# EARN TO LIVE

#### COBURN PRIMARY SCHOOL

# **DUTY OF CARE**

**POLICY - 2017** 



#### **Rationale:**

In addition to their professional obligations, the staff at Coburn Primary School have a legal duty to take reasonable steps to protect students in their charge from risks of injury that are reasonably foreseeable.

#### Aims:

• To ensure Coburn Primary School staff have an understanding of their duty of care to students and other employees or volunteers, and behave in a manner that does not compromise these legal obligations.

### **Implementation:**

- In addition to their professional obligations, staff have a legal duty to take reasonable steps to protect students in their charge from risks of injury that are reasonably foreseeable.
- Although the general duty is to take reasonable steps to protect students from reasonably foreseeable risks
  of injury, specific (but not exhaustive) requirements of the duty involve providing adequate supervision in
  the school or on school activities as well as providing safe and suitable buildings, grounds and equipment.
- A teacher's duty of care is not confirmed to the geographic area of Coburn Primary School or to school activities, or to activities occurring outside the school where a student is acting on a teacher's instructions. The duty also applies to situations both before and after school where a teacher can be deemed to have 'assumed' the teacher-students relationship.
- The teacher's duty of care is greater than that of the ordinary citizen in that a teacher is obliged to protect a student from reasonably foreseeable harm or to assist an injured student, while the ordinary citizen does not have a legal obligation to respond.
- Whilst each case regarding a teacher's legal duty of care will be judged on the circumstances that occurred
  at the time, the following common examples may be times when a teacher has failed to meet their legal
  duty of care responsibilities to their students
  - Arriving late to scheduled timetabled yard duty responsibilities
  - Failing to act appropriately to protect a student who claims to be bullied
  - Believing that a child is being abused but failing to report the matter appropriately
  - Being late to supervise the line-up of students after the bell has sounded
  - Leaving students unattended in the classroom
  - Failing to instruct a student who is not wearing a hat to play in the shade
  - Ignoring dangerous play
  - Leaving the school during time-release without approval
  - Inadequate supervision on a school excursion
- Staff members are also cautioned against giving advice on matters that they are not professionally competent to give (negligent advice). Advice is to be limited to areas within a teacher's own professional competence and given in situations arising from a role specified for them by the Principal.
- Teachers must ensure that the advice they give is correct and where appropriate, in line with the most recent available statements from institutions or employers. Teachers should not give advice in areas outside those related to their role where they may lack expertise.

- Where appropriate Coburn Primary School will use a Hygiene Care and Learning Plan to maximise opportunities for students to manage tasks such as hand washing <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/personalhygiene.aspx">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/health/Pages/personalhygiene.aspx</a>
- At Coburn Primary School hand sanitisers are installed throughout the school to assist with the prevention and control of infection.
- Coburn Primary School ensures the safety and welfare of students both on and off site when with an
  external provider (when the school contracts with another school, a registered training organisation or an
  organisation not registered as an education training provider). This is ensured through Coburn Staff
  supervising students and ensuring line of sight.

## **Evaluation:**

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