



Work Health and Safety Policy

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to outline the Birali Steiner School compliance framework for work health and safety, including the definition of key terms, roles and duties and the implementation and monitoring of measures to ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers and all other person at the school.	
Scope:	Birali Steiner School's board, officers, workers and other persons at the school, including students and parents.	
Status: Authorised	Supersedes: Version 2020505	
Authorised by: School Board	Policy Owner: School Board	Date of Authorisation: 12.06.23
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld) • Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld) • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld) • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017 (Qld) • Birali Steiner School's Risk Management Policy • Birali Steiner School's Workplace Bullying Policy • Birali Steiner School's Complaints Policy • Birali Steiner School's Sun Smart Policy • Birali Steiner School's Incident Reporting processes • Birali Steiner School's Statement on Harmful Plants • Birali Steiner School's Safe Food Handling Guidelines • Birali Steiner School's Working After Hours Protocol • Adapted from ISQ WHS Policy Template Version March 2023 	
Review Date:	3 years	Next Review Date: June 2026
Policy Owner:	School Board	
Definitions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU)¹ includes those operating a business alone or with others; for profit or not-for-profit; and partners in a partnership. A person is not a PCBU if solely a worker or officer in a business, is an elected member of a local government or a volunteer association. Examples of a PCBU include a company, association, a sole trader, or partners in a partnership. • Officer is a person who makes or participates in making decisions, that affect the whole or a substantial part of the business or undertaking of the State or Commonwealth², public authority³ or a corporation⁴. In a school this may include members of the school board and senior leadership employees such as the Principal or Business Manager. • Worker⁵ includes employees, contractors and subcontractors and their employees, employees of a labour hire company who has been assigned to work in the school, outworkers, apprentices, trainees, students gaining work experience and volunteers. A PCBU, for example a sole trader, can also be a worker if they carry out work in the business. • Health and Safety Representative (HSR)⁶ (Sch5 <i>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</i>): 	

¹ *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.5*

² *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.247*

³ *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.252*

⁴ [Corporations Act 2001 s.9](#)

⁵ *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.7*

⁶ *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 Schedule 5*

Work Health and Safety Policy

is a worker, elected by workers⁷, to represent the health and safety of the work group of which the worker is a member. An HSR's duties include representing workers in work health and safety matters by investigating complaints from workers; inquiring about risks to workers; monitoring measures undertaken by the PCBU; inspecting the workplace including with an inspector; requesting a health and safety committee be established, directing that unsafe work cease and the issuing of provisional improvement notices in certain circumstances. HSRs may be present at an interview concerning work health and safety between a worker or a group of workers and the PCBU or worker(s) and an inspector.

- **Work Health and Safety Officer (WHSO)⁸** is a suitably qualified person appointed by the PCBU to assist in fulfilling the PCBU's work health and safety duties. Activities include identifying and reporting on work health and safety matters, hazards and risks, notifying of or investigating incidents, accompanying or assisting an inspector during an inspection and establishing training. The PCBU may also act in the role of work health and safety officer⁹.
- **Health and Safety Committee (HSC)¹⁰** is a body established to facilitate cooperation between the PCBU and the workers and to assist with work health and safety compliance including developing standards, rules and procedures. Membership of the committee must include the HSR and the work health and safety officer, if these positions have been established at the school and at least half of the committee members must be workers, not nominated by the PCBU.
- **Reasonably practicable¹¹** means what is reasonably able to be done to ensure the health and safety of workers and other person at the school. Determining what is reasonable requires a weighing up of relevant matters such as the likelihood or degree of harm from the hazard or risk, availability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk and associated costs, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.
- **Notifiable Incident¹²** occurs when there is a death, serious injury or illness or a dangerous incident, at the workplace, relating to a worker or other person. Such incidents must be reported to Work Health and Safety Queensland immediately after the school becomes aware of the incident.
- **Serious Injury or Incident¹³** is where a person needs immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital or treatment for certain injuries prescribed in the legislation such as amputation, serious head or an eye injury, a serious burn, separation of skin from tissue, spinal injury, loss of bodily function or serious lacerations. It also includes medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance.
- **Dangerous Incident¹⁴** is an incident in relation to a workplace, where a worker or any other person's health and safety is at risk due to exposure to uncontrolled events for example substance spillage, explosion or fire, or involvement in an accident such as a fall, electric shock or the collapse of a structure.

Policy Statement

⁷ Work Health and Safety Act 2011 Part 5

⁸ Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.103B

⁹ Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.103C

¹⁰ Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.75

¹¹ Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.18

¹² Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.35

¹³ Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.36

¹⁴ Work Health and Safety Act 2011 s.37

Work Health and Safety Policy

Birali Steiner School is committed to providing and maintaining a safe and healthy workplace for all workers (including contractors and volunteers) as well as students, visitors and members of the public. Hazards and risks to health and safety will be eliminated or minimised, as far as is reasonably practicable.

In doing so, the school will comply with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld), (the Act) the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 (Qld), (the Regulation) and relevant codes of practice.

This commitment is in line with Birali Steiner School's responsibility under the *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017* to comply with the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.

Roles and duties

The Act outlines the duties held by the Person Conducting the Business or Undertaking (PCBU), officers, workers and other persons within the school community. Birali Steiner School acknowledges the duties held by these roles cannot be transferred or delegated to another person.

More than one person can concurrently have the same duty and each duty holder must comply with that duty to the standard required by the legislation.

If more than one person has a duty for the same matter, each person is required to carry out their duty to the extent they have the capacity to influence and control the matter and must, so far as is reasonably practicable, consult, cooperate and coordinate activities with all other persons who have a duty in relation to the same matter.

Duties of specific roles are outlined below.

Person conducting the business or undertaking (PCBU)

The PCBU has the primary duty of care under the Act, to ensure as far as reasonably practicable, the health and safety of workers and any other person, is not put at risk from work carried out from conducting the business such as a school. In fulfilling this duty, Birali Steiner School will:

- Provide and maintain a safe work environment
- Provide and maintain safe plant and structures
- Provide and maintain safe systems of work
- Ensure safe use, handling and storage of plant, structures and substances
- Provide adequate facilities for workers welfare
- Provide information, training, instruction or supervision
- Monitor the health of workers and the conditions at the school to prevent illness or injury

In addition to the primary duty of care, the PCBU has duties outlined in other sections of the Act. In fulfilling these duties, Birali Steiner School will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable:

- Safe entry and exit to the school
- Anything arising from the school is free from risk to the health and safety of any person
- Fixtures, fittings and the plant are without risks to the health and safety of any person
- Provision of consultation, cooperation and issue resolution to workers
- Reporting of notifiable incidents as soon as the school becomes aware of the incident
- Compliance with codes of practices or adoption of an equivalent or higher standard

Work Health and Safety Policy

The Regulation also includes PCBU duties providing specific requirements, to supplement the broad PCBU duties in the Act. In fulfilling these duties, Birali Steiner School will:

- Identify reasonably foreseeable hazards¹⁵
- Ensure general workplace facilities, including the maintenance of and accessibility to the facilities meet minimum requirements, so far as is reasonably practicable¹⁶
- Ensure the provision of and access to first aid equipment, and first aid training meet the minimum requirements¹⁷
- Ensure an emergency plan is prepared, maintained and implemented, meeting the minimum requirements in the regulation¹⁸
- Psychosocial risks are appropriately managed¹⁹

Officers

Officers have a duty under the Act to exercise due diligence, by ensuring the PCBU complies with the duties under the Act. Officers of Birali Steiner School will exercise due diligence by taking the following reasonable steps:

- acquiring and keeping up-to-date knowledge of work health and safety; and
- understanding the nature of the schools' operations and the associated hazards and risks; and
- ensuring the school has resources and processes to eliminate or minimise risks to health and safety; and
- ensuring the school has processes for receiving, considering and responding to information about incidents, hazards and risks; and
- ensuring processes for complying with work health and safety legislation; and
- auditing and reviewing, work health and safety processes and use of the resources.

Workers

Workers have duties under the Act. Workers of Birali Steiner School have the following duties and will:

- take reasonable care for their own health and safety; and
- take reasonable care that their conduct does not adversely affect others; and
- comply, so far as the worker is reasonably able, with instruction given by the school; and
- co-operate with any reasonable, notified policy or procedure.

Other persons

All other persons have duties under the Act. All other persons at Birali Steiner School have the following duties and will:

- Take reasonable care for their own safety; and
- Ensure their conduct does not adversely affect others; and
- Comply, so far as the person is reasonably able, with reasonable instructions given by the school.

¹⁵ *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* s.34 and How to manage work health and safety risks Code of Practice 2021

¹⁶ *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* s.40-41 and Managing the work environment and facilities Code of Practice 2021

¹⁷ *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* s.42 and First aid in the workplace Code of Practice 2021

¹⁸ *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* s.43

¹⁹ *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011* s.55C and Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2022

Work Health and Safety Policy

Other roles

Birali Steiner School may establish additional roles or committees to assist in managing the school's work health and safety duties under the Act, these may include:

- Appointing one or more health and safety representatives (HSRs), by election, to represent the workers. The school must hold an election to appoint an HSR where one or more workers makes such a request.
- Establishing a health and safety committee (HSC), to facilitate cooperation between the PCBU and the workers and to assist with compliance. The school must establish an HSC if a request is made by an HSR or it is a requirement under regulation.
- Appointing a Work Health and Safety Officer (WHSO), to assist the school fulfil its duties. A person appointed as WHSO must have the minimum qualifications and a certificate of authority issued by Work Health and Safety Queensland.

Implementation

Birali Steiner School is committed to protecting workers and other persons against harm to their health and safety and will implement the following measures in line with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and the *Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011*:

- A risk management process
- Provide information, training, instruction and supervision
- Provide a process for consultation, cooperation and issue resolution

Further details of these measures are provided below.

Risk management process

Birali Steiner School's Risk Management Policy provides further guidance on the process and approach to managing risks at the school.

Where the approach in the Risk Management Framework does not eliminate the risk to the health and safety of workers and others, the Birali Steiner School must minimise risks, so far as is reasonably practicable, by doing one or more of the following—

- (a) substituting (wholly or partly) the hazard giving rise to the risk with something that gives rise to a lesser risk;
- (b) isolating the hazard from any person exposed to it;
- (c) implementing engineering controls.

If a risk then remains, the duty holder must minimise the remaining risk, so far as is reasonably practicable, by implementing administrative controls.

If a risk then remains, the duty holder must minimise the remaining risk, so far as is reasonably practicable, by ensuring the provision and use of suitable personal protective equipment.

Information, training, instruction and supervision

Birali Steiner School will ensure that appropriate information, training, instruction and supervision is provided to workers to enable them to perform their work without risk to their health or safety, as far as is reasonably practicable. This information, training, instruction and supervision will be suitable and adequate, having regard to:

- The nature of the work carried out by the worker; and
- The nature of the risks associated with the work at the time the information, training, instruction or supervision is provided; and
- The control measures implemented.

Birali Steiner School will ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that the information, training and instruction is provided in a way that is readily understandable by any person to whom it is provided.

Work Health and Safety Policy

Birali Steiner School's Staff Handbook and Compliance Training Schedule provides further guidance on the information, training, instruction and supervision provided to workers at the school.

Consultation, cooperation and issue resolution

Birali Steiner School acknowledges its duty to consult, so far as is reasonably practicable, with workers who carry out work for the school, who are or are likely to be, directly affected by work health and safety matters. Matters may include identifying, assessing and eliminating or minimising risks relating to work carried out by the workers at the school, proposed changes to procedures for resolving worker issues or monitoring worker safety and the provision of information and training.

Consultation with workers includes sharing information regarding work, health and safety matters with workers and giving them reasonable opportunity to:

- Express their views and raise work health and safety issues in relation to the matter; and
- Contribute to the decision-making process relating to the matter; and
- Access information on the outcome of the consultation, in a timely manner.

Birali Steiner School's worker's will refer to the School's Complaints Policy for further guidance on resolving work health and safety issues.

Compliance and Monitoring

In line with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 and its duties Birali Steiner School is committed to monitoring the health of workers and the conditions at the school.

Birali Steiner School has implemented a Hazard Register which requires workers and other persons to report any hazards or incidents resulting in potential or actual harm to health and safety. Birali Steiner School will regularly monitor, collate and report on hazards and incidents in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011.

Birali Steiner School is also committed to reporting notifiable incidents to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland in accordance with the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011. Notifiable incidents include the death, serious injury or illness of a person or a dangerous incident, arising out of the conduct of the school.

Work Health and Safety Policy

Appendix 1 – WHS Processes

Safety Equipment

The most visible safety equipment is fire extinguishers and hydrant. Staff members are advised to familiarise themselves with the placement and method of operation of such equipment by reading the instructions provided with the equipment or supplier. Regular in-service training in the use of this equipment will occur (at least once per year and as part of the induction of new staff). Other safety equipment includes:

- security sensors and alarms
- cones
- bunting, etc.

Safety equipment also includes personal protective equipment (such as Hi-vis clothing, safety glasses and gloves, hard hats, etc). If you are directed to wear personal protective equipment you must do so and also wear it in the proper manner.

Sun Exposure

Skin cancer is a major public health problem in Australia, with two out of three people requiring treatment for some form of skin cancer during their life time. Exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun is a major cause of skin cancer. The incidence of skin cancer can be reduced by minimizing personal UVR exposure.

Refer to the school's Sun Smart Policy for further information.

Manual Handling

Careless lifting and carrying can cause serious injury. Whenever practicable, heavy lifts are to be made by mechanical means. If manual handling is unavoidable:

- size up the load and seek help if necessary;
- position the feet correctly, as close as possible to the object to be lifted;
- bend knees and get a secure grip;
- maintain a straight back and ensure you are comfortable;
- take a deep breath, keep your head erect and lift by straightening your legs;
- keep your back straight, your arms in and your elbows and knees slightly bent;
- when carrying a load, hold it close to the body and avoid twisting the back; and
- when lowering the load, follow the procedure in reverse, keeping the back straight.

Computer Workstations

Some school employees spend a great deal of time sitting in the one position at a computer. For this reason, correct posture, a correctly adjusted seat and correct positioning of the keyboard and monitor are important.

To adjust your seat correctly, adjust the height so your feet rest firmly on the floor and your weight is through your feet. Thighs should be fully supported except for a two-finger width space behind the knees. Adjust the back rest depth to achieve this.

Maintain a relaxed posture where:

- your shoulders are relaxed
- your elbows are by your side
- your forearms and hands are parallel to the ground
- your wrists are not bent when using the keyboard
- you are seated at a comfortable distance from the keys (the length of your forearm away).

Work Health and Safety Policy

Ideally the top of the screen should be approximately at eye level and about 60-70 cm from your eyes. Your neck should be at rest and relaxed.

You should be able to maintain the recommended seating position when using the keyboard. The keyboard should be placed 6-7 cm from the edge of the table surface to allow the wrist/forearm to rest when you are not keying.

The document you are working on and the screen should be the same distance from your eyes. Use a document holder which allows you to place the documents in the most convenient position. The document should be placed:

- in a level position beside the screen when the keyboard is in the central position or
- directly below the screen just above the keyboard.

Altering the angle of your screen may overcome problems with glare and reflection; however, your screen should only tilt 5 degrees upwards. Generally, the best position for the screen is at right angles to the window and parallel to overhead fluorescent lights. The contrast of text and background on the screen should be adjusted to a moderate level. It is also desirable to have an outlook on which to rest the eyes occasionally.

Maintenance Works

Maintenance on High Risk items must be done by licensed contractors as per relevant legislation. Such things include:

- Electrical Test and Tag
- Mains Electrical Installation or Repair
- Mains Water supply maintenance or repair
- Fire Safety Equipment maintenance or repair
- Septic System maintenance and repair

For equipment, grounds or building maintenance and repairs carried out by Birali Steiner School Staff and/or volunteers, appropriate PPE and safety zone/barrier placement must be used to ensure safety for safety for passing children/staff/parents.

Electrical Safety Test & Tag

- Annual Electrical Test & Tag across the Whole School
- 6-monthly for Workshops including Classroom Workshops & Maintenance Officer Workshop Tools & Cleaning Equipment
- “New To Service” Tags to be put on new cables when purchased in between cycles of testing.

Harmful Plants

Birali Steiner School has implemented a Statement on Harmful Plants and a List of Plants Approved and Planted at Birali. Plants that have the potential to cause safety concerns for children or adults will be assessed. Risk assessments will be performed and reviewed to ensure any plant that may pose a safety concern is controlled to prevent the potential risk.

Food Safety

All staff and volunteers working with food at Birali are required to complete the online “Do Food Safely” course and provide the certificate of completion to Birali Steiner School.

Birali Steiner School also requires staff and volunteers to adhere to the Safe Food Handling Guidelines available on our website.

Working on site after hours

Refer to Birali’s Working After Hours Protocol.