

# HEIGHTS SAFETY

## POLICY

### Rationale:

An inordinate number of accidents occur in schools as a result of staff members, contractors or volunteers working at heights. The number and seriousness of accidents will be significantly decreased if proper training and precautions are taken.

### Aims:

To eliminate workplace injuries resulting on falls from heights.

### Implementation:

- **OHSR for the Underbool Primary School refers to the Principal.**
- All Victorian workplaces, including schools, are required to comply with the *Occupational Health & Safety Regulations 2007* (3.3 Prevention of Falls).
- Working at any height above the ground has an inherent risk that can cause serious injury.
- Tasks at heights under 2 metres require Safe Work Procedures to be developed and implemented to minimise the risk. All or as much of the task as practicable should be completed on the ground.
- Tasks at heights above 2 metres are high risk. Only properly trained and authorised persons will carry out work at our school where there is danger of a fall of greater than 2 metres. The school principal, prior to commencement, must approve all work that involves working above the ground or on ladders or is to be carried out at school at a height greater than 2 metres.
- The school will establish an appropriate risk assessment team (including the principal and OH&S nominee) to identify potential hazards, and establish and implement safe work procedures as well as a control plan based on the recognised hierarchy of control (elimination, substitution, isolation, modification, administrative controls, and protective equipment) for working at heights hazards.
- A Safe Work Procedure must be developed and approved by the principal before a **staff member** works at a height above 2 metres. The staff member must be properly trained and competent. The staff member must complete a Permit to Work and have it approved by the principal before commencing work. Ladders must be compliant with AS 1892.
- A Safe Work Method Statement must be developed and approved by the principal before a **contractor** works at a height above 2 metres. The contractor must be properly trained and competent. The contractor must complete a Permit to Work and have it approved by the principal before commencing work. Ladders must be compliant with AS 1892.
- Our school will ensure that we accept every opportunity provided by Department of Education to have the maximum number of appropriate staff appropriately trained in heights safety, commencing with the staff members most likely to use ladders or work at heights above the ground (eg: maintenance person or PE staff member).
- It is preferred that access to heights greater than 2 metres, such as roofs, be via solid constructions such as stairways or by devices such as cherry pickers or scissor lifts used by contractors rather than ladders or by staff.
- The school will conduct a feasibility study regarding the installation of fixed walkways, platforms, stairs or handrails to difficult locations where a 2 metre fall could potentially occur that require regular or routine access eg: lighting for theatrical performances.
- Generally, all work on the school roof or above 2 metres will be carried out by trained and qualified contractors rather than staff members or volunteers.

- Staff members will not be expected or directed to use ladders for any purpose or carry out any work on school roofs, including the retrieval of balls, or at heights above ground level.
- All work at a height greater than 2 metres will be done in the company of a second adult trained in heights safety
  
- The principal should seek advice from the OHS Advisory Service on **1300 074 715** for information regarding any areas in concern.

**Evaluation:**

- An annual Occupational Health and Safety review will be conducted by the appointed OHSR in consultation with the principal and nominees from the OHS committee or after any serious incident or near miss.
- The outcomes of this review will be placed on the OHS notice board and will be included within the Buildings and Grounds committee's report to School Council and the community.
- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....

**February 2015**