



# DUTY OF CARE POLICY

## INTRODUCTION

Principals and teachers are held to a high standard of care in relation to students. The duty requires Principals and teachers to take reasonable steps to minimise the risks of reasonably foreseeable harm including:

- ensuring the school complies with the seven Child Safe Standards (see Child Safe Standards)
- provision of suitable and safe premises
- provision of an adequate system of supervision
- implementation of strategies to prevent bullying
- ensuring that medical assistance is provided to sick and injured students
- managing employee recruitment, conduct and performance.

“Duty of care” is a legal obligation that requires schools to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include personal injury (physical or psychological) or damage to property. The reasonable steps that our school may decide to take in response to a potential risk or hazard will depend on the circumstances of the risk.

Keelonith Primary School is a Supported Inclusion School, which balances a level of targeted support that is greater than a standard mainstream school, with a level of inclusivity that is greater than a stand-alone specialist school. As a Supported Inclusion School, a number of places at the school are designated for students with disabilities.

Our school has developed policies and procedures to manage common risks in the school environment, including:

Yard duty and Supervision	First Aid	Emergency Management
Bullying Prevention	Child Safe	Visitors
Volunteers	Camps and Excursions	

Staff at our school understand that school activities involve different levels of risk and that particular care may need to be taken to support younger students or students with additional needs. Our school also understands that it is responsible for ensuring that the school premises are kept in good repair and will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of members of our community suffering injury or damage because of the state of the premises.

School staff, parents, carers and students are encouraged to speak to the principal to raise any concerns about risks or hazards at our school, or our duty of care obligations.

Our school acknowledges we are required to take reasonable precautions to prevent the abuse of a child by an individual associated with the organisation while the child is under the care, supervision or authority of the organisation.

## PURPOSE

This policy is in place to ensure that:

- the school community understands the non-delegable duty of care obligations that all staff at Greenvale North West Primary (interim name) owe to our students and members of the school community who visit and use the school premises
- staff at Greenvale North West Primary (interim name) understand their duty of care and operate in a manner that does not compromise their legal obligations

## SCOPE

This policy applies to all staff during all school activities, camps, and excursions.

## COMMUNICATION

Parents will be provided with a copy of this policy on enrolment and the policy will be available on the school website. An annual newsletter item will refer parents to this policy.

Staff will be referred to this policy during induction and at the start of each school year. A copy of this policy will be available on the Sentral Student Management System for staff access.

CRTs, volunteers, and contractors will be provided with a copy of this policy on induction.

Following review and any changes to this policy, all those with a vested interest will be informed through appropriate avenues such as the newsletter, Sentral Student Management System and staff forums.

## POLICY

### 1. Staff Responsibilities

- a) The Principal is responsible for administering arrangements for supervision of students as are deemed necessary according to the circumstances of the school.
- b) The Principal is responsible for informing staff of their Duty of Care through provision of a copy of this policy at the start of the school year and during induction of new staff.
- c) Teachers are responsible for carrying out their assigned supervisory duties in such a way that ensures students are, as far as can be reasonably expected, protected from injury. Teachers are therefore required to;
  - arrive on time to yard duty responsibilities and teaching sessions
  - adequately supervise students lining up outside classrooms after breaks
  - intervene to protect students from bullying or dangerous play
  - seek approval to leave the school during the day and sign out when leaving
  - ensure students in their care are actively supervised at all times. Teachers must not leave a class unsupervised or in the care of ancillary staff, voluntary staff, parents, trainee teachers or external providers at any time (At law, the Duty of Care cannot be delegated)
  - report incidents relating to the Mandatory Reporting guidelines
  - use discretion when allowing students to leave the classroom during sessions for any reason
  - supervise orderly movement of students around the school
  - only provide advice that is correct and in line with the most recent available statements from institutions or employers. In addition, all advice must be within their professional competence.
  - be aware that their duty of care is not confined to the geographic area of the school, or to school activities occurring outside school. The duty also applies to situations before or after school where a teacher can be deemed to have 'assumed' the teacher/pupil relationship. Teachers have a concurrent duty of care to protect students from harm that is reasonably foreseeable outside the school environment.
- a) Non-teaching staff have a duty of care and must intervene by either requesting students cease dangerous behaviour or seeking assistance from a teacher.
- b) When a student departs from school without authorisation, the parent/carer will be informed as soon as possible. Where there is a reasonable concern for the student's safety or the safety of others, immediate contact will be made with the Police and the Department's Incident Support and Operations Centre (ISOC) on 1800 126 126.

### 2. External Providers

- a) Staff at our school acknowledge that, as our duty of care is non-delegable, we are also required to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm when external providers have been engaged to plan for or conduct an activity involving our students. Our *Visitors Policy* and *Camps and Excursions Policy* include information on the safety and care of our students when engaged with external providers.
- b) Our school also takes steps to ensure student safety when they are engaging in off-site workplace learning programs with external providers, such as when students are participating in programs off-site while on camps and excursions and during sporting activities. Our School will follow all applicable Department of Education and Training policies and guidelines in relation to off-site learning and will ensure that the safety and welfare of the students engaging in these activities is paramount.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

### Policy Advisory Library

- Duty of Care

- Workplace Learning

## REVIEW CYCLE

Department guidelines recommend this policy is reviewed every three to four years.

Policy last reviewed	July 2020
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2024