are to be developed at Faculty level and/or Department level and documented using the school's SOP template, lodged, approved and disseminated.

1.6 All on site contractors must provide current Workers Compensation Insurance certification before being allowed to commence work.

1.7 The School will maintain an adequate level of workers compensation insurance through industry brokerage based on annual salary budgets.

1.8 Adequate safety training and relevant training programmes are to be employed throughout the school.

1.9 Campus-wide audits will occur to include hazard identification, evaluation and control measures. Risk Assessment is to occur on a case by case basis for all activities involving an element of risk.

1.10 Appropriate off-campus risk management will take place where excursions, field trip, sports and other activities are approved.

1.11 Accident and injury registers are kept and prompt reporting and investigation of incidents occurs at a number of levels. Corrective action will be initiated in a timely manner.

1.12 Suppliers and contractors on site will be appropriately controlled and only appropriate supplies and equipment will be used on campus.

1.13 All staff are encouraged to gain Senior First Aid qualifications as a minimum. A minimum number of staff will be adequately trained in First Aid and adequate First Aid facilities are to be provided on the campus.

1.14 Emergency procedures are in place and are covered under a separate document.

2 DUTY OF CARE

2.1 Pittwater House is committed to the provision and maintenance of a working and learning environment which is safe and healthy and where the well-being of all staff, students, volunteers and visitors is ensured.

2.2 OHS is an integral part of overall management responsibilities. This responsibility applies to all phases of operations and at all levels.

2.3 Everyone has a duty of care towards others on campus to ensure their safety and to prevent injuries and illness.

2.4 All staff, volunteers, students and visitors must comply with instructions given for workplace health and safety.

2.5 Personnel must use personal protective equipment where it has been provided and instructions for its use has been given.

2.6 Personnel must not wilfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse anything provided for workplace health and safety on campus.

2.7 Personnel must not put at risk the workplace health and safety of themselves or others.

3 RISK MANAGEMENT

3.1 There is no doubt that there is an element of risk in everything we do. One of the riskiest things we do almost daily is to cross the road. It is important that common sense prevails because there are many situations where an element of risk can be justified. Where this risk can be assessed and controlled this is the Risk Management process.

3.2 The National Safety Council of Australia developed a system for identifying and assessing risk and this can be applied to any of the activities we are conducting at school. See Appendix C

3.3 The fundamental action is observation and common sense in identifying hazards. Hazard identification generally comes from workplace inspections, accident reports, complaints and observation.

3.4 Typical school hazards on campus include:

- chemicals and hazardous substances
- manual handling
- property issues
- emergency, fire, etc
- office environment
- voice strain

3.5 Off campus hazards include:

- transport to/from an activity (statistically one of the highest risk undertakings!)
- exposure to adverse environmental conditions beyond our control
- strenuous and/or vigorous activities
- other activities controlled by third parties (e.g. factory processes being observed on an excursion)

3.6 Risk Assessment should be carried out by any member of staff or supervisor of a group of students before engaging in an activity. The main question to be asked is: "Is the activity safe?".

3.7 A more detailed risk assessment should be carried out for more complex activities. The following points should be considered:

- Assess the LIKELIHOOD of the hazard causing an injury or illness and
- consider how SEVERE the injury or illness would be if it occurred

3.8 Once a hazard has been identified an assessment of the hazard must be carried out. The assessment then leads to the implementation of control measures to be put in place for the particular identified hazard which should result in its elimination or control.

3.9 The following is a hierarchy that should be followed when considering risk management and control measures to reduce risk in an activity or environment.

- A. Eliminate
- B. Substitute

- C. Isolate
- D. Engineering/Environmental Controls
- E. Administrative Controls
- F. Personal Protective Equipment

A. Eliminate

Consider whether the process is required at all for the activity to continue. Using noise as an example of a hazard, it may mean that the source of the noise (eg. a noisy piece of machinery) is not required at all for the process to take place. In this instance, the noisy piece of equipment could be eliminated from the process and as such, the risk of noise exposure from this piece of machinery is eliminated.

B. Substitute

If a process or procedure is absolutely necessary for the activity to be carried out, then substituting the way that the activity is conducted may be a way to reduce the risks of an accident, incident or hazard.

C. Isolate

In the case of the noisy piece of machinery, isolating that piece of machinery will reduce the risk of exposure to harmful noise. Isolating the equipment may mean placing it within a soundproof enclosure. It may also mean placing the equipment outside a building whilst the activity takes place inside.

D. Engineering/Environmental Controls

Engineering and environmental controls may provide many different options depending upon the circumstances. An example is the covering of electrical cabling which was recently completed in the Cadet Unit Q Store where wires were encased in conduit eliminating the risk of electrocution from a potential cut wire by an item stored there.

E. Administrative Controls

Administrative controls may also be used to reduce the exposure to risk during an activity. An example is to plan for adequate rest stops/meal breaks when driving for long periods.

F. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

The provision of PPE should always be considered as the last resort in order to control risks in the workplace or during an activity. If all of the above control measures have been considered and are not viable control measures for the hazard identified, it is only then that PPE should be considered.

3.10 Training of staff can overcome hazards. General safety training is to be available and training in the correct operating procedures of plant is to occur. Supervisors are to ensure personnel are competent to undertake the task.

3.11 Appropriate records are to be kept, especially SOPs, and Risk Assessments, records of

injury and training records are to be kept on appropriate files.

3.12 In planning new operations, changing present operations or introducing new plant or equipment consultation will occur in consideration of OHS aspects and all practicable OHS measures required will be taken before change over or the new plant is commissioned.

3.13 A system of audits should be implemented in order to identify hazards and introduce appropriate control measures to ensure the continued effectiveness of programmes, and compliance with legislation and School policy.

3.14 Coordinators, and Department Heads should establish a system of regular audits of health and safety performance within each faculty, section and other identifiable workplaces.

4 CONSULTATION

4.1 Under the Regulations there is a duty for employers to consult with their employees.

4.2 The school has numerous committees and meetings that involve all members of staff. All staff can contribute to the making of decisions about health and safety at work through these existing structures. Staff are therefore encouraged to use these existing structures.

4.3 It is acknowledged under the Regulations that various forms of consultation can occur including “Other agreed arrangements” – i.e. through our existing meeting structure.

4.4 OHS will matters be raised and discussed in all of the school’s existing meeting structures and this will allow risk management to occur at Faculty, Department, School and Executive levels of the organisation,

4.5 Minutes of meetings are to demonstrate coverage of OHS issues as they arise.

4.6 A review of this system will be ongoing and if these arrangements are found to lack effectiveness a proposal to alter these arrangements will be made to staff.

5 SAFE SYSTEMS OF WORK

5.1 All teachers and supervisors

a. will supervise the safe behaviour of students (in the classroom, in the playground and when on excursions, etc)

b. are responsible for the health and safety of students whilst on campus and participating in official school activities

c. will maintain healthy and safe procedures and practices

d. are to assess and reduce risks in subject-specific areas (especially in PE, Creative Arts, TAS and Science) and similarly for extra-curricular activities (especially Cadets and sports)

e. in collaboration with faculty co-ordinators and/or heads of department are to assess any hazards which exist in the school or workplace (includes off-campus places visited) and

eliminate or reduce the associated risks as required

- f. are to ensure that all personnel receive appropriate workplace health and safety information and training where they are using a facility under their care
- g. will ensure that appropriate use is made of all safeguards, safety devices, personal protective equipment and other appliances provided for OHS purposes
- h. are to ensure records of all workplace injuries, work-related illnesses and dangerous occurrences on campus are kept and referred to the appropriate Head of Department
- i. are to ensure that special needs groups (eg people with disabilities and persons from a non-English speaking backgrounds) are considered in regard to OHS.

5.2 All employees, including permanent, part-time and casual employees, have an individual responsibility to take all reasonably practicable steps to avoid creating or increasing risks to themselves or others. This responsibility involves:

- a. performing work duties in a responsible and safe manner and in accordance with the training and instruction they have received;
- b. taking proper care to ensure that appropriate use is made of all safeguards, safety devices, personal protective equipment and other appliances provided for the purpose of health and
- c. co-operating with Heads, Deans, Co-ordinators, various committees, etc to ensure health and safety by complying with this policy/procedure and all other School policies on specific aspects of OHS.
- d. In addition, personnel must not wilfully or recklessly interfere with or misuse safety equipment that is provided. They must not wilfully put at risk the health and safety of themselves or others.

5.3 All voluntary helpers, visitors, students and users (other than employees) of Pittwater House must act in a manner that would not endanger the health and safety of any other person. Nor may they wilfully or recklessly interfere with anything provided in the interests of health and safety.

5.4 At all times all personnel must obey safety directions and comply with the standards in operation at the particular workplace (i.e. classroom, lab, administrative office or other area).

5.5 Supervisors of staff and students must ensure that all personnel are advised of immediate health and safety issues as they arise.

5.6 Through the current school meeting structure the following is to occur:

- a. Create and maintain an active interest in health and safety and assist in reducing work injuries, work-related illnesses and dangerous occurrences
- b. Consideration is to be given to measures for the training, education and promotion of

health and safety on campus and make recommendations to the Executive Principal in relation to those measures

- c. In collaboration with the Executive Principal formulate, review and disseminate to staff, students and others the standards, rules and procedures relating to health and safety to be complied with at the school or workplace
- d. Review circumstances surrounding recent injuries, work-related illnesses and dangerous occurrences at school or off campus, advise the results of those reviews and make such recommendations to the Executive Principal as the committee/group considers desirable
- e. Initiate programs aimed at promoting and maintaining the interest of the executive, staff, students and others concerned in school or workplace health and safety
- f. Assist in the resolution of issues in respect of workplace health and safety as required.

6 INJURY & INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

6.1 In order to understand the extent of hazards and risks to the health and safety of staff, students and others and to take action to eliminate or minimise these hazards or risks, ALL accidents, incidents and work-related illness or disease must be recorded and reported.

6.2 All serious accidents must be investigated as soon as possible after they occur so that the most accurate account of events can be recorded and remedial action taken to reduce the risk of other similar accidents.

6.3 Guidelines for reporting:

A. Accident

An accident is defined as an occurrence which resulted in an injury or illness to an employee.

B. Incident

An incident is defined as an occurrence which would have resulted in injury, illness or death of an employee. Incidents are often referred to as a 'near miss' or a 'close call'.

C. Hazards

Hazards are defined as events that may have the potential to result in serious injury to persons or damage to property.

D. Workplace

The Regulation defines workplace as: any premises where persons work (Ch 4, Clause 33).

Premises includes (Ch 1 Clause 3):

- any land, building or part of any building; and
 - any vehicle, vessel or aircraft; and
 - any installation on land, on the bed of any waters or floating on any waters;
- and
- any tent or movable structure.

6.4 NOTE: All accidents, incidents and hazards involving employees whilst on duty (including journeys directly to/from work), must be reported. This is irrespective of whether they occur on occupied property (over which we have direct control).

6.5 The School has a standard Accident/Incident Report Form which is to be used for any accident where injury results.

6.6 The Accident/Incident Report Form or a memo is to be used to report any other accident or dangerous occurrence or incident.

6.7 Communication up the line of management is essential and the use of the Injury Report and Incident Report in a timely manner allows for a quick and appropriately considered response.

6.8 Pittwater House supports rehabilitation of and an early return to work for employees who have sustained a physical or identifiable psychological injury or illness.

6.9 Rehabilitation provides the most effective approach to assisting injured or ill employees to achieve their full physical, psychological, vocational and social potential and to reduce the long term costs of compensation and sick leave.

6.10 Rehabilitation guidelines accredited by WorkCover will assist in identifying individuals suitable for rehabilitation, ensure early intervention and outline procedures for facilitating and managing programs for individuals.

6.11 Rehabilitation of the injured or ill worker must be given the highest priority and must commence as soon as possible after injury or illness.

6.12 The School's Rehabilitation Co-ordinator is Mrs Virginia Callaghan (Pay Mistress).

6.13 Heads, in collaboration with the rehabilitation co-ordinator, are responsible for initiating the rehabilitation arrangements. Staff are to actively support the rehabilitation process.

6.14 Where employees are unable to perform their usual duties they may be offered suitable selected duties where practicable. The aim of selected duties is to offer a graduated return to normal duties and is not a permanent job change.

6.15 The agreement of the rehabilitation provider and the treating doctor that the duties

are within the capabilities of the employee must be obtained.

7 PROCEDURES

7.1 These procedures have been developed with assistance from the Association of Independent Schools and the Catholic Commission for Employment Relations and reference to WorkCover NSW, Education Queensland's Department of Education Manual, various NSW Government departments and various documents provided by AON Insurance Services Limited.