



MONTMORENCY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Duty of Care Policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the office on 9434 5944 or email montmorency.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain to our school community the non-delegable duty of care obligations that all staff at Montmorency Primary School owe to our students and members of the school community

POLICY

“Duty of care” is a legal obligation that requires schools to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include personal injury (physical or psychological) or damage to property. The reasonable steps that our school may decide to take in response to a potential risk or hazard will depend on the circumstances of the risk.

Our school has developed policies and procedures to manage common risks in the school environment, including:

- Yard duty and Supervision
- Bullying Prevention
- Camps and Excursions
- First Aid
- Child Safe Standards
- Emergency Management
- Volunteers
- Visitors
- Working with Children and Suitability Checks
- Mandatory Reporting
- Occupational Health and Safety

Staff at our school understand that school activities involve different levels of risk and that particular care may need to be taken to support younger students or students with additional needs. Our school also understands that it is responsible for ensuring that the school premises are kept in good repair and will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of members of our community suffering injury or damage because of the state of the premises.

School staff, parents, carers and students are encouraged to speak to the principal to raise any concerns about risks or hazards at our school, or our duty of care obligations.

Classroom Supervision

In an emergency situation, phone the Principal or Assistant Principal or contact the teacher in the next room.

At no time are students to be left unsupervised in the classroom or specialist areas (this includes before and after school, lunchtimes and recess breaks).

It is not appropriate to leave students in the sole care of non-teaching staff, parents or trainee teachers (by law, the duty of care cannot be delegated). Education Support staff may provide care for students when they are within line of sight of, or are able to refer to, a supervising teacher.

It is not appropriate to leave students in the care of external education providers for example incursions (by law, the duty of care cannot be delegated).

No student is to be left unsupervised outside the classroom as a withdrawal consequence for misbehaviour. Withdrawal is to be conducted by sending a student to a colleague's classroom, or to the Assistant Principal or Principal. The teacher, Principal or Assistant Principal is to be contacted first to alert them that the student is on their way.

Movement of Children

Extreme care needs to be taken in allowing students to leave the room for any reason.

Use of students as monitors outside the room during class time must only occur with the approval of the Principal or Assistant Principal.

Utmost discretion is to be used when allowing students to visit the toilets during class time and in such situations, students must go in groups of three.

Yard Supervision

Playground supervision is an essential element in staff duty of care.

Be aware that yard duty supervision within the school requires the staff to fully comply with the Department of Education and Training (DET) Guidelines and brings with it an increased duty of care. It is a staff member's responsibility to be aware of these guidelines and duty of care responsibilities.

Staff are also expected to follow school policy whilst on yard duty, such as carrying the required first aid bumbags at all times and EpiPens where applicable.

Staff rostered for duty are to attend the designated area at the time indicated on the roster and/or at the sounding of the appropriate bell.

Staff on duty are to remain in the designated area until the bell signals the end of the break period or until replaced by their relieving teacher, whichever is applicable.

The handing over of duty from one staff member to another must be clearly communicated. Where a relieving teacher does not arrive for duty, the teacher currently on duty should send a message to the office, but not leave the area until replaced.

Changes to the yard duty roster are to be communicated clearly and emailed to all staff in the daily bulletin newsletter.

If a staff member rostered for duty will be absent due to an excursion, sport, etc. another staff member will be allocated to the duty. This will be communicated in the daily bulletin.

Be alert and vigilant - intervene immediately if potentially dangerous behaviour is observed in the playground. Enforce school behaviour standards and logical consequences of playground safety rules.

Excursions, Incursions and Camps

Be aware that an incursion with an external provider does not absolve supervision duties of the teacher, including the first aid duties. A teacher must be present at all times and remain the person designated with duty of care responsibilities.

Be aware that camp activities require the teacher to fully comply with DET guidelines and brings with it an increased duty of care. It is a teacher's responsibility to be aware of these guidelines and remain the person designated with duty of care.

Be aware that excursion and camp activities require the teacher to ensure that the venue and transport adhere to DET guidelines and are accredited.

Be aware that school policy is for students to be counted on and off transport and at other times on a regular basis whilst on excursion or camp activities.

The teacher in charge will have copies of all confidential medical forms and permission notes with contact details. A copy of this material will also be kept at school.

Arrangements will be made for students not attending to continue their normal program at school under supervision of another classroom teacher.

The teacher in charge of an excursion or camp will carry a mobile contact number known to the school, and a first aid kit needs to be carried at all times by supervising teacher/s on either the excursion or camp.

If the return time from an excursion or camp is delayed, the teacher in charge will contact the school to inform the Principal of the new arrival time so that parents can be contacted and a senior staff member will remain at school until they arrive.

If crossing roads, students are to use the designated crossing points. Staff are to walk to the middle of crossing to ensure visibility and orderly crossing. Other staff will control the flow of students crossing the road.

All staff must follow the DET guidelines when organising an excursion, incursion or camp. All procedural steps contained in the school's Camp and Excursion policies must also be followed. DET guidelines for planning excursions are located on the Department's website at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/excursions.aspx>

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Provided to staff at induction and included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff meetings/briefings as required
- Made available publicly on our school website
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Duty of Care](#)
- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Structured Workplace Learning](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2022
Consultation	Internal
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	March 2023