

Falls Prevention

Rationale

An inordinate number of accidents occur in schools as a result of staff members, contractors or volunteers slipping, tripping or falling. The number and seriousness of accidents due to slips, trips and falls will be significantly decreased if proper training and precautions are taken.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to eliminate workplace injuries due to slips, trips and falls.

Implementation

- All people working in, attending or visiting St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Primary School are entitled to do so without slipping, tripping or falling due to a preventable environmental hazard.
- All Victorian workplaces, including schools, are required to comply with the Occupational Health & Safety (Prevention of Falls) Regulations 2003.
- St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Primary School will establish an appropriate risk assessment team to identify potential hazards, and establish and implement a control plan based on the recognised hierarchy of control (elimination, substitution, isolation, modification, administrative controls, and protective equipment) for slips, trips and falls hazards.
- The team will conduct an assessment each semester, and use a 'Falls Checklist' in doing so.
- Loose carpets, uneven concrete, electrical cords, poor lighting, worn stairs, general clutter, slippery surfaces, poor or missing handrails, pot holes on oval etc will be amongst the hazards that may be identified.
- The risk assessment team will conduct a feasibility study regarding the installation of fixed walkways, platforms, stairs or handrails to difficult locations where a 2 metre fall could potentially occur that require regular or routine access eg: lighting for theatrical performances.
- The risk assessment team will consult widely in the development of the falls prevention control plan, which will be implemented as soon as practicable.
- All staff will undertake in-service training in relation to falls safety commencing with the staff members most likely to use ladders or work at heights greater than 2 metres (eg: maintenance person or PE staff member). Only trained and authorised persons will carry out principal approved work at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Primary School where there is danger of a fall of greater than 2 metres.
- It is preferred at all times that work be carried out from the ground if at all practicable.
- It is preferred that access to heights greater than 2 metres, such as roofs, be via solid constructions such as stairways or by devices such as cherry pickers or scissor lifts used by contractors rather than by ladders or by staff.
- Generally, all work on the school roof will be carried out by licensed contractors rather than staff members or volunteers.

- All work at a height greater than 2 metres will be done in the company of a second adult.
- Staff members will not be expected or directed to use ladders for any purpose or carry out any work on school roofs, including the retrieval of balls, or at heights above ground level.
- Gutter guards will be installed to minimise the need to retrieve balls from roofs.
- All staff are expected to wear appropriate footwear to minimise the risks of slips, trips or falls.
- When putting up displays teachers need to be aware of all OH&S regulations and safety issues.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's five-year review cycle or as required. Ratified by B.Marrinon, August, 2013.