



Penola
CATHOLIC COLLEGE
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STUDENT SAFETY POLICY

Introduction

Staff have a duty of care to students at all times while working on behalf of the school (during school hours or out-of-school hours). If the staff fail this duty of care, or if the duty of care exercised is found to be not sufficient, then they may be found to be negligent by a court of law and therefore liable for injuries caused. The duty of care requires that staff always act in a reasonable way for the safety and welfare of the student. They must always consider the safety of students in their care and protect them from both known hazards and from hazards that could be reasonably foreseen and in which preventative measures could have been taken. The duty is a considerable one but it is not absolute. That is to say, a teacher may not be able to stop all accidents from happening. Thoughtful and thorough preparation, knowledge and understanding of accepted standards of safety, awareness of risks, and vigilance will lessen the possibility of an incident or accident occurring.

Supervising students in class

The duty of the teacher includes exercising reasonable supervision in the classroom. In order to respond responsibly and reasonably, teachers need to be aware of group dynamics within the particular class, especially situations that may develop into harassment, intimidation, victimisation, physical violence, fighting, misbehaviour, throwing objects or argumentation. The teacher needs to be vigilant that none of the students leave the classroom without permission.

Teachers are responsible for the group of students that they have been allocated to teach and/or supervise at a particular time. This duty of care includes the time when a student may be in class or has withdrawn from the class for a reason. Eg:

- If a student is ill and goes to the sick bay
- If a student leaves class to be collected by a parent/guardian, that student is still under the supervision of the teacher until the parent/guardian takes over the supervisory role
- If a student goes to the toilet

The supervisory duty of a teacher is never fully replaced by the presence of a support staff member or a preservice teacher. In the case of a student sent to sickbay, or the ERC (for example), a shared responsibility is assumed with the staff member in direct supervision of the student.

Classroom rules

All classrooms, laboratories and preparation rooms and specialist rooms should be safe areas for students and staff. All staff and students should follow the rules

outlined for the classroom or specialist room/spaces that they are in. Staff should be aware of the potential hazards and dangers that may occur in classrooms and take all reasonable steps to avoid them. Teachers should always look at potential hazards and risks from the child's point of view.

In the science learning area the following should be clearly displayed:

- Guidelines for the storage of chemicals
- Rules for the disposal of residue and waste chemicals
- Guidelines for student behaviour in risk areas
- Requirements for protective clothing and body protection
- Details about the location of safety and first aid equipment, including locations of fire extinguishers
- Emergency evacuation procedures
- The comprehensive risk management plan

In the workshop area the following should be clearly displayed:

- The machines that the students are not allowed to use without teacher supervision
- All long hair must be securely covered or fixed and confined to the head before going near machinery or in the work area
- All protective equipment should be worn at all times
- All students are to comply with the displayed classroom rules in this area
- **The comprehensive risk management plan**

For safety in the arts area, it is important that:

- The work areas are adequately ventilated and kept clean
- Protective clothing is worn by students
- Washing facilities for students are available
- There is an awareness that some materials can be potentially dangerous to the health and safety of students
- All students are to comply with the displayed classroom rules in this area
- **The comprehensive risk management plan is clearly displayed**

In the food technology area, it is important that:

- Protective clothing must be worn by all students during practical lessons
- The rules about using the equipment and stoves must be displayed and followed.
- **The comprehensive risk management plan is clearly displayed**

Risk management

Evaluation of risks about the school property should be part of the continuing assessment of management responsibilities.

These three steps should be followed and applied in a Risk Assessment for potentially hazardous situations:

- Collect information about hazards
- Analyse the risks associated with possible hazards
- Prevent future accidents through risk control.

Note: In all classes where hazards and dangerous equipment is used, the leading staff member must instruct students about the dangers posed by the inappropriate use of tools or equipment and the right way of using or handling these items.

Information

Staff should be familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures and the critical incidents policy that the College has developed and be able to follow these if the need arises.