



POLICY DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW POLICY

Rationale

- Clearly written policies set out the school's position on a particular issue.
- They are important tools as they reflect the school's values and support the school's broad direction as outlined in its Strategic Plan.
- Good policies are essential because they demonstrate that the school is being operated in an efficient manner and ensure that there will be consistency in decisions and in school operations.
- A School Council will develop a policy because:
 - DET policy requires a school to have a policy on a particular topic
 - Council decides to issue guidance about an aspect of implementation of its strategic plan
 - Council decides to set out the school's position on a major issues within its powers and functions
 - The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) - Schools requires policy statements in specific areas
 - A policy is governed by Ministerial Order e.g. Anaphylaxis Management
- Due to legislation and statewide approaches, DET requires schools to have the following policies in place:
 - Investments
 - Parent Payments
 - Student Dress Code
 - Child Safe Standards
 - Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality
- DET states that other policies which typically are common to most schools such as camps and excursions, homework, SunSmart, sponsorship, community use of school facilities, canteen operation and other school food services should be developed.
- A Health Care Needs Policy is a mandatory prerequisite for Anaphylaxis and other student health issues.
- A Duty of Care Policy is a mandatory prerequisite for Yard Duty/Supervision.
- Admission is a mandatory prerequisite policy for Enrolment. Both these policies are prerequisites for Attendance.
- For VRQA registration purposes, schools must have policies and procedures relating to:
 - School Philosophy
 - Vision, Mission & Values
 - Student Enrolment (Specialist Schools only)
 - Curriculum Framework
 - Teaching & Learning
 - Assessment
 - Reporting to Parents
 - Data Analysis & Use
 - Children at Risk
 - Framework for Improving Student Outcomes
 - Student Engagement & Inclusion
 - Complaints
 - Bullying Prevention
 - Wellbeing & Learning
 - Child Safe – Child Safe Standards
 - Yard/Duty Supervision
 - Safety of Students Working with External Providers (Incursions)

- Camps & Excursions
 - Emergency & Critical Incidents including Recovery Plan
 - Risk Management Strategies (Child Safe Standard 6)
 - Administration of Medication
 - Care Arrangements for Ill Children
 - Medication (Administration of)
 - Anaphylaxis Management
 - Registers Maintenance (Staff, Volunteers & External Providers)
 - Mandatory Reporting (Child Protection)
 - Accident Reporting & Recording
 - First Aid (and Register of staff trained in first aid)
 - Internet Use (including Acceptable Use)
 - Emergency & Incident Reporting
 - Communication of School Policies, Procedures & Schedule
 - Policy Communication & Schedule
 - Student Engagement
 - Procedures for Verifying & Recording WWC checks and VIT registration
 - Annual Report
- Please note that some Reviewers may request other policies.
 - DET also lists the policies related to Governance & Management which includes the policies listed below as well as some of the policies above:

Accountability and Improvement (Performance & Development and Framework for School Improvement)	Accident Recording and Reporting
Archives and Records Management	Advertising
Asset Management and SEIS	Banning, Search and Seizure of Harmful Items
Camps and Excursions	Conducting Research
Copyright	Duty of Care
Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances	Emergency and Incident Reporting
Emergency and Critical Incidents	Framework for Improving School Outcomes
Emergency Management Planning	Freedom of Information
Fraud and Corruption	Home Schooling
Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality	Information and Privacy
Internet/Social Media	Payments by Parents/Carers
Mobile Phones, Use by Children	Performance & Development
Personal Devices – Parent Payments & Access	School Naming
Protocols for Members of Parliament Visiting Schools	Risk Management
Relations with the Media	Smoking Ban
Uniform/Dress Code	School Council Operations
School Council Legal Framework	School Council Meetings
School Council Elections	
School Hours	
- Please note that there is a significant duplication of policies under the various sections.
 - If the school operates an Out-of-School-Hours Care Program (OHSC) there are policies required under the National Quality Framework (NQF) for the service to be compliant.
 - From time to time, the School Council or Principal might identify the need to develop a policy about a school or community issue (for example, students' use of mobile phones at school, beyond curriculum purposes). Most often, this will arise from the need to set out the school's position in relation to a specific topic. In these cases, the policy would explain the purpose and intended outcome and the Principal and staff would establish operational procedures to implement the policy. The views of all Councillors and the school community would help inform any new or changed policy.
 - Such a policy can be useful to:
 - promote fairness, consistency and transparency across the school
 - provide the means to engage the community in achieving an agreed approach in response to a specific topic
 - manage or prevent controversy

- inform the school community about the school's position in relation to a particular matter
- Depending on the topic, the Department may have issued advice which must be used as a guide for policy development by the school.
- The templates portal is an important and useful resources for schools and is designed to reduce workload in the area of policy development. Whilst not yet compulsory, DET recommends use of the templates as they become available.

Purpose

- To have in place a minimum set of policies based on the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) - Schools to best guide the operations and directions of the school.
- To ensure Footscray North Primary School complies with DET policy and guidelines and relevant legislation.
- To assist School Councillors to understand their governance responsibilities in relation to establishing and reviewing school policies.

Implementation:

- The Principal will advise the School Council on the need for school policies to meet government policy or legislation or guidelines.
- The School Council also will determine the need for policies on local issues within its powers and functions, develop policies including consulting the school community if required and regularly review existing policies.
- As a minimum a set of policies based on the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) - Schools standards will be developed. School policies also will include the recommended and mandatory sets as above.
- An Anaphylaxis Management Policy consistent with MO706 will be developed.
- School policies will be of a consistent layout, will focus on a single issue and will describe the background or rationale, purpose or aims, implementation procedures (action to be taken), evaluation schedule and references.
- The policies may include "definitions" to improve the clarity of the policy which should be precise and easy to understand.
- The policies will include the date when the policy was developed or updated and subsequently ratified by School Council.
- Policies may include procedural statements in the form of "The school will" when this has been stipulated by DET.
- Policies may include school specific procedures to further clarify the procedures to be implemented.
- As applicable, the policies will be cross-referenced to the Child Safe Standards with statements such as:
 - "The safety and wellbeing of children is this school's highest priority."
 - "This school has **zero tolerance of child abuse.**"
- The development and review of policies will have an agreed process so that various stakeholders are part of the consultation and review process.
- The process of considering school policies will be managed by the Principal who may be supported by a School Council Policy Subcommittee, will be a continuous cycle, and as far as practicable, will use a transparent and consultative process.
- When developing a new policy, the Council will determine if consultation with appropriate personnel in order to draft the initial policy statement is required or whether a special working party needs to be established. If yes, the draft policy will then be circulated for comment as deemed appropriate, back to the leadership team and finally to the School Council for ratification, preferably within three months.
- To comply with DET policy and guidelines, in formulating and reviewing its policies, the School Council will formally seek the views of the school community on student engagement, vision, mission and values statements, visitors to the school, the uniform/dress code and photographing & filming children.
- Changes as a result of policy development and/or review will be widely advised to staff and parents/carers as appropriate.

- Policies will be developed taking into account DET policy as described at web reference www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/azindex.aspx
- Council will ratify all financial policies annually and preferably at the start of the year:
- These policies also require annual ratification:
 - Anaphylaxis Management
 - Bullying Prevention
 - Emergency Management Planning
 - Uniform/Dress Code
 - Support for Families Experiencing Hardship
- The Parent Payments Policy will be ratified at least six weeks before the end of the year when information about payment of school costs for the following year will be sent to parents/carers.
- Parents/carers will be provided with the following policies on enrolment:
 - Bullying Prevention
 - Homework
 - Information and Privacy
 - Payments by Parents/Carers
 - Photographing & Filming Children
 - Mobile Phones, Use by Children
 - Smoking Ban
 - Student Engagement
 - Uniform/Dress Code
- The above policies will also be placed on the school website and parents/carers may be directed to the website rather than receiving a hardcopy.
- Upon request, parents/carers will be given a complete set of school policies or a single policy relating to a specific area.
- Information about other policies e.g. complaints, sun & UV protection, medication at school, times when the playground will be supervised will be provided through the school newsletter.
- Statements about the school's vision, mission and values will be displayed strategically throughout the school.
- Staff will be briefed on school policies such as Duty of Care, Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality, Anaphylaxis Management and Asthma Management according to the communication schedule.
- New staff will be informed about school policies as part of the induction process.
- For children with disabilities or medical needs, the school's *Health Care Needs Policy* will be provided upon enrolment.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change (latest DET update February 2018).

This policy was ratified by School Council 25/3/2019.

References:

- www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/policywriting.aspx
- Improving School Governance: Policy & Review February 2018
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority – School Registration
 - > www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/registration/Pages/schooledefault.aspx
 - Support Materials for Schools – Registration Requirements for Schools
 - > www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/Pages/registration.aspx
 - School Policy and Advisory Guide
 - > www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx
 - School Policy Templates Portal
 - > edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/cp/Pages/home.aspx

For further advice on policy development and requirements, school council members can email the School Operations and Governance Unit at: school.council@edumail.vic.gov.au