Workplace Health and Safety (WHS) Policy

Policy No:	3.6	Version: 6	June 2025
Responsibility:	School Chair	Scheduled Review Date:	September 2028

1.0 Purpose

Tarremah Steiner School is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for staff, students, visitors and other individuals that may be impacted by the School's operation. Tarremah complies with WHS laws and associated regulations, which will provide direction to the School Executive, staff and the School community to ensure the School is meeting its legal responsibilities. As a school, Tarremah has a particular obligation for providing a safe environment for its students through a preventative approach to health and safety.

2.0 Policy Statement

At Tarremah the health and wellbeing of students and staff is our highest priority. We are proactive in creating, as far as reasonably practicable, a safe and healthy workplace for all teaching and non-teaching staff, students, volunteers, parents, third party contractors and service providers and any other persons who may from time to time be engaged at the school. The School will comply with all relevant WHS legislation.

3.0 Policy Elements

3.1 Scope of Policy

Tarremah teachers and staff have a fiduciary duty of care to do everything reasonably practicable to protect students from foreseeable harm due to their special relationship based upon trust. General duties of care are central to the legislation, requiring all workplace participants to take practicable steps to ensure health and safety measures are met. Each person under a duty must satisfy it, even if other persons also have a similar duty.

The duties set out in the Act have always existed under common law. The details of the duty of care as it applies to all people in the workplace, are detailed in Section 9 of the Act.

The expectation that staff will do all that is reasonable to take responsibility for their safety and that other, extends to afterhours and personal use of the School's facilities, where others refers to anyone accompanying them. The School requires staff to seek permission to use the School's facilities for personal use, including afterhours use. The School does not take responsibility for staff's personal use of School facilities.

3.2 Tarremah Safety Plan (schoolwide) – detailed at 4.1

Tarremah aims to create a safe and healthy workplace by implementing a school-wide **Safety Plan** which:

- Defines an appropriate safety management structure with clear roles and responsibilities
- Systematically identifies and manages potential hazards
- Provides direction for the availability and use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Conducts drills and preventative maintenance on its buildings and equipment
- Defines processes for incident reporting, analysis and corrective action
- Provides access to appropriate Physical and Mental Health First Aid treatment
- Provides access to a Health and Wellbeing Team and professional counselling.
- Provides a Safe Return to Work Plan
- Defines expectations regarding personal use of the School's facilities
- Encourages a school-wide safety culture

3.3 Health and Wellbeing Plan – detailed at 4.2

3.4 Individual Safety Plan – detailed at 4.3

3.5 Policy Definitions

Workplace – A workplace in the context of a school can be anywhere a school worker or student is, or is likely to be, while at work. This can be on or off-site.

Person Conducting Business or Undertaking (PCBU) – Is the legal entity who holds the primary WHS duty of care. In the case of Tarremah, this is the Tarremah Steiner School Foundation (TSSF).

Duty holder – Duty holders include the PCBU, Officers and Workers.

Officer – An officer is a person who makes decisions, or participates in making decisions, that affect the whole or a substantial part of Tarremah's business or operations or has the capacity to significantly affect the financial standing of Tarremah's business or operations. In Tarremah's case this is the School Council, the School Chair and the School Executive.

Reasonably Practicable – That which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health or safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including:

- The likelihood of the hazard or risk occurring
- The seriousness of the risk
- What the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about the hazard or the risk, and ways of eliminating or minimising the risk.

The availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk – After assessing these matters the cost or ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk, may also be taken into account.

Duty of Care – A duty of care is a legal responsibility. The general duty of care provisions in the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2012 (the Act) are limited by 'reasonable practicability'. Practicable means it must be possible or capable of being done safely. To carry out a duty as far as is reasonably practicable means the degree of risk in a particular activity or environment can be balanced against measures taken to control it.

4.0 Procedure

4.1 Tarremah Safety Plan

1. Safety Management Structure - Roles and Responsibilities

- TSSF (PCBU)
  - Overarching responsibility for Workplace Health and Safety under the Act.
  - Ensure that there is a well-balanced School Council with expertise in all relevant areas, including finance, policy and compliance, that facilitate the good governance of the School.
- School Council
  - Review all relevant policies on a regular basis, in line with guidelines from the Schools Registration Board.
  - Ensure policies align with best practice and are compliant will all relevant legislation
  - Ensure processes are in place to facilitate staff understanding of relevant policies and their personal responsibilities
  - Ensure the School is adequately resourced to maintain amenity and reduce risk.
  - Receive monthly report health and safety risks and breaches from the School Executive
  - Are advised of notifiable incidents as soon as possible.
- School Executive
  - Create and implement policies to ensure safety and wellbeing of staff and students.
  - Oversee the implementation and maintenance of an effective WHS program
  - Allocate an appropriate budget to WHS
  - Review and approve risk assessments prior to all on-site and off-site activities
  - Review and agree on corrective actions for all safety incidents
  - Report health and safety risks and breaches to the School Council and external authorities as appropriate
- WHS and Facilities Manager
  - Manage the implementation of the Safety Plan
  - Provide and maintain a work environment free from reasonably foreseeable risks to health and safety

- Ensure there is provision and maintenance of safe plant, equipment, structures and systems of work
- Ensure the safe use, handling and storage of plant (equipment), structures and substances
- Ensure there are adequate facilities for the welfare of workers in carrying out work
- Ensure there is provision of information, training, instruction or supervision that is necessary to protect all people from risks to their health and safety arising from their work.
- Ensure that systems are in place to monitor the wellbeing of staff and the conditions at the workplace are monitored to prevent illness or injury of workers arising
- Consult with staff on all matters relating to health and safety.
- Conduct and assist staff to conduct risk assessments
- Ensure all WHS issues and breaches of safety are reported to the School Executive
- For all reported safety incidents, review proposed remedial or corrective actions for appropriateness

- Staff, Volunteers, Workers and Parents (Workers)
  - Take reasonable personal care for their own and colleagues' physical and mental health and safety
  - Have a duty of care to all those affected by their acts or omissions
  - Report all safety incidents to the Business Manager and investigate as appropriate
  - To support and foster a shared WHS culture in which staff and other personnel observe safe work practices and minimize the risk of injury to themselves and others
  - Comply (so far as they are reasonably able to) with any reasonable instruction regarding safety
  - Co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure for work health or safety that has been communicated to them
  - Not misuse or interfere with anything provided for work health and safety without approval.

2. Hazard Identification

The process to be used by the School for hazard identification is Risk Assessment. Risk assessments are to be performed using the Tarremah Risk Assessment Matrix. Risk assessments are required to be performed for all activities that include a level of inherent risk whether on or off-site. The process of assessing risk is detailed on the Risk Assessment Form.

Careful consideration will be given to Risk Control Measures, focusing on a Hierarchy of Control, noting that *Elimination* and *Substitution* are far more effective than *Instruction* and use of *PPE*.

The WHS and Facilities Manager and/or School Chair will do a site “walk-through” at least once a term to identify potential hazards. Areas in need of particular attention in the school include:

- The School Playground
- Machinery and equipment in the Woodwork area
- Storage of Hazardous Chemicals
- Outdoor Education program
- Contractor Management
- Fire Safety Management
- Medical Emergencies

The nature of the risk will determine the most appropriate risk management strategy including the likelihood of occurrence of the risk and impact should it occur. Examples of risk management strategies, which may be adopted, include avoidance, insurance, prevention management.

Risk assessment should take into account the level of expertise or competence of the person performing the task.

3. Personal Protect Equipment

All staff and students will have access to and use appropriate 'Personal Protective Equipment’ (PPE). We expect that staff and students will understand the need and use all the recommended PPE as documented in the Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for equipment and chemicals or Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) documents for plant, power tools and machinery. The school will provide/fund all such equipment that would fall outside that which one would normally be expected to wear to school or for their work at school.

4. Preventative Maintenance and Drills

The WHS Facilities Manager will prepare annual maintenance plans for the school’s major fixed assets. The plan will comply with all legislative requirements including electrical tagging, maintenance of fire equipment etc.
Fire Drills will be conducted at least once per semester in the Early Childhood Centre and at least once a year in the Primary and Secondary School.

5. Accident, Injury and Incident Reporting

All safety incidents are to be recorded on an Accident, Injury and Incident Reporting Form by the Teacher on Duty at the time of the incident and submitted to the Business Manager for collation. In completing this form, the teacher will note when remedial action is required.

The Business Manager will ensure appropriate reporting of the incident and will present all reported incidents to the School Executive, WHS officer and the School Council to ensure appropriate remedial or corrective action is taken.

When a notifiable incident occurs, such as serious bodily injury or illness, WorkSafe Tasmania or the Education and Care Unit must be contacted by the Business Manager. When there is a catastrophic injury, death or near death experience the Business Manager should seek support from Independent Schools Tasmania (IST). The School Council, School Executive and WHS Officer will also be notified when such incidents occur.

6. Access to Physical and Mental Health First Aid

The School will provide a quiet health and wellbeing space within the School Office and in each classroom where students and staff can be monitored or attended to in the event of physical or mental sickness or injury.

All staff will have appropriate Physical and Mental Health First Aid, CPR and Anaphylaxis training to administer first aid and care for children who are unwell.

Staff will follow the process outlined by the acronym DRSABCD when administering First Aid; and the acronym ALGEE for assessing and treating Mental Health.

The Office and each classroom will have a compliant first aid kit that is checked and resupplied annually or as needed.

Medication will be administered in accordance with the Authorisation and Administration of Medication Policy.

The Health and Wellbeing team provides additional support of students and staff.

7. After-hours access to the School Campus and personal use of facilities.

This policy covers the School's program of after-hours events. The expectation that staff will do all that is reasonable to take responsibility for their safety and that of others, extends to afterhours and personal use of the School's facilities.

School requires staff to seek permission to use the School's facilities for personal use, including after-hours use.

Staff are required to take personal responsibility of their own actions when using the School's facilities for personal use. Staff are responsible of any injury that occurs as a result of such personal use and are personally responsible for any damage caused.

The School does not take responsibility for staff's personal use of School facilities.

4.2 Tarremah Health and Wellbeing Plan

At Tarremah we stive to care for student and staff's physical and mental health. This Health and Wellbeing Plan outlines the structures in place to proactively and reactively support mental health and wellbeing.

For students: the Class Teacher / Guardian takes primary responsibility for student pastural care. The Class Teacher is supported by a Health and Wellbeing Team. The team includes the School Guidance Counsellor, the Extra-lesson Teacher, several teachers and teachers' assistants. The team work collaboratively and in consultation with parents, to offer initial and possibly ongoing support for students.

For Staff: Our staff can call on the support of colleagues, the College, their Faculty and the School Executive. Staff are also able to receive three professional counselling sessions, paid for by the School through the Employee Assistance Program. The School's 'Heath and Happiness Association' (HAHA) provides proactive support in the form of social events, and the Staff Well-fare Fund is able to provide financial support in special circumstances.

For All:

Staff will follow the Mental Health First Aide First Aid acronym ALGEE for assessing and treating Mental Health. This details the following Process:

Approach, assist and assess for crisis

Listen unjudgmentally

Give support and information about what supports are available

Encourage the individual (and their parents) to get appropriate Professional assistance

Encourage the individual to get support from other people such as friends and family

Where a student is thought to be in crisis their **Individual Student Safety Plan** will be enacted.

4.3 Individual Student Safety Plan

Where students are in crisis or at risk of crisis an Individual Safety Plan may be required. If a student has engaged in self harm, experienced suicidal adiation, or attempted Suicide, an Individual Safety Plan will be created with input from the student, their parents and relevant professionals.

- The Safety Plan will focus on what the student should do, rather than what they shouldn't.

- The Plan will include strategies that proactively help the student avoid becoming anxious/stressed; and strategies that will help them destress when they recognise the initial signs of anxiety.
- These strategies will be for specific lengths of time - short, so that the individual can have a sense of achievement.
- It will list any specific issues that heighten a student's anxiety.
- It will include the names of friends, staff and other adults that they feel comfortable to call on for support and assistance.
- It will include quiet places that the student may use to destress.

In some circumstances an individual's physical or mental health might be at such a crisis that it is not appropriate for them to be at School. This assessment would be made by the School in consultation with the individual, their parent if a student and an appropriate Professional Consultant. A 'Return to School Plan', similar to an Individual Safety Plan, will be created at the appropriate time, with the appropriate professional guidance to support a return to school. Such a plan might facilitate a part-time re-entry.

4.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Class Teacher and the Health and Wellbeing Team:

Class Teacher
In the ECC and Primary School the Class Teacher has the role of offering primary pastural care and support. The Class teacher is in regular contact with parents and will immediately communicate any significant concern to both Parents and their Faculty for support.

Class Guardian
In the Secondary School the Class Guardian has the role of offering primary pastural care and support. The Guardian is in regular contact with parents and will immediately communicate any significant concern to both Parents and their Faculty for support. Whilst navigating adolescence students may find they form a closer relationship with an alternate appropriate adult within the School. We recognise and support this, expecting that this person will communicate concerns to the Guardian.

Learning Support Teacher (LST)
Our Learning Support Teachers play a special role investing considerable time building relationships with students who need extra support (emotional, social or academic). Given this relationship the Learning support Teacher might well be the first contact for students. In negotiation with the Guardian and parents, students can come out of classes on a regular basis to work with the LST. This is organized through a formal documented process.

Teachers Assistant

Our teacher's assistants play a critical role in supporting students and teachers in the classroom. Whilst they have training in Mental Health First Aide, they are not expected to offer long term emotional support to students. The Assistant will discuss the support offered with the Class Teacher/Guardian and the LST as soon as possible.

Emergency Critical support
We can provide short term emergency support for individual students experiencing Crisis. The focus of this emergency support is to ensure the child is safe and that an appropriate supportive environment is found for the child for longer term care.

Student Counsellor
Our Student Counsellor is available to offer students further support. Our Counsellor has experience in providing advice for young people who may need support from external experts in mental health and support of young people. Students can make an appointment to see the Student counsellor. Students are expected to let their Class Guardian know that they have an appoint with the Counsellor so that the student is not thought lost. The Student Counsellor might visit classes from time to time to develop relationship with the entire class. Discussions at these times will be lesson focused not personal. Students might be able to see the Student Counsellor at morning tea or lunch without an appointment but must return for the beginning of their next class.

If students would like to receive ongoing support, the Student Counsellor will discuss this request and develop a plan in consultation with the student's parents and the Class Guardian.

Extra Lesson Teacher
Our Extra Lesson Teacher provides specialist support for students with fine and gross motor skill challenges. Movement challenges can dramatically affect social and emotional engagement, identifying and improving skills in this area are a key focus. Private sessions are also available, at parent's expense.

Art Therapist
Our Art Therapist can provide specialist support students and staff with emotional or fine motor skills, through exploration of an alternate medium of expression. Teachers and Parents can request/suggest that a student might benefit from such support. Private sessions are also available, at parents' expense.

5.0 Responsibilities

- School Council
- School Chair
- School Executive
- Business Manager
- WHS and Facilities Manager

6.0 Related Documents

- Duty of Care Statement
- Code of Conduct
- Child Protection Policy
- Lost Child Policy
- Child Left After Hours Policy
- Death of a Child Policy
- Authorisation and Administration of Medication Policy
- Infectious Diseases and Exclusion Policy
- Emergency and Critical Incident Management Policy
- Alcohol, Tobacco and Drugs Policy
- Outdoor Education Policy
- Occupation Rehabilitation Policy
- Accident, Injury and Incident Report Form
- Tarremah Risk Assessment Form and Matrix
- Behaviour Support Policy

7.0 Reference/Legislation

- Workplace Health and Safety Act Tas 2012
- Building Act 2016

8.0 Contact Point

- School Chair
- Business Manager
- Workplace Health and Safety and Facilities Manager

9.0 Authorisation

Executive: Council:

Name:

Date: