



Occupational Health & Safety Policy

Level: 2

Version Number: 7

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1. Preamble

- 1.1. Chairo Christian School is operated by the Chairo Parent Governed Christian Education Limited (the Company) and is governed by a Board of Directors (the Board) elected from and by the members of the Company to control and manage the business and affairs of the Company. The Board, as the employer, has ultimate responsibility for occupational health and safety within the school.
- 1.2. Chairo is committed to caring for the interests of others (Phil. 2:4) by seeking to care for their wellbeing (1 Cor. 10:24) and by doing good to all, especially those within the school community (Gal. 6:10). Protecting others is inherent in Christ's command to love one another (John 13:34, 1 Cor. 13:6-7).
- 1.3. At Chairo, occupational health and safety issues are viewed as being part of a bigger picture of compassion, stewardship and justice within a workplace and learning environment where members are seeking to be responsible disciples of Jesus Christ.
- 1.4. The school is committed to providing and maintaining a healthy and safe workplace so far as is reasonably practicable. It is acknowledged that effectively addressed occupational health and safety contributes to the school's mission to "*provide excellence ... within a caring Christian community*".
- 1.5. At Chairo, it is acknowledged that the school has a responsibility to model healthy and safe workplace practices to students, who are the employees and employers of the future.
- 1.6. While this policy relates primarily to occupational health and safety, it is recognised that the legal duty of care owed to staff members and contractors similarly applies to students under occupational health and safety legislation. It is acknowledged that the establishment of an occupational health and safety culture with effective processes in place will assist in meeting such duty of care to students.
- 1.7. Employees should also refer to other relevant policies, including the *Equal Opportunity and Respectful Workplace Policy*, and the Chairo Christian School document entitled *Important Return to Work Information*.

2. Definitions

- 2.1. *Employees*, for the purposes of occupational health and safety matters, refers to staff members but also extends to include independent contractors and their employees who enter the school, in relation to the performance of duties over which the school has control or would normally have control.
- 2.2. *Others* in the workplace refers to everyone other than staff members, including students, parents, volunteers and visitors.
- 2.3. *Reasonably practicable* involves doing what can be done in the light of: (1) the severity of a risk; (2) knowledge about a risk and any methods of removing or minimising such risk; (3) the availability and suitability of ways to remove or minimise a risk; and (4) the cost of removing or minimising a risk.



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- 2.4. *OHS* where used within this policy and related documents refers to occupational health and safety.
- 2.5. *Designated Work Groups* are groups of staff members in a particular work area, unit or department who share similar workplace health and safety interests and conditions. At Chairo, all staff members are regarded as being part of single Designated Work Groups at each campus, with everyone encouraged to actively participate in creating and maintaining a healthy and safe workplace.
- 2.6. *HSRs* refers to Health & Safety Representatives elected to represent staff members in relation to their health and safety, and whose names shall be clearly displayed and/or otherwise communicated to staff members.

3. **Details**

3.1. **Legal Responsibilities**

- 3.1.1. The school shall seek to comply with all relevant legislation, including the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, *Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017*, *Dangerous Goods Act 1985*, *Environmental Protection Act 1970* and *Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013*.
- 3.1.2. Compliance codes and codes of practice provide practical guidance to those who have duties or obligations under occupational health and safety, dangerous goods and worker's compensation legislation. While compliance codes and codes of practice are not mandatory, it is deemed that there is compliance with the Act or Duty Regulation covered by the code. Where it is reasonably practicable to do so, relevant staff members at Chairo are asked to observe these codes, which may be accessed at this link: <https://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/laws/compliance-codes-and-codes-of-practice>
- 3.1.3. The school shall comply with Part 5 – Duties of the *OHS Act 2004* and report all serious incidents to Worksafe (refer to item 3.0 of the *Accidents and Incidents Policy*).
- 3.1.4. The school shall comply with return-to-work obligations under Victorian worker's compensation legislation. Important information related to this and the relevant RTW Issues Resolution Process is found in the Chairo Christian School document entitled *Important Return to Work Information*.

3.2. **Mutual responsibility**

- 3.2.1. All members of the school community are expected to take appropriate responsibility for OHS, both for their own wellbeing and for the wellbeing of those they interact with.
- 3.2.2. It is to be recognised that health and safety includes both physical and psychological wellbeing.
- 3.2.3. Staff members have a responsibility to develop a culture of mutual responsibility, care and protection. They should take seriously the wellbeing of students, and act to minimise risks of harm to students and other staff members, particularly when teaching or supervising activities.
- 3.2.4. Students should be encouraged to behave responsibly in order that they and their fellow students can share a safe and healthy school environment.
- 3.2.5. Others working or volunteering at the school or in school-related activities, or visiting the school community, shall be requested to exercise care to ensure the safety of themselves and others.



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3.3. Duty of care

3.3.1. So far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of employees and others (including students, parents, volunteers and visitors) shall not be placed at risk when they are at school or otherwise engaged in school-related activities.

3.3.2. Duty of care shall be applied by a systematic approach that includes:

- having a clear expectation of staff members with respect to safety and wellbeing;
- training, consultation and communication with staff, contractors and volunteers as appropriate;
- maintaining a safe and healthy work environment, with safe facilities and equipment;
- being prepared for incidents, should they occur; and
- monitoring hazards and risks, and seeking to improve OHS so far as reasonably practicable.

3.4. Consultation and engagement

3.4.1. The school shall fulfil its obligations to facilitate the election and training of HSRs from within each Designated Work Group to represent staff members in relation to their health and safety, and to serve on campus occupational health and safety committees with management representatives and other staff members.

3.4.2. To engage staff members as part of an ongoing commitment to OHS education, time shall be set aside at campus staff meetings in all areas at least once per month for OHS-related discussion of any OHS concerns. As required the OHS manager and/or campus HSR should attend the staff meetings. Training, and specific professional development opportunities shall be facilitated as required across the campuses.

3.4.3. To engage staff members, volunteers and contractors in the task of maintaining a safe and healthy school environment, the school shall:

- demonstrate in words and actions, a commitment to OHS at all leadership levels; and
- require behaviour that promotes and safeguards a healthy and safe school environment.

3.4.4. The school shall consult with staff members, contractors and volunteers with regard to OHS matters as applicable and appropriate by sharing relevant information and providing them with reasonable opportunities to raise OHS issues, express views and opinions, and contribute to decision-making.

3.4.5. The views and opinions of staff members, contractors and volunteers shall be taken into account when making decisions and they shall be advised about the outcome.

3.5. OHS system

3.5.1. The school shall manage the health and safety of students, staff members and others by:

- modelling behaviour at all leadership levels that promotes OHS;
- establishing policies and setting up systems to manage OHS;
- following an annual OHS checklist;
- communicating with and training staff members, contractors and volunteers as appropriate, with regard to their roles and responsibilities to maintain a safe school environment;
- managing risks by establishing formal processes to identify and eliminate hazards where it is reasonably practicable to do so; and
- reporting and investigating any incidents that arise.



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- 3.5.2. The OHS Management Team shall meet regularly throughout the year to review hazard, incident and workplace inspection reports, and to review progress with regard to OHS training and any outstanding checklist issues.
- 3.5.3. An Incident Summary Register shall be maintained and any OHS matters communicated to the OHS Management team.
- 3.5.4. Compliance checklists as assigned to outside bodies for completion and staff shall be completed at regular intervals and presented to the OHS Management team in order to ensure active engagement in risk management and compliance with OHS laws and policies are in place.
- 3.5.5. The OHS system shall be documented, and related policies and documents kept up-to-date and accessible.

3.6. Annual planning

- 3.6.1. The OHS Management Team shall develop and maintain a procedural document and checklist that:
 - outlines tasks required to meet the policy responsibilities of the school;
 - assigns responsibility to individuals for completion of the above tasks; and
 - is reviewed annually.
- 3.6.2. The OHS Management Team shall prepare an annual OHS document that will:
 - Identify areas for improvement, and prepare and schedule plans to make improvements;
 - review all hazards that have been experienced in the work environment and review the related risks and risk remedies, and consider any areas for improvement and prepare and schedule plans to make improvements;
 - Monitor and review the regular planned workplace inspections; and
 - schedule communication and training activities for staff members, contractors, volunteers and others, as appropriate.

3.7. Continuous improvement

- 3.7.1. All incidents must be documented and appropriate action taken.
- 3.7.2. When there are changes in workplace practices, any risks resulting from such changes shall be identified and accommodated.

3.8. Training and communication

- 3.8.1. As part of their induction, all new staff members must be familiar with the school's OHS policies and their OHS responsibilities.
- 3.8.2. Ongoing training shall be provided to staff members as required to reinforce specific OHS responsibilities.
- 3.8.3. HSRs shall be provided with time to attend training courses and to fulfil their role.
- 3.8.4. Volunteers must be informed and trained with regard to relevant OHS procedures and rules.
- 3.8.5. Students shall be appropriately informed regarding the OHS rules that apply to them.

3.9. Risk management

- 3.9.1. Risk assessments in relation to activities shall be carried out and reviewed regularly.
- 3.9.2. The risks identified through risk assessments shall be eliminated or reduced as appropriate, and as reasonably practicable to do so.



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3.10. Incident investigation and response

- 3.10.1. All incidents (including accidents, other incidents and near misses) shall be investigated and actions determined in order to prevent reoccurrences.
- 3.10.2. The school shall plan how to respond to critical incidents, and in the event of a critical incident occurring, the causes of the incident and effectiveness of the school's response shall be reviewed to help prevent such incidents occurring again.
- 3.10.3. The school shall fulfil its obligations to return injured employees to work as soon as possible, and to prevent a recurrence of the injury, in a carefully managed return-to-work program.