

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY (WHS) POLICY



Relevant to:	All staff
Developed by:	Leadership Team
Date of Introduction:	December 2019
Date of Most Recent Review:	2023
Date for Review:	2 years or as required
Approved:	School Board Mar23
Related Documents:	School Maintenance Schedule/Emergency Evacuation Policy and Staff Induction pack/Risk Assessment forms

OVERVIEW

Compliance with WHS legislation is complex. It requires a clear understanding of what constitutes the workplace, who are the duty holders, what are their responsibilities and what is a reasonably practicable standard of care.

Under Work Health and Safety Act Tas. 2012, the person conducting business or undertaking (PCBU) holds the primary duty of care. Its Officers have an obligation to exercise due diligence to ensure the PCBU complies with its duty of care.

Definitions:

Workplace - A workplace in the context of a school can be anywhere a school worker or student is, or is likely to be, while at work. This can be on-or off-site.

Person Conducting Business or Undertaking (PCBU) – Is the legal entity, which holds the primary WHS duty of care. In the case of TVSS this is the Business Manager.

Duty holder – Duty holders include the PCBU, Officers and Workers.

Officer - An officer is a person who makes decisions, or participates in making decisions, that affect the whole or a substantial part of TVSS's business or operations or has the capacity to significantly affect the financial standing of TVSS's business or operations. In TVSS's case this is the School Council, the Principal and Management Team.

Reasonably Practicable – That which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health or safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- The likelihood of the hazard or risk occurring
- The seriousness of the risk
- What the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or the risk, and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk.

The availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk – After assessing these matters the cost of ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk, may also be taken into account.

Duty of Care - A duty of care is a legal responsibility. The general duty of care provisions in the Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 are limited by 'reasonable practicability'.

Practicable means it must be possible or capable of being done safely. To carry out a duty as far as is reasonably practicable means the degree of risk in a particular activity or environment can be balanced against measures taken to control it.

Duty of Care Statement

TVSS teachers have a fiduciary duty of care to do everything reasonably practicable to protect students from foreseeable harm due to their special relationship based upon trust.

General duties of care are central to the legislation, requiring all workplace participants to take practicable steps to ensure health and safety measures are met. Each person under a duty must satisfy it, even if other persons also have a similar duty.

The duties set out in the Act have always existed under common law.

The details of the duty of care as it applies to all people in the workplace, which may influence the provision and maintenance of a safe and healthy workplace, are detailed in Section 9 of the Act.

Policy

Tamar Valley Steiner School aims to be proactive in creating, as far as reasonably practicable, a safe workplace for all teaching and non-teaching staff, students, volunteers, parents, third party contractors and service providers and any other persons who may from time to time be engaged at the school. The School will comply with all relevant WHS legislation.

TVSS aims to create a safe workplace by implementing a **Staff Induction Pack** which:

- Defines an appropriate safety management structure with clear roles and responsibilities
- Defines processes for incident reporting, analysis and corrective action
- Systematically identifies and manages potential hazards
- Conducts drills and preventative maintenance on its buildings and equipment
- Provides access to appropriate First Aid treatment for work related injury and illness
- Encourages a school-wide safety culture
- Provides information about Emergency procedures and processes

Safety Management Structure:

1. Roles and Responsibilities Management Team (MT)

- Oversee the implementation and maintenance of an effective WHS program.
- Allocate an appropriate budget to WHS.
- Review and approve risk assessments prior to all on-site and off-site activities.
- Review and agree corrective actions for all safety incidents.
- Report safety breaches to the School Council and external authorities as appropriate.

Business Manager

- Organise, control and manage the Safety Plan
- Conduct and assist staff to conduct risk assessments
- Ensure all breaches of safety are reported
- For all reported safety incidents, review proposed corrective actions for appropriateness
- Advise the School Executive and School Council on all WHS issues as appropriate.

Staff, Volunteers, Workers and Parents

- Take reasonable care for their own health and safety.
- Have a duty of care to all those affected by their acts or omissions.
- Report all safety incidents to the Business Manager and investigate as appropriate.
- To support and foster a shared WHS culture in which staff and other personnel observe safe work practices and minimise the risk of injury to themselves and others.
- Students are cared for under the Duty of Care obligations of teachers.

2. Accident, Injury and Incident Reporting

All safety incidents are to be recorded on an Accident, Injury and Incident Reporting Form by the Teacher on Duty at the time of the incident, followed up by the class teacher and then submitted to the Business Manager for collation. The Business Manager will ensure appropriate reporting of the incident and will present all reported incidents to the School Executive and the School Council to ensure appropriate corrective action is taken.

3. Hazard Identification

The process to be used by the School for hazard identification is Risk Assessment. Risk assessments are to be performed using the TVSS Risk Assessment Matrix. Risk assessments are required to be performed for all activities that include a level of inherent risk whether on or off-site.

The Business Manager will do a site Hazard Hunt (walk-through) at least once a term to identify potential hazards. Areas in need of particular attention in the school include:

- Machinery and equipment
- Storage of Hazardous Chemicals
- Bush School program
- Contractor Management
- Fire Safety Management
- Medical Emergencies

The nature of the risk will determine the most appropriate risk management strategy including the likelihood of occurrence of the risk and the impact should it occur. Examples of risk management strategies, which may be adopted include avoidance, insurance, prevention management.

Risk assessment should take into account the level of expertise or competence of the person performing the task.

4. Preventative Maintenance and Drills

The Business Manager will prepare annual maintenance plans for the school's major fixed assets. The plan will comply with all legislative requirements including electrical tagging, maintenance of fire equipment etc.

Fire Drills will be conducted at least once per term in the Early Childhood Centre and at least once a year in the Primary School.

5. Access to First Aid

The School will house a sick bay adjacent to the School office at 368 St Leonards Road and within the classroom at French Street where students and staff can be monitored or attended in the event of sickness or injury. Currently there is no dedicated 'sick bay', however, a temporary space will be made available for students who are injured or unwell.

Teaching staff and Office reception staff with appropriate First Aid, CPR and Anaphylaxis training will be available to administer first aid and care for sick children.

Each classroom will have a compliant first aid kit that is checked and resupplied for the start of each term or as needed.