



## OTAGO GIRLS' HIGH SCHOOL

### Health and Safety

#### Rationale:

The Health and Safety at Work Act requires the School Board to do what is 'reasonably practicable' to keep students, staff, contractors, and visitors safe and healthy. In addition, the National Administration Guidelines, National Education and Learning Priorities and the Education and Training Act requires the School Board to ensure the school is a physically and emotionally safe and inclusive place for students and staff.

#### Purpose:

- The good health and safety of students, staff, contractors, and visitors to the school is vital in terms of the daily operation of the various activities and functions which take place on the Otago Girls' High School site.
- The School Board is committed to maintaining high standards of health and safety, complying with all relevant legislation, regulations, New Zealand standard and approved codes of practice, and to the continuous improvement of Otago Girls' High School's health and safety performance.

#### Procedures:

- To ensure that the school is a safe and healthy place of work for students, staff, contractors, and visitors.
- To ensure that the school has an effective method for identifying hazards and assessing risks. Hazards and risks will then be controlled by:
  - Eliminating or isolating so far as is reasonably practicable any hazards that arises out of the school or school environment likely to cause harm to students, staff, contractors, or visitors; and
  - Minimising, so far as is reasonably practicable, the risks and effects of hazards.
- To promote safe and healthy living options for both students and staff.
- To ensure staff and their representatives are consulted on, and given the opportunity to participate in, health and safety management.
- To maintain correct procedures for the use and maintenance of equipment and materials (including through the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE)) to ensure that they are safe and properly handled and compliant with all relevant laws and legal requirements.
- To establish safe work practices and to implement procedures to ensure that these practices are followed by providing appropriate orientation, training and supervision for all new and existing staff, and by supporting the safe and early return to work of injured and ill staff.

- To provide plans, procedures, supervision and training relating to health and safety issues pertaining to the school, including movement to and from school, on-site activities and off-site school-related activities.
- To promote an understanding that all members of the school community have a responsibility for health and safety.
- To ensure educational programmes are in place, aimed at promoting a safe and healthy lifestyle.
- To accept the need to delegate responsibility for the promotion of a safe and healthy workplace to all involved at and with the school.
- To ensure systems are in place which monitor the school site and activities and functions from a health and safety point of view, and respond should concerns in this regard be identified.
- To have effective procedures for the hiring and monitoring of contractors to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the contractor appropriately identify hazards and control risks to health and safety arising from their activities at Otago Girls' High School and be accountable, and ensure that the contractors are accountable, for the health and safety of the contractors' workers, as well as students' staff, other contractors and visitors.

#### Practice and procedure

- The Principal will maintain a set of health and safety guidelines.
- Staff (including relieving teachers), students, contractors, and visitors will be made aware of the school's health and safety requirements.
- The school will continuously monitor and update school practice and procedures in order to ensure we are following best practice guidance regarding the health and safety of students and staff in relation to all school activities - on-site and off-site, including Ministry of Education guidelines for education outside the classroom (EOTC).

#### H&S Committee

- The school will operate a Health and Safety committee consisting of staff (including a representative from Science, Technology, Outdoor Education, Physical Education and caretaking and the Principal). The Health and Safety committee meets twice per term and reports to senior management on health and safety matters. The Health and Safety Committee will:
  - Identify hazards and notify the person responsible
  - Ensure hazards are eliminated where practicable
  - Minimise, monitor, or isolate hazards that are not able to be eliminated
  - Keep informed of the results of monitoring hazards
  - Supply health and safety information to staff and students through the Deputy Principals and the Teacher in Charge of Health and Safety
  - Ensure all workshops, laboratories and computer rooms have safety measures established, which are displayed and reinforced as part of lessons
  - Ensure there is proper training in the use of all school plant and machinery operated by staff or students and that appropriate safety devices and protective clothing are available and their use mandatory.

### Identification and reporting of hazards

- The Principal will report to the School Board on Health and Safety matters at each regular Board meeting.
- Staff and students will be encouraged to identify hazards and to bring forward issues and report incidents concerning health and safety (including injuries and near misses and pain or discomfort in carrying out school related activities) to the attention of the Principal and/or delegates staff responsible for the area of concern. Access to reporting for staff is through the staff handbook on the school landing page.
- Staff and students will be encouraged to keep all areas of the school tidy and free of hazards and obstacles to minimise the risk of trips, falls and other health and safety risks.
- Hazards will be identified to all staff, students, contractors, and visitors, and remedied or removed, in each case as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Similarly, all others in the school premises (including contractors and visitors) will be encouraged to identify and eliminate or minimise hazards, report incidents (including injuries and near misses) and use all appropriate personal protective equipment when carrying out activities at the school.
- Health monitoring of people working in areas of risk or hazard, eg, Hard Materials workshop

### Record of incidents

- A record of on-site accidents, as well as incidents that expose a person to a serious risk to that person's health or safety, will be maintained by the school as required. All such accidents and incidents will be investigated and steps taken to eliminate so far as reasonably practicable, or otherwise reduce, the likelihood of such accident or incident recurring.

### Training

- Training needs for staff on health and safety matters will be available as required through the Professional Development Programme of the school.
- The school will continue to develop, provide, and monitor and evaluate education programmes for students relating to health and safety.

### Staff wellbeing and workplace stress

- The school will foster a positive culture, around the school values of Respect, Integrity and Positivity.
- The school will offer an employee assistance programme with regard to the management of stress. This is a confidential counselling service.
- The school will continue to consider and, where thought appropriate and beneficial, provide appropriate staff wellbeing programmes and initiatives.
- The school will promote an ongoing awareness of, and promote and train staff in strategies for reduction and management of workplace stress (including taking regular holidays, effective time management, effective and efficient planning and classroom management and reporting to senior leaders unhealthy levels of stress).
- Senior staff (Heads of Department and Deputy Principals) will be trained to recognise workplace stress situations and to deal with them within the resources of the school.
- The school will foster a caring and safe environment in which to work.

## Legal Position:

Relevant legal requirements include:

- **Health and Safety at Work Act 2015 ('HSWA')**: Otago Girls' High School must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers who work for the school, while the workers are at work; and workers whose activities in carrying out work are influenced or directed by the school, while the workers are carrying out the work. The school must also ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the health and safety of other persons is not put at risk from work carried out as part of the conduct of school activities.
- **National Administration Guidelines**: NAG 5 requires the School Board to ensure the school is a physically and emotionally safe place for students. Healthy food and nutrition is encouraged for all students, and the school follows laws for the safety of students and employees.
- **National Education and Learning Priorities**: NELP 1 requires School Boards to ensure places of learning are safe, inclusive and free from racism, discrimination and bullying.
- **Education and Training Act 2020**: provides that a Board's primary objectives in governing a school include ensuring that every student at the school is able to attain their highest possible standard in educational achievement; that the school is a physically and emotionally safe place for all students and staff; that the school takes all reasonable steps to eliminate racism, stigma, bullying and any other forms of discrimination within the school; and the school is inclusive of and cares for students with differing needs.
- **State Sector Act 1988**: Employers must operate and comply with the principle of being a good employer (which, in turn, includes good and safe working conditions).
- **Approved Codes of Practice**: These are guidelines approved by the responsible Minister under the HSWA, compliance with which provides a defence to prosecution.
- **Standards**: New Zealand or relevant international standards provide technical guidance on health and safety.
- **Health and Safety at Work (Adventure Activities) Regulations 2016**: and accompanying resources from the Ministry of Education (Education outside the classroom).
- **Health and Safety at Work (Hazard Substances) Regulations 2017**: Sets out specific requirements for laboratories that use hazardous substances in teaching.


Otago Girls' High School will also have regard to guidance published by the Ministry of Education and the New Zealand School Trustees Association, including "Health and Safety at Work Act 2015: A practical guide for School Boards and School leaders".

[Health and Safety at Work Act 2015: A practical guide for School Boards and School leaders](#)  
[Education and Training Act 2020](#)  
[State Sector Act 1988](#)

## RELATED POLICIES

Other policies relevant to health and safety include:

- Child Protection
- Health Curriculum (Sexuality Education)
- Preventing and responding to Harmful Behaviour
- Property Management
- Search and Seizure of Personal Property
- Student Behaviour
- Student Trips/Extended Travel
- Support of Students

<p><b>Signed by Principal - November 2023</b></p> 	<p><b>Date to be reviewed - November 2026</b></p>
---	---