***DUTY OF CARE POLICY***

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to explain to our school community the non-delegable duty of care obligations that all staff at Pender’s Grove Primary School owe to our students and members of the school community who visit and use the school premises.

**DEFINITION**

“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.

**Policy**

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 & Medical Emergencies
* Child Safe Standards
* Incursions (Safety of Students Working with External Providers)
* Emergency Management
* Volunteers in Schools
* Visitors to the School
* Working with Children and Suitability Checks
* Child Safety (Mandatory Reporting) Responding & Reporting Obligations
* Occupational Health and Safety

Staff 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, parent/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.

**External Providers**

Staff at our school acknowledge that, as our duty of care is non-delegable, we are also required to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm when external providers have been engaged to plan for or conduct an activity involving our students. The *Visitors to the School Policy* and *Camps & Excursions Policy* include information on the safety and care of our students when engaged with external providers. Our school also takes steps to ensure student safety when they are engaging in off-site workplace learning programs with external providers, such as when students are participating in work experience, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, structured workplace learning and any other workplace learning program involving external providers. Our school will follow all applicable Department of Education and Training policy and guidelines in relation to off-site learning and will ensure that the safety and welfare of the students engaging in these activities is paramount. The Department’s guidelines in relation to Workplace Learning are available at the following link:

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/pages/workplace.aspx>

**COMMUNICATION**

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

* 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
* Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

**FURTHER INFORMATION and resources**

* School Policy and Advisory Guide: [Duty of Care](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/dutyofcare.aspx)
* the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Structured Workplace Learning](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/structured-workplace-learning/policy)
* Please refer also to the school’s *Child Safety Responding & Reporting Policy, Camps and Excursions Policy, First Aid & Emergency Management Policy, Yard Duty/Supervision Policy, Diabetes Management Policy, Health Care Needs Policy, Anaphylaxis Management Policy, Asthma Management Policy, Epilepsy & Seizure Policy, First Aid Policy, Sun & UV Protection [SunSmart] Policy, Bullying Prevention Policy, Volunteer Workers Policy, Visitors to the School Policy* and the *Emergency Management Plan* and the *Critical Incident Management Plan* all of which relate to the school’s duty of care.
* Please also refer to the Child Safe Standards.

Reference:

<http://educaiton.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare/aspx>

## **Policy REVIEW and Approval**

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| Policy last reviewed | June 2022 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | June 2025 |