

Croydon Community School & OPTIONS

Policy Development and Review

Policy (DET Guidelines)



Based on the document Improving School Governance – Policy & Review February 2018

1. Clearly written policies set out the school's position on a particular issue.
2. They are important tools as they reflect the school's values and support the school's broad direction as outlined in its Strategic Plan.
3. Good policies are essential because they demonstrate that the school is being operated in an efficient manner and ensure that there will be consistency in decisions and in school operations.
4. A School Council will develop a policy because:
 - DET policy requires a school to have a policy on a particular topic
 - Council decides to issue guidance about an aspect of implementation of its strategic plan
 - Council decides to set out the school's position on a major issues within its powers and functions
 - The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) - Schools requires policy statements in specific areas
 - A policy is governed by Ministerial Order e.g. Anaphylaxis Management
5. Due to legislation and statewide approaches, DET requires schools to have the following policies in place:
 - Investments
 - Student Dress Code
 - Child Safe Standards
 - Gifts, Benefits & Hospitality

*Please note that staff and School Council must be advised of the requirements but Council can determine if DET's guidelines are satisfactory or Council wishes to be more restrictive.
6. An Anaphylaxis Management Policy consistent with MO706 must be developed.
7. DET states that other policies which typically are common to most schools such as dress codes, camps and excursions, homework, SunSmart, sponsorship, community use of school facilities, canteen operation and other school food services should be developed.
8. A Health Care Needs Policy is a mandatory prerequisite for Anaphylaxis and other student health issues.
9. A Duty of Care Policy is a mandatory prerequisite for Yard Duty/Supervision.
10. Admission is a mandatory prerequisite policy for Enrolment. Both these policies are prerequisites for Attendance.
11. For VRQA registration purposes, schools must have policies and procedures relating to:
 - Accident Reporting & Recording
 - Administration of Medication
 - Anaphylaxis Management
 - Annual Report
 - Assessment
 - Bullying Prevention (including cyber bullying)
 - Camps & Excursions
 - Care Arrangements for Ill Children
 - Children at Risk
 - Child Safe – Child Safe Standards
 - Child Safety (Mandatory Reporting) Responding & Reporting Obligations

- Communication of School Policies, Procedures & Schedule
- Complaints, Parents
- Curriculum Framework
- Data Analysis & Use
- Digital Technologies (Internet Use/Social Media/Devices) including Acceptable Use
- Emergency & Critical Incidents including Recovery Plan
- Emergency & Incident Reporting
- First Aid (and Register of staff trained in first aid)
- Framework for Improving Student Outcomes
- Medication (Administration of)
- Policy Communication & Schedule
- Procedures for Verifying & Recording WWC checks and VIT registration
- Registers Maintenance (Staff, Volunteers & External Providers)
- Reporting Student Achievement & Progress to Parents
- Risk Management Strategies (Child Safe Standard 6)
- Safety of Students Working with External Providers (Incursions)
- School Philosophy
- Student Enrolment (Specialist Schools only)
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement
- Teaching & Learning
- Vision, Mission & Values
- Visitors (including External Providers)
- Wellbeing & Learning
- Yard/Duty Supervision

(Some Reviewers may request other policies)

*Please note that the Annual Report must show that the school has met the minimum standards for Registration as in 11) above.

* This list is based on 2018 VRQA list of policies for Registration/School Review.

12. From time to time, the School Council or Principal might identify the need to develop a policy about a school or community issue (for example, students' use of mobile phones at school, beyond curriculum purposes). Most often, this will arise from the need to set out the school's position in relation to a specific topic. In these cases, the policy would explain the purpose and intended outcome and the Principal and staff would establish operational procedures to implement the policy. The views of all Councillors and the school community would help inform any new or changed policy.
13. Such a policy can be useful to:
 - promote fairness, consistency and transparency across the school
 - provide the means to engage the community in achieving an agreed approach in response to a specific topic
 - manage or prevent controversy
 - inform the school community about the school's position in relation to a particular matter
14. Depending on the topic, the Department may have issued advice which must be used as a guide for policy development by the school.
15. The Principal will advise the School Council on the need for school policies to meet government policy or legislation or guidelines.
16. Procedural or operational matters are the responsibility of the Principal who may choose to develop a policy with the input of School Council if deemed appropriate.
17. When determining if a policy is required, the School Council should ask if:
 - the matter falls within the powers and functions of School Council
 - Departmental policy and/or guidelines already exist
 - the Department/legislation requires Council to develop a local policy

- the policy will assist in implementing an aspect of the strategic plan
 - the policy will inform the community of the school's position on a particular issue the policy can be implemented ethically, legally and without breaching the Department's values
 - the school is required to develop a policy for
 - school registration or review requirements?
18. The School Council also will determine the need for policies on local issues within its powers and functions, develop policies including consulting the school community if required and regularly review existing policies.
19. Council will decide on the need for a policy in line with the DET information as above.
20. The Council will decide whether a special working party needs to be established for the purpose of developing the policy or whether the Council itself, or an existing sub-committee of the Council, will develop the policy.

Other

School policies should be of a consistent layout, will focus on a single issue and will describe the background or rationale, purpose or aims, implementation procedures (action to be taken), evaluation schedule and references.

The policies may include "definitions" to improve the clarity of the policy which should be precise and easy to understand.

The policies will include the date when the policy was developed or updated and subsequently ratified by School Council.

The process of considering school policies will be managed by the Principal who may be supported by a School Council Policy Subcommittee, will be a continuous cycle, and as far as practicable, will use a transparent and consultative process.

When developing a new policy, the Council will determine if consultation with appropriate personnel in order to draft the initial policy statement is required. If yes, the draft policy will then be circulated for comment as deemed appropriate, back to the leadership team and finally to the School Council for ratification, preferably within three months.

Policies will be developed taking into account DET policy as described at web reference www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/azindex.aspx

To comply with DET policy and guidelines, in formulating and reviewing its policies, the School Council will formally seek the views of the school community on student engagement, vision, mission and values statements, visitors to the school, the uniform/dress code and sponsorship.

Council will ratify the following policies annually and preferably at the start of the year:

- Anaphylaxis Management
- Bullying Prevention
- Emergency Management Planning
- Financial Management Procedures including Cash Handling Procedures, Investments, Petty Cash (if applicable) Purchasing Cards, Electronic Funds Management
- Uniform/Dress Code
- Support for Families Experiencing Hardship

Council must adopt DET's Parent Payments Template and ratify the contents at least six weeks before the end of the year when information about payment of school costs for the following year will be sent to parents/carers.

Changes as a result of policy developments and/or reviews will be widely advised to staff and parents/carers as appropriate.

Routine matters such as school hours are best dealt with procedurally and may not need a policy. This is for School Council to determine.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

References:

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/management/policywriting.aspx

Improving School Governance: Policy & Review February 2018

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority – School Registration

www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/registration/Pages/schooldefault.aspx

Support Materials for Schools – Registration Requirements for Schools

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/Pages/registration.aspx

School Policy and Advisory Guide

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx

School Policy Templates Portal

www.edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edrms/keyprocess/cp/Pages/home.aspx

For further advice on policy development and requirements, school council members can email the School Operations and Governance Unit at: school.council@edumail.vic.gov.au

Please refer also to the school's:

- Communication Procedure and Schedule Policy

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy, first developed in this format in May 2019 and will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle or if guidelines change.