

Croydon Community School & OPTIONS

Professional Learning Policy



PURPOSE

To ensure staff develop the knowledge and skills they need to address students' learning challenges.

To encourage all staff collaboratively to develop knowledge and teaching skills that are aligned to School Strategic Plan goals and priorities, the Annual Implementation Plan and continuous school improvement.

To provide professional learning and development which supports personal goals, wellbeing and career advancement.

To support professional development for leadership and succession planning.

To support DET initiatives through professional growth of staff.

To provide opportunities for professional learning through mentoring, coaching, feedback and action research.

To ensure staff gain additional formal and informal qualifications which will enable them to advance in the profession.

To ensure that, where applicable, Croydon Community School & OPTIONS staff members are aware of DET policy and guidelines.

To ensure the school has strategies in place to support the Child Safe Standards.

SCOPE

Professional learning and development for staff is essential to improving the learning experiences and outcomes for students. As a learning community, the school is responsible for providing support for teachers to continually develop their knowledge, skills, leadership capabilities and career opportunities through a comprehensive professional learning and development program.

The same is true for professionals with many years' experience in the workplace. Continuing **professional development is important** because it ensures you continue to be competent in your profession. It is an ongoing process and continues throughout a **professional's** career.

This policy is intended for School Leadership as well as teaching and Education Support Staff.

DEFINITION

In education, the term **professional development** may be used in reference to a wide variety of specialised training, formal education, or advanced **professional** learning intended to help administrators, teachers, and other educators improve their **professional** knowledge, competence, skill, and effectiveness.

Professional development is learning to earn or maintain professional credentials such as academic degrees to formal coursework, attending conferences, and informal learning opportunities situated in practice.

POLICY

Improvement in student outcomes is the driving force behind all school professional development/professional learning.

The Principal, in conjunction with the Professional Development Coordinator will be responsible for facilitating the development of a planned approach to professional learning and development.

The school Professional Learning Plan will be developed for the whole school that takes into account identified priorities and needs in:

- Facilitating the Annual Implementation Plan and School Strategic Plan goals and priorities
- Teaching and Learning
- Student wellbeing
- Staff wellbeing
- Leadership development
- DET priorities
- School management
- Career growth

Professional Development will be based on the seven principles of highly effective professional learning:

- Focused on improving student outcomes.
- Focused on and embedded in teacher practice.
- Informed by the best available research on effective learning and teaching.
- Collaborative, involving reflection and feedback.
- Evidenced based and data driven to guide improvement and to measure impact.
- Ongoing, supported and fully integrated into the culture and operations of the system – schools, networks, regions and the centre.
- Be both an individual responsibility and a collective responsibility at all levels of the system.

Procedures for approving staff attendance at professional development activities and team professional learning plans or action research will be developed, maintained and consistent.

Reports on professional development activities/action research will be communicated to the appropriate staff and an evaluation summary will be available on the staff intranet when appropriate.

Professional learning that involves feedback and reflection on teaching practice and the sharing of good practices will be encouraged.

A whole school professional learning record will be maintained on the school intranet.

Staff are responsible for recording their professional learning in accordance with Victorian Teaching Institute requirements.

The process of improving and increasing capabilities of staff will be through access to education and training opportunities in the workplace, through outside organisations, or through watching others perform.

The coordination of professional development will ensure that the professional growth of staff is developed cooperatively, resources are used effectively and evaluation of the program occurs regularly.

Professional Development should include planned participation in individual, team, cross team and whole school learning and improvement activities.

In planning whole-school professional development/professional learning, the school will reference the *Framework for Improving Student Outcomes* which uses the latest research on student learning and global best-practice to assist schools to focus their efforts on key areas that are known to have the greatest impact on school improvement.

All staff including ES staff are required to develop Professional Learning Plans which are evaluated and reviewed regularly.

The plans must have a component which relates to school goals, targets and the identified key learning strategies.

Professional Learning will be a key component of whole staff meeting time and of pupil free days.

Professional development will be adequately resourced to address the whole school's professional development needs.

All staff are expected to undertake specific mandatory training as follows:

Anaphylaxis Management

- the anaphylaxis online ASCIA e-training course which is fully funded for all Victorian school staff and asthma management
- have their competency in the use of an EpiPen® tested within 30 days of course completion
- identified staff will undertake more specialised training which will enable them to act as supervisors

Asthma Management

- annual **non-accredited training** in Asthma first aid management provided through the Asthma Foundation
- other identified staff will undertake **accredited training** in asthma management by a Registered Training Organisation, paid for by the school every three years.

Child Safety Responding & Reporting Obligations (Mandatory Reporting)

All staff will complete the online [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations eLearning module](#) mandatory reporting module/s.

Occupational Health & Safety

All staff will complete the online modules

- Manual Handling
- Ergonomics
- Slips, Trips and Falls
- Hazards and Incident Reporting
- Risk Management

and others as training modules become available.

Child Safe Policies

Our school culture aims for all staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors (in addition to our parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in the school understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

We will train our staff and others as above to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also will support our staff and others through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse, to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees, volunteers and others will be briefed and then supervised regularly to ensure they understand our philosophy and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

In order to achieve this, there will be a scheduled component of staff professional development time devoted to understanding of our child safe culture.

Volunteers and others working regularly in the school, e.g. music instructors will be invited to attend a briefing session on the school's child safe policy. However this is pre-requisite training for persons wishing to work as "helpers" or "semi-professionals" within the school.

Before commencing work in the school, contractors also will be briefed as part of their induction to the school.

Staff will be briefed on the range of policies that are listed in the communication schedule. These include:

- Bullying Prevention
- Child Safety
- Drug Education/Use
- Duty of Care
- Emergency Management Plan
- First Aid
- Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality
- Homework
- Information and Privacy
- Medication (administration of)
- Risk Management
- Smoking Ban
- Student Engagement
- Sun & UV Protection
- Yard Duty/On-Site Supervision

A sufficient number of staff members will be trained in Level 2 first aid to comply with the OHS schedule.

New staff will be trained in their anaphylaxis and asthma management responsibilities, mandatory reporting obligations, OHS modules and school practices and procedures as part of the induction procedure.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Please refer also to the school's:

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Emergency Management Plan Policy
- Medical & First Aid Emergencies Policy
- Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Policy
- Homework – At Home Learning Policy
- Information and Privacy Policy
- Medication (Administration of) Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Smoke Free Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Sunsmart Policy
- Yard Duty and Supervision Policy
- (and the) Child Safe Standards

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy, first developed in in this format in May 2019 and will be reviewed annually or if guidelines change (no current DET A-Z Index reference).