WORK HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

St. Agnes' Primary School

RATIONALE:

St Agnes' Primary School is committed to provide a safe and secure school for our staff, students and visitors.

SCOPE:

The purpose of this Policy is to establish a framework for St Agnes' Primary School, employees, students, volunteers and contractors, and for other persons with a legal right to be on premises controlled or managed by the Parish Schools, to comply with the requirements of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011. This framework is intended for Parish Schools use, to establish their own Work, Health and Safety (WHS) Policy.

PRINCIPLES:

That Work, Health and Safety is the responsibility of everyone in the organisation.

DEFINITIONS

WHS; Work, Health and Safety.
PCBU; Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking.
HSC; Health and Safety Committee.
HSR; Health and Safety Representative
PEEP; Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan.

1. Consultation

   St Agnes' Primary School WH&S Committee, meets at least three times per term and as required. The committee consists of 1 representative from each area of the school eg. Teaching, ancillary, leadership, support staff, etc

   Health and Safety committees

   Health and Safety committees bring together workers and management to assist in the development and review of health and safety policies and procedures for the workplace.

   The functions of the health and safety committee are:

   a) To facilitate co-operation between the school and workers in instigating, developing and carrying out measures designed to ensure the health and safety of workers
   b) To assist in developing standards, rules and procedures relative to health and safety

c)   Such other functions prescribed by the regulations or agreed between the PCBU (includes employers) and the committee.

1.1. The effective operation of a health and safety committee is dependent upon everyone fulfilling their role.

1.2. Establishment of health and safety committees.

The school must establish a health and safety committee within two months after being requested to do so by a health and safety representative (HSR), or five or more workers at the workplace.

1.3. A health and safety committee may be established for workers who carry out work at one or more locations or for those who do not have a fixed place of work.

1.4. An PCBU (includes employers) can also establish a health and safety committee on their own initiative. The constitution of the health and safety committee may be agreed to between the PCBU (includes employers), HSR and workers at the workplace. If agreement is not reached within a reasonable time, any party may ask WorkCover to appoint an inspector to decide the matter.

2.   <u>Management of Risk</u>

All employees of St Agnes' Primary School have a primary duty to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that staff, students and other persons at a workplace are not exposed to health and safety risks. This means that in every undertaking a school is involved in, risk management is to be of the utmost priority. Whenever it is reasonably practicable to do so, a risk assessment should be completed for such undertakings.

Tools to assist in the development of risk assessments are available through SafetyNet and WHS online.

2.1   Workplace facilities

A safe working environment and adequate facilities must be provided and maintained by the person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU), so far as is reasonably practicable. This includes ensuring:

a)   Safe entry and exit to and from the workplace
b)   People can move about the workplace without risk to health and safety, under normal working conditions and in an emergency
c)   Sufficient work space for workers
d)   Suitable floor surfaces
e)   Sufficient lighting
f)   Adequate ventilation
g)   Adequate and accessible facilities for the welfare of workers such as toilets, drinking water, eating facilities
h)   Hot and cold environments do not put workers at risk.

2.1.1 When determining requirements for the working environment and the facilities to be provided, the PCBU should consider:

a) The work being carried out
b) The hazards
c) The size, location and nature of the workplace

d) The number and composition of the workers and other persons at the workplace.

2.2   Training and instruction

Suitable and adequate information, training and instruction, which is easily understood and necessary, should be provided to all workers by the school.

2.2.1 Information, training and instruction should relate to the:

a)   Nature of the work carried out by the worker
b)   Nature of the risks associated with the work at the time the information, training or instruction is provided
c)   Implemented control measures.

2.2.2 Induction training should be provided when a worker first starts at the workplace. At a minimum, this should cover information and instructions on:

a)   Emergency procedures
b)   Amenity facilities
c)   First aid
d)   How to report a hazard or other safety issues
e)   How work health and safety is managed in the workplace
f)   The health and safety procedures and policies required for their tasks, such as manuals, safety data sheets, personal protective equipment etc.

2.2.3 There is no set timeframe for how long training records should be kept however, it would be good practice for a PCBU to keep all training records whilst a worker is engaged. In the event of a notifiable incident, training records should be kept for two years after the incident.

2.2.4 Supervision of staff and students may be required, especially when undertaking a new task or using equipment they have not used previously. By providing step by step procedures and observing the individual performing the task until they can safely do it without assistance, assists in ensuring a safe workplace.

2.2.5 Some online training is available through SafetyNet which is encouraged to be used but does not replace the need for specific training in certain areas and for certain roles in our schools.

2.3   Emergency plans

An emergency plan must be prepared, maintained and implemented by the school for the workplace.

2.3.1 The emergency plan must provide procedures including:

a)   An effective response to an emergency
b)   Lockdown procedures
c)   Evacuation procedures
d)   Notifying emergency service organisations promptly
e)   Medical treatment and assistance
f)   Effective communication between the authorised person who coordinates the emergency response and all persons at the workplace.
g)   A personal emergency evacuation plan or peep for any person with additional needs that is likely to be on school grounds in an emergency, including students.

h) Testing of the emergency procedures, including the frequency of testing.
i) Information, training and instruction to relevant workers in relation to implementing the emergency procedures.

2.3.2 When preparing and maintaining an emergency plan, the PCBU must consider all relevant matters including:

a) The nature of the work being carried out at the workplace
b) The nature of the hazards at the workplace
c) The size and location of the workplace
d) The number and composition of the staff, students and other persons at the workplace.
e) An effective response to an emergency
f) Evacuation procedures
   a. Notifying emergency service organisations promptly
g) Medical treatment and assistance
h) Effective communication between the authorised person who coordinates the emergency response and all persons at the workplace.
i) Testing of the emergency procedures, including the frequency of testing.

2.4 First aid

First aid must be provided by the person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) and includes the following:

a) The provision of first aid equipment
b) That each staff member must have access to the equipment
c) An adequate number of staff are trained to administer first aid or workers have access to an adequate number of people who have been trained to administer first aid
d) Staff has access to facilities for the administration of first aid.

2.4.1 First aid requirements will vary from one workplace and work area to the next. In order to assess how to best provide for first aid in a workplace, a PCBU must consider all relevant factors including the:

a) Nature of the work being carried out at the workplace
b) Nature of the hazards at the workplace
c) Size and location of the workplace
d) Number and composition of workers and others at the workplace.

3. Staff Bullying

Employers or PCBU's should actively encourage staff to speak out should they believe they are the victim of Staff Bullying. Staff should first speak to their assistant principal or principal regarding issues of Staff Bullying. Further advice is available from School Resource Services at the Catholic Schools Office. Staff should also access the CSO Discrimination, Bullying and Harassment Policy on the CSO intranet. Staff maintain the legal right to report any Bullying directly to Fair Work Commission but are asked to follow the above procedure before doing so.

4. <u>Managing risks to health and safety</u>

Managing risks to health and safety is critical to ensuring a safe workplace. The first step in managing risks is to identify any reasonably foreseeable hazards. The second step is to eliminate those hazards so far as is reasonably practicable. If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate the risk, then action must be taken to minimise that risk so far as is reasonably practicable.

4.1 A school has a duty to manage risks to health and safety and this should involve consultation with workers. In addition, there are specific risk control measures required for some schools or campuses where activities including hazardous chemicals, plant, and/or construction.

4.2 A school must consider various control options and choose the control that most effectively eliminates the risk.

4.3 When a risk cannot be eliminated, the school must choose the control measures that most effectively minimises the risk. This may involve a single control measure or a combination of different controls that together provide the highest level of protection that is reasonably practicable.

4.4 The hierarchy of control measures that should be used to control a risk are:

a)   Substituting the hazard with something safer
b)   Isolating the hazard so a person is not exposed to the risk
c)   Implementing engineering controls
d)   Minimising the hazard using administrative controls
e)   The use of personal protective equipment.

4.5 The school must ensure that all control measures are effectively implemented and maintained in a way that ensures the risk is minimised.

4.6 A school must review and, if necessary, implement changes to the control measures, especially when:

a)   The control measure is not effective in controlling the risk
b)   A change at the workplace is likely to give rise to a new or different health and safety risk and the existing control measure may no longer effectively control the risk
c)   A new hazard or risk is identified
d)   The results of consultation indicate that a review is necessary
e)   A health and safety representative requests a review.

5. <u>Visitors in the workplace</u>

Visitors, parents, friends and family at a school have work health and safety responsibilities and must:

a)   Comply with any reasonable work health and safety instructions at the workplace
b)   Take reasonable care to not put themselves or others at risk.

5.1 Contractors/ Sub contractors/ Service providers.

A school has the same WHS responsibilities to contractor and sub-contractors as it does to all other persons in the school. A Contractor / Service Provider Induction Package and Contractor Register should be established to ensure the school is meeting its requirements. A template of these can be found on WHS online.

6. Work, Health, Safety and Students

The Work, Health and Safety Act and regulations apply to all students in the schools of the Lismore Diocese. The duty of care owed to students is non-transferrable and all due diligence must be undertaken to ensure the safety of students as far as is reasonable practicable. Policies and procedures should be developed by schools that encompass this, including but not limited to:

a) Establishing that students have a duty of care to each other.
b) School sport
c) Outside activities conducted in the name of the school
d) Bullying, including cyber-bullying
e) School camps and excursions

7. WHS Suite of Policies

Each school is required to establish and maintain a WHS suite of policies that include but not limited to:

a) Building and Property Management Policy
b) Parents/Caregivers Complaints and Concerns Policy
c) First Aid Policy
d) Medication Policy
e) Excursion Policy
f) Risk Management Policy
g) Anti- Bullying Policy
h) WHS Policy

8. Employees Obligations

a) All Employees have a duty of care to ensure the safety of themselves and others in the workplace.
b) All Employees are obligated to report or make safe any hazard they are aware of in the workplace.
c) All Employees are obligated to operate all plant and equipment in a safe manner and for the purpose and manner it was intended.
d) All Employees are to be aware that they have a duty of care to the safety of students.

9. Employers Obligations

a) Provide a healthy and safe workplace.
b) Provide a framework for effective consultation between staff and management in all WHS matters. This should take the form of a Health and Safety Committee (HSC), a Health and Safety Representative (HSR) or other agreed arrangements. These arrangements, which ever are agreed upon in the school, need to be documented and followed through with. A school is to provide training for those on a HSC or to a HSR.
c) Work, Health and Safety to be a standing item at all staff meetings. This should be minuted and minutes to be stored in a manner whereby they can be accessed by staff.
d) Provide for and implement procedures for the health and safety of students in our schools. Risk assessments must be completed for all excursions and school sports (school sport refers to any sporting activity that takes place under the name or auspices of the school, regardless of where or when it takes place). Schools must have and implement an anti-bullying policy.