



1. Rationale

Catholic schools can serve as models for all within Western Australia who seek to create genuine communities. Such communities are always founded upon shared commitment to the common good (Mandate, 6).

Pursuant to the Occupational Safety and Health Act (WA) 1984 (the OSH Act) and in accordance with the Mandate for Catholic Education, the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) is committed to ensuring the safety and health of all people whilst on school premises.

Therefore, all Catholic schools shall endeavour to:

- ensure the safety, health and welfare of all employees and non-employees on school premises
- develop, promote, and maintain safe and healthy school premises that seeks to minimise the risk of injury or illness for employees and non-employees
- create a culture of safety that encourages the development, maintenance and promotion of healthy school premises, and
- ensure that adequate financial, physical and human resources are available to support the management of occupational safety and health on school premises.

2. Definitions

An *employer* is a person who engages employees, and includes an accountable officer, such as a principal or such other figure of authority delegated with the duty of employing and/or directing employees and non-employees whilst on school premises.

An *employee* is any person working under a contract of employment, apprenticeship or traineeship scheme. For the purposes of this policy statement, the term employee shall also include contractors engaged by the employer to carry out work associated with the business of the school.

Non-employee refers to any person legally on the school premises who may be affected by the work activity, and shall include students, parents, guardians, caregivers, community members and volunteers.

Catholic school refers to an educational venue as defined by the Teacher Registration Act 2012 that is part of the Catholic Education system in Western Australia. This includes schools as well as early learning and care services.

School premises include the school campus and places away from a school campus such as a campsite or where school excursions may take place from time to time.

A *Provisional Improvement Notice (PIN)* is a notice issued by a safety and health representative to the employer requiring them to address an occupational safety and health concern in the workplace.

3. Scope

This policy statement applies to all Catholic schools and early learning and care services in Western Australia.

4. Principles

- 4.1 According to the provisions of the OSH Act all Catholic schools in Western Australia have a legal responsibility to put in place procedures and processes to develop, promote and maintain a safe and healthy school premises for all employees and non-employees.
- 4.2 All those who serve the Church through Catholic Education in Western Australia are called to be accountable and accept responsibility for any action or initiative at a personal and professional level.
- 4.3 As the authority to employ is delegated to the principal by the Bishop of each Diocese or the Congregational Leader or Governing Authority, the principal as the employer shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, provide and maintain school premises where employees and non-employees are not exposed to hazards.
- 4.4 When engaged in activities on school premises, employees and non-employees are required to take reasonable care for their own health and safety. Further, they have a responsibility to avoid situations and practices (including acts or omissions) that may adversely affect the health and safety of others.
- 4.6 Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) representatives must be elected to their position in accordance with the OSH Act.
- 4.7 To meet the consultative requirement of the OSH Act, the cycle of continuous improvement inherent in the Australian and New Zealand Standards for Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems: Specification with Guidance for Use [AS/NZS 4801:2001] and in the interests of building a culture of safety, all schools may establish and effectively operate a whole-of-school OSH committee.

5. Procedures

- 5.1 Each Catholic school shall develop and communicate to employees its own OSH Policy consistent with the CECWA Occupational Safety and Health policy and the proforma policy developed by Catholic Education Western Australia. It is not sufficient for a school to state that it complies with or uses the CECWA policy.
- 5.2 In developing a school-based OSH policy, the employer should undertake appropriate hazard identification and risk assessment.
- 5.3 General duties of employers shall include:
 - safe systems of work;
 - hazard identification and risk assessment
 - induction, information, instruction, training and supervision;
 - consultation and co-operation;
 - provision of personal protection;
 - safe plant and substances;
 - reporting of fatalities, injuries and disease.
- 5.4 General duties of employees shall include:
 - follow the employer's safety and health instructions

- utilise personal protective clothing and equipment where appropriate (i.e. as intended or directed)
 - take care of and appropriately maintain equipment
 - report suspected or actual hazards to the school-based OSH representative and/or employer
 - immediately report work-related injuries or near miss or concerning incidents to the employer and school-based OSH representative and complete requisite paperwork
 - cooperate with the employer, members of the school management team, the school-based OSH representative and whole-of-school OSH committee members (where applicable) to enable the employer to execute its obligation under the OSH Act
- 5.5 With the exception of a contractor, an employee may request the election of a school-based OSH representative. All employees are eligible to be elected. A person who is elected as a safety and health representative is elected for a period up to 2 years and is eligible to be re-elected.
- 5.6 The OSH representative is entitled to paid time off to attend the compulsory CEWA training course.
- 5.7 The employer may work collaboratively with the school-based OSH representative(s) to form a whole-of-school OSH committee. Membership of this committee will vary from school to school and will depend upon many factors including staff size and student numbers. At a minimum, the committee shall consist of:
- the employer or a delegated representative (e.g. an assistant or deputy principal)
 - the school-based OSH representative(s), and
 - a member(s) of staff.
- 5.8 In accordance with the OSH Act, WorkSafe Guidance Note: General Duty of Care in Western Australian workplaces, the AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 Risk management - Principles and guidelines and AS/NZ Standards 4801:2001 Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems, school-based OSH representatives have the following functions:
- carry out regular workplace inspections
 - immediately carry out an appropriate investigation of any accident or any near miss to any person engaged in work or study or any approved activity; at the school premises
 - keep abreast of health and safety information provided by the employer and relevant external bodies (e.g. WorkSafe)
 - liaise as necessary with WorkSafe, the Department of and other relevant Government or private bodies
 - consult and cooperate with the employer on all matters relating to workplace health and safety
 - liaise with employees regarding work-based safety and health issues
 - promote a culture of safety on school premises, by working collaboratively with the employer, employees and non-employees
 - immediately report to the employer any potential or actual hazard that poses a danger to the safety and health of employees and/or non-employees
 - issue PINs where they believe existence of a breach of the OSH Act or Regulations. Before issuing a PIN, the school-based OSH representative shall liaise with the employer to discuss the issue. These discussions shall include risk assessment of the hazard(s) and control measure options. The employer shall take appropriate corrective action upon receipt of a PIN.
- 5.9 Penalties are applicable for breaches of the OSH Act. Penalties may be applied to employers, and employees.
- 5.10 The employer is required to notify WorkSafe under the following circumstances:

- Any workplace related death or serious life threatening injuries or diseases must be reported to WorkSafe immediately using the 24 hour incident/accident reporting line Tel: 1800 678 198.
- Certain types of injuries and diseases are to be reported to WorkSafe using the appropriate notification form: <http://www.commerce.wa.gov.au/worksafe/how-report-injury-and-disease>. This includes any injury which, in the opinion of a medical practitioner, is likely to prevent the employee from being able to work within 10 days of the day on which the injury occurred.
The employer shall consult with the Employment and Community Relations Team prior to making any notification to WorkSafe.

5.11 If an event occurs on school premises, which constitutes a critical incident, as defined in the Non-Government Schools Registration Standards, the procedures outlined in CECWA Crisis Management Planning in Catholic Schools policy should be adhered to.

6. References

Bishops of Western Australia, *Mandate for the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia: 2009 – 2015*

Code of Ethical Conduct for those who serve the Church through Catholic Education in Western Australia

Department of Education Services website Critical Incidents in non-government schools at http://www.des.wa.gov.au/schooleducation/nongovernmentschools/info-ngs/critical_incidents/Pages/default.aspx

Department of Commerce, Government of WA. 2006. WorkSafe [Web site] Available: <http://www.docep.wa.gov.au/WorkSafe/>

Occupational Safety & Health Act 1984 (WA)
Occupational Safety & Health Regulations 1996 (WA)

Standards Australia and Standards New Zealand. 2001. Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems: Specification with guidance for use [AS/NZS 4801:2001]. Sydney: Standards Australia

Standards Australia. 2009. *Risk management - Principles and guidelines (AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009)*

Commission for Occupational Safety and Health. 2005. *Guidance Note: General Duty of Care in Western Australian workplaces*

CECWA Crisis Management Planning in Catholic Schools policy

7. Related Documents

CECWA School Excursions policy

8. Related Proformas and other Forms

Proforma policy

9. Review History

Year of Review:	Reviewed by:	Amendments/Review
2008	SPC	Originally Released
2010	CEOWA	Reformatted
2014	SPC	Reviewed
2017	CEWA Policy Group	Reformatted

10. Next Review

Year:	Sub-Committee Responsible
2019	Audit and Risk Sub-Committee