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## OHS

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### A OHS LEGISLATION – AN OVERVIEW

#### **Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 and Regulations 2001**

In NSW the legislative duty of care is that employers shall ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of all their employees.

Mater Dei is committed to due diligence, i.e. taking every precaution reasonable in the circumstances to protect the health, safety and welfare of its employees, students, volunteers, contractors and visitors to the work site.

#### **Outline of Act, Regulations, Codes of Practice, Standards and Workers Compensation Legislation**

**The Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000** is the principal legislation.

**Regulations 2001** have been made under the Act and form part of the legal structure of each Act. They are designed as guides to assist the employer with their ‘Duty of Care’ responsibility. They cover such areas as risk management, manual handling, safety committees, first aid, notification of accidents, hazardous substances.

**Codes of Practice** provide practical but not mandatory guidance, however a failure to follow a relevant code in the absence of a specific regulation may be used as evidence to support prosecution.

In the absence of a relevant Regulation, a Code of Practice should be followed. Codes of Practice are available from WorkCover.

**Standards** are advisory documents containing technical data, designed to ensure consistency in methods and materials. National Standards are declared by the National Occupational Health and Safety Commission (Worksafe Australia). Any standard adopted by Regulation has the force of law. There are also Australian Standards which should be adopted as relevant in the absence of a Worksafe standard.

**Workers Compensation legislation** is a separate Act and compliance is required.

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### B OHS POLICY

#### Management Plan

Mater Dei Management is committed to compliance with health and safety legislation and the requirements of the WorkCover Authority. It recognises that the promotion and maintenance of Occupational Health and Safety is primarily the responsibility of management. It will exercise due diligence in understanding and carrying out its legal duties, in assessing risks and hazards in the workplace on an on-going basis and take all reasonable precautions with respect to those risks. It will communicate this commitment to all members within the workplace. It will endeavour to ensure the commitment and compliance of all members within the workplace. It is committed to communication and consultation on all OHS matters with all workgroups.

The Management Model Mater Dei has adopted is the continuation of the **OHS Committee** with elected representatives from the different workgroups - Administration (including Development), School, FRP and Bethany. The Committee, including Management, meets at least once per school term and more often as required. Management is represented by the CEO/Principal, Assistant Principal and Business Manager. All Committee members have undertaken, or as need arises, will undertake, WorkCover accredited training.

Each program area (Administration/Development, School, FRP and Bethany) shall be deemed to constitute a **workplace group** and have OHS as an integral part of their program administration. OHS shall be on the agenda of every workgroup's regular staff meeting.

*Any deviation from the safety code by any person at any level shall be dealt with as a serious offence.*

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### **C HOW WE APPROACH OHS AT MATER DEI**

**The approach is planned and coordinated. The following Steps will be achieved in stages.**

- Step 1            Development of OH & S Policy and OHS Program**
- Step 2            Records and Records Management**
- Step 3            Risk Management System**
- Step 4            Injury Management**
- Step 5            Emergency Procedures and Drills**
- Step 6            Workplace Training in OHS**
- Step 7            Contracts and Contractor Management**
- Step 8            Comprehensive Safety Audit**

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## OHS

### C HOW WE APPROACH OHS AT MATER DEI

#### Step 1 - Occupational Health and Safety Program

A program of activities and procedures will be set up, continually updated and effectively carried out. The procedures will relate to:

1. Management Responsibility
2. Consultation and Communication
3. Risk Management and Process Control
4. Training, Learning and Skills Development
5. Records and Records Management, Monitoring and Reviewing
6. Injury Management and Return to Work Program
7. Emergency Procedures and Drills

#### **Specific Responsibilities**

##### **A. Managers**

Each Manager (CEO, Assistant Principal, Manager FRP, Manager Bethany and Manager Development) is required to ensure that this policy and the OH & S program is effectively implemented in their area of control and to hold employees accountable for their specific responsibilities. They must take all practical measures to ensure

- that the workplace under their control is safe and without risks to health
- that the behaviour of all persons in the workplace is safe and without risks to health.

##### **More Specifically**

- the manager will always be held accountable for detecting any unsafe or unhealthy conditions or behaviour
- all problems must be authorised for fixing, or reported to the manager having the authority to fix the problem.

##### **B. Employees**

All employees are required to co-operate with the OHS Policy and Program to ensure their own health and safety and the health and safety of others in the workplace.

##### **C. Contractors**

All contractors and sub-contractors engaged to perform work on the organization's premises or locations are required, as part of their contract, to comply with the Occupational Health and Safety policies, procedures and programs of the organisation and to observe directions on health and safety from designated officers of the organisation. Failure to comply or observe a direction will be considered a breach of the contract and sufficient grounds for termination of the contract.

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### **C HOW WE APPROACH OHS AT MATER DEI**

#### **Step 2 – Records and Records Management**

##### **The following activities require records**

- buildings inspections safety checklist
- hazard identification/risk identification (purple slip)
- risk assessments (including activities)
- record of OH & S complaints (green slip)
- accident report
- accident investigation
- register of injuries
- Material Safety Data Sheets (hereafter referred to as MSDS)
- Contractor Insurance
- Prohibited Employment Declaration
- audits of equipment (photographs)
- OHS audit report

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#### **Step 3 – Risk Management System**

##### **Hazards**

- physical - slips, trips and falls; violence and aggression
- chemical
- biological

##### **Risks**

- the most common factor in workplace injury isn't exposure to hazard, it is exposure to risks

##### **Hazard/Risk identification**

- workplace inspections by designated consultative group
- employees at the site, doing the job are to be encouraged to contribute
- use checklists
- determine which action is to be taken: elimination, control, changing work practices (education) or protective equipment.
- report on risks that are eliminated/managed
- time frame for review

##### **Hazard/Risk Monitoring**

- all prospective new equipment to be assessed for risk prior to purchase
- regular workplace inspections
- assess all changes to the workplace (new plant/buildings etc)
- regularly review task performance and training needs

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## C HOW WE APPROACH OHS AT MATER DEI

### Step 3 – Risk Management System

#### A-Z of Risk Assessments to be undertaken

<i>Risk</i>	<i>Regulation</i>	<i>Standard</i>	<i>Code of Practice</i>
• abuse and harassment			
• access and exits			
• animals in the workplace			
• danger tags			
• disabilities			
• drugs and alcohol			
• electricity			
• ergonomics			
• Fire Extinguishers			
• First Aid			
• Gas			
• HIV/Aids and Hepatitis			
• Home Visits			
• Housekeeping			
• hygiene			
• ladders			
• legionnaires disease			
• lighting			
• machinery - guarding and safe plant			
• mobile phones			
• motor vehicles			
• NESB workers			
• personal protective equipment			
• photocopying equipment			
• safe lifting			
• safety reporting processes			
• safety reporting			
• safety signs			
• screen based equipment			
• shift workers			
• skin cancer			
• smoking			
• stress			
• temperature			
• women and reproductive health			
• young people in the workplace			

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#### **Step 4 – Injury Management**

*For minor injuries the employee should report to the First Aid Officer on duty, seek treatment as appropriate and complete a CCI Report*

- Workers Compensation Insurance is compulsory
- Aim of the Act is to provide compensation and rehabilitation for employees suffering work-related injuries
- copy of the summary of the provisions must be prominently displayed with the name and address of the insurer

#### **Key employer obligations**

- notify insurers of any significant injuries within 48 hours
- send claim forms within 7 days
- work with insurers to develop a return to work program
- provide suitable duties where practicable
- not dismiss an employee because of an injury within 6 months of becoming unfit
- keep employment and wages records for 7 years

#### **Employee obligations**

- notify employer ASAP
- complete W/C claim form
- obtain and attach a WorkCover medical form
- if the injury is serious, nominate a treating doctor
- make all reasonable efforts to return to work
- attend medical examinations as directed by the employer/insurer
- provide accurate information about any aspect of the claim

#### **Return to work programs**

A workplace Return-to-Work officer must be designated and trained. Suitable duties must be offered to employees who have sustained work-related injuries and who are considered by a medical practitioner to commence work-based rehabilitation. Consideration should be given to the physical, social, vocational and psychological capabilities.

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#### Step 5 – Emergency Procedures and Drills

##### Emergency Evacuation

Mater Dei, through its Occupational Health and Safety Committee, is responsible for the effective implementation and monitoring of its Emergency Evacuation Plan for the school, the residences, Bethany Early Intervention and the Mater Dei Chapel.

##### General Procedures

- a) current egress maps are to be displayed outside each classroom and at egress routes.
- b) ensure that all staff and students are aware of egress routes and exit procedures and the assembly point
- c) fire-fighting equipment is to be maintained in good order to legislative requirements. This involves regular inspections of equipment and monitoring for correct display of equipment (signs etc)
- d) regular training is to take place (annually) for new staff on the use of fire fighting equipment. Unless the fire is very small no attempt is to be made to use fire-fighting equipment. The safe evacuation of staff and students is to be the priority.
- e) have regular fire drills - at least one per school term
- f) once each person has left the building ***there is to be NO re-entry under any circumstances***
- g) do not attempt to gather personal possessions. Immediately terminate phone calls.
- h) if the room is full of smoke keep close to the ground and crawl, following the lit exit signs to the egress point.
- i) First Aid Officer on duty is to bring the First Aid kit.

##### School

- a) evacuation will proceed whenever the alarm is activated ***even if the alarm stops.***
- b) the meeting point is at the bottom of the senior playground.
- c) if a staff member discovers a fire and the alarm is not sounding, the alarm should be manually activated at a keypad. Staff are to be familiar with this procedure.
- d) staff are to guide students to the most appropriate egress point. Fire doors ***are not to be propped open. Their design is such that they fall closed and prevent re-entry.***
- e) if a student refuses to leave the building, the staff members in charge of the group or class must leave the student and accompany the rest of the group to safety. The staff member in charge must **IMMEDIATELY** notify the most senior person on the premises of the situation. This person will take appropriate action.
- f) each floor monitor (the most senior person on each floor at the time) must check common areas and toilets (if safety allows) to ensure these are not occupied.
- g) teachers at each classroom must take the class roll, and any other roll assigned to their care because of class splits.
- h) students are to be assisted to gather in their roll-class groupings. Teachers and Assistants are to check attendance.
- i) if any person is found to be missing, immediately notify the most senior person on the premises.

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#### **Administration**

The person on reception is to take the following items when leaving the building (if safety allows)

- a) the school mobile, student absence folder, staff sign out folder, visitors book, container with keys and computer back up tape and the staff and student information lists. The receptionist will instruct another staff member to check toilets, kitchen and Blue Room.
- b) each staff member is to close the window nearest to his or her desk if safety permits.
- c) the CEO or another staff member is to check the keypad for information on the whereabouts of the fire if safety allows.
- d) the most senior staff member on duty will meet the emergency services.
- e) the OHS Chairperson and the CEO or next most senior staff on duty will decide safe re-entry after receiving advice from the emergency services.
- f) the CEO or next in charge will organise contacting relatives and carers if the school cannot be re-entered.

#### **Residences**

- a) staff members will escort students from the building
- b) staff members will contact the Program Manager to advise of the situation
- c) the Program Manager will take the most appropriate action re contacting parents if required

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#### Step 6 - Workplace Training in OHS

##### For employees

- Outline of legislative requirements – this document
- Outline role of WorkCover – this document
- Establish specific OH & S training required in consultation with staff eg
  - Manual Handling
  - PART
  - Fire Safety Equipment
  - Safe driving practices/Speed Limits
  - First Aid/Medication
  - Child Protection Parts A & B
  - Emergency Procedures and Drills
  - Critical Incident
  - Electrical
  - Speed limits
  - Sign in and out/Visitors & Staff
  - Lift
  - Privacy
  - Document Control
  - Ergonomics
  - Home Visits
  - Monitoring Medical Records (students)
  - Product Safety and Recalls
  - Purchasing
  - Signage
  - Smoking, Drugs and Alcohol
  - Others as the need arises

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#### **Step 7 - Contracts and Contractor Management**

To be devised

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### **C HOW WE APPROACH OHS AT MATER DEI**

#### **Step 8 - Comprehensive Safety Audit**

- Audits check that there is an appropriate system in place and check that the system is working and if the organisation is prepared for any emergency. It can assess gaps in the present system and identify improvements.
- An audit would be presented to the Board of Directors as proof of compliance to OHS.

*Note: an audit should be conducted after good OHS Policies and Program are in place*