



DUTY OF CARE POLICY

PURPOSE

To ensure school staff understand their duty of care, supervision and yard duty responsibilities.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all teaching and non-teaching staff at Altona Primary School, including education support staff, casual relief teachers and visiting teachers.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Before and after School

The principal is responsible for ensuring that there is a well-organised and responsive system of supervision in place during school hours, before and after school, and on school excursions and camps. School staff are responsible for following reasonable and lawful instructions from the principal, including instructions to provide supervision to students at specific dates, time and places.

Altona Primary School's grounds are supervised by school staff from 8.50am until 3.30pm. Outside of these hours, school staff will not be available to supervise students. Before and after school, school staff will supervise Section 3 (synthetic turf) of the school grounds.

Parents and carers should not allow their children to attend Altona Primary School outside of these hours. Families are encouraged to contact Team Kids on 1300 035 000 or refer to www.teamkids.com.au for more information about the before and after school care facilities available to our school community.

If a student arrives at school before supervision commences at the beginning of the day, the principal or nominee staff member will ask the student to remain in the school office and, as soon as practicable, follow up with the parent/carer to:

- advise of the supervision arrangements before school
- request that the parent/ carer make alternate arrangements

If a student is not collected before supervision finishes at the end of the day, the principal or nominee staff member will consider whether it is appropriate to:

- attempt to contact the parents/carers
- attempt to contact the emergency contacts
- place the student in an out of school hours care program (if available)
- contact Victoria Police and/or the Department of Health and Human Services (Child Protection) to arrange for the supervision, care and protection of the student.

School staff who are rostered on for before or after school supervision must follow the processes outlined below.

Yard Duty

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that students are adequately supervised during recess and lunch. This will usually involve designating areas in the yard and developing a roster for staff to supervise students in the designated area for the time indicated in the roster.

At Altona Primary School, the principal (or nominated replacement), is responsible for preparing and communicating the yard duty roster on a termly basis.



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Teachers who are rostered for duty are responsible for remaining in the designated area until the end of the break period, or until replaced a reliving teacher, whichever is applicable.

The designated yard duty areas for our school are:

Section	Area
Section 1	Big Oval
Section 2	New Playground and Soccer Field
Section 3	Synthetic Turf and Small Oval
Section 4	Centenary and Rotunda Playground



During yard duty, supervising teachers should be guided by the following:

School staff must wear the provided hi-vis vest and carry a first aid bum bag and walkie-talkie whilst on yard duty. Hi-vis vests, first aid bum bags and walkie-talkies will be stored in the First Aid room.

Staff who are rostered for yard duty must remain in the designated area until they are replaced by a relieving teacher.



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During yard duty, supervising staff must:

- methodically move around the designated zone
- be alert and vigilant
- intervene immediately if potentially dangerous or inappropriate behaviour is observed in the yard
- enforce behavioural standards and implement appropriate consequences for breaches of safety rules, in accordance with the school's *Student Engagement and Wellbeing* policy
- ensure that students who require first aid assistance receive it as soon as practicable
- log/report any incidents or near misses as appropriate on Compass or a member of the Leadership Team. If being relieved of their yard duty shift by another staff member, ensure that a brief but adequate verbal 'handover' is given to the next staff member in relation to any issues which may have arisen during the first shift.

If the supervising staff member is unable to conduct yard duty at the designated time, they should contact a member of the Leadership Team with as much notice as possible prior to the relevant yard duty shift to ensure that alternative arrangements are made.

If the supervising staff member needs to leave yard duty during the allocated time, they should contact the Leadership Team but should not leave the designated area until the relieving staff member has arrived in the designated area.

If a relieving or next staff member does not arrive for yard duty, the staff member currently on duty should send a message or call the office and not leave the designated area until a replacement staff member has arrived.

Should students require assistance during recess or lunchtime, they are encouraged to speak to the supervising yard duty staff member.

Classroom

The classroom teacher is responsible for the supervision of all students in their care during class.

If a teacher needs to leave the classroom unattended at any time during a lesson, they should first contact a team member or a member of the Leadership Team. The teacher should then wait until another staff member has arrived at the classroom to supervise the class prior to leaving.

Late arrival or early departure

The Principal will ensure that the school has a procedure in place for the safe collection and drop off of students at school during school hours (eg late arrival or an early departure). This will include a record of the date and time, the reason for the late arrival or early departure, and the person who has authorised the late arrival or early departure.

In relation to early departure from school, the procedure will also include:

- Students will be only permitted to leave the school premises under the supervision of a parent, or another person authorised by parents to collect the student
- If the person collecting the student is unknown to school staff, school staff will request photo identification to verify the person's identity

Visitors

The Principal will ensure that there is a procedure to monitor all visitors in the school. As a minimum this procedure must require all visitors arriving and departing the school premises during school hours to use sign in at the Compass kiosk at the office. At Altona Primary School, visitors sign in at arrival at the front office, collect a school lanyard and sign out on departure.



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Use of Digital Technologies

Teachers and other staff of Altona Primary School also have a responsibility to reasonably supervise the use of digital technologies, and the use of online learning environments at school. In doing so, teachers and other staff should be guided by the following:

- Relevant Departmental policies (eg. Student Engagement Guidance, Bully Stoppers, Acceptable Use Policy)
- Relevant Altona Primary School policies (eg. Digital Technologies and Acceptable Use Policy and Agreements)

It is important to note that:

- It is not reasonable or practicable for a teacher or principal to inspect every website that will be accessed by a student. The nature of the Internet means that there can be no guarantee against inappropriate content or changing circumstances in website content.
- It is not reasonable or practicable for a teacher or principal to supervise an online learning environment 24 hours a day.

The principal and teachers are expected to respond to an online incident that impacts on students at the school as soon as they have knowledge of its occurrence.

Incursions

Teachers must continue to supervise their students even whilst a visitor, speaker or instructor is presenting to the class. Visitors, speakers and instructors should not be responsible for supervising students on the school premises.

School activities, camps and excursions

The principal and leadership team are responsible for ensuring that students are appropriately supervised during all school activities, camps and excursions, including when external providers are engaged to conduct part or all of the activities. Appropriate supervision will be planned for special school activities, camps and excursions on an individual basis, depending on the activities to be undertaken and the level of potential risk involved.

The *Schools Policy and Advisory Guide* provide minimum requirements for staff-student ratios. However, Principals should determine the appropriate and effective level of supervision for each individual excursion or camp, taking into account the following:

- The experience, qualifications and skills of staff;
- The age, maturity, physical characteristics and gender of the students;
- The size of the group;
- The nature and location of the excursion / camp;
- The activities to be undertaken

Most excursions and camps must

- be under the direct control of a teacher with at least one other excursion staff member present;
- have enough teachers to maintain appropriate control of the excursion and each activity;
- have teachers comprising at least half of the excursion staff

Any person who supervises students on an excursion or camp must have a Working with Children check.

Prior to the commencement of the excursion or camp, the Principal must ensure that the specific roles and responsibilities of each supervisor are clarified and understood by all supervisors and students.

The supervision of students on a camp or excursion will include the following:

- Retaining copies of all confidential medical forms and permissions slips for each student who is participating in the excursion or camp;



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- Regularly marking off the attendance of students – this may include at the beginning of the excursion, on the transport, and at each location and activity;
- Ensuring that the venue, transport and activities conducted adhere to DET guidelines;
- Monitoring student behaviour, enforcing behaviour standards, and implementing logical consequences for a failure to comply with the behaviour and safety standards;
- Ensure that students who require first aid assistance receive it as soon as practicable;
- Ensure that risk management plans and emergency management plans are implemented as necessary

Note: Further information can be found in the **Camps and Excursions Policy**

Custody Arrangements

Schools are often confronted with issues relating to custody of students. While such issues are often emotionally charged, Altona Primary School will manage custody related issues in accordance with the law. The school has clear and responsible processes for managing custody related issues at a school level, and clearly articulates processes relating to the management of custody issues to parents. These include:

- Parents or guardians are required to complete and sign accurate enrolment forms for children for whom they have custody;
- Enrolments must be accompanied by Birth Certificates or similar that proves a student's name and birth date;
- The school will only enrol a child under the name provided on a Birth Certificate or more recent legally recognised document that details a name change, or by written consent of both parents/guardians;
- Any custody issues are to be declared and supported by legal documentation – which will be photocopied and retained on the student's individual file;
- The principal will be responsible for ensuring that the school complies with all Family Court Orders or similar legal documents relating to custody;
- The Principal or nominee may consult with DET's legal advice team in regard to Family Court orders;
- The school will assume a default position that both parents have equal access to enrolled students unless current court orders or legal documents dictate otherwise;
- Both parents will have access to school reports, newsletters, parent interviews, and their children at school unless court orders or similar legal documents dictate otherwise;
- Parents or guardians who claim custody restrictions but fail to provide documentation will not have their requests met until such time as supporting documentation is provided;
- People who have restricted access to students, and whose presence at school or requests for information etc are in breach of court orders or similar legal documents will be directed immediately to the principal;
- The police will be contacted immediately if any person refuses to comply with the principal's lawful instructions, or to obey court orders or similar.

Inclement Weather

As part of the usual yard duty timetable process, an inclement weather timetable will be activated by the Principal/Assistant Principal when conditions outside are considered to be unsuitable for students and staff. Inclement weather is generally defined as extreme heat, rain, lightning, dust, wind, cold or any other condition that is considered by the Principal/Assistant Principal to be unsuitable.

In the event of inclement weather, the school will implement the following:

- Where inclement weather is obvious prior to children being dismissed for a recess or lunch break,



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an announcement will be made by the Principal/Assistant Principal advising class teachers to follow the inclement weather time-table until further notice;

- Designate teachers who will supervise a number of grades (as previously agreed to by the teachers concerned), for an agreed time during the recess or lunch break;
- Teachers, other than classroom teachers, will similarly share supervision of the classes and other areas (as determined);
- All children will be confined to classrooms unless permission has been granted by a teacher to leave temporarily, e.g. toilet break;
- Children will be expected to walk indoors/under cover at all times and undertake appropriate indoor games and activities;
- In the case of unpredicted inclement weather occurring during a recess break, a yard duty teacher will activate the inclement weather timetable;
- In the event of children being required to come inside the school buildings, yard duty teachers will supervise the return to classes briefly while designated teachers make their way to the classrooms, or other areas, that they are required to supervise;
- All staff and students are required to wear broad-brimmed hats from mid August through to the end of April consistent with the school's Sunsmart Policy;
- Excursions, camps, scheduled sport, physical education or other outside activities may need to be reorganised or rescheduled should inclement weather occur or be predicted.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related School Policies

- Child Safe Policy
- First Aid Policy
- Anaphylaxis Policy
- Asthma Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy
- Camps and Excursions Policy
- Digital Technologies Policy and Acceptable use Agreement
- SunSmart Policy

DET resources

- <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/dutyofcare.aspx>

School Policy and Advisory Guide:

- [Supervision](#)
- [Duty of Care](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Visitors in Schools](#)

EVALUATION AND REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually, and/or in response to any incident in regard to the school's duty of care, and/or if circumstances and regulations change.