POLICY: RISK IN PLANNING AND SCHOOL OPERATIONS

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the office on 9702 2022.

PURPOSE:

To ensure Brentwood Park Primary School applies effective risk management processes.

AIMS:

Risk management forms one of the key elements of an effective planning process. Understanding the school's objectives and goals, and how to measure success, should be followed up by an assessment of the uncertainty (the risks, both threats and opportunities) to achieving the objectives. A thorough understanding of the risk profile of objectives helps to prioritise the areas of focus for the planning period. It also helps to decide which strategies, activities and processes will have less impact on the uncertainty and therefore may be stopped or not implemented.

Brentwood Park must proactively manage risks by following the department's Risk Management Process for Schools.

Managing risk involves:

- identifying and assessing risks and controls
- documenting risks in a risk register (or equivalent)
- implementing actions and treatments to manage identified risks
- monitoring risks, including regularly reviewing risk registers
- reporting on risks.

Identifying and managing risk maximises schools' ability to make sound decisions to:

- deliver the best possible outcomes for the school and the community
- meet Victorian community and government expectations for accountable and responsible use of public finances and resources
- safeguard student and staff wellbeing.

IMPLEMENTATION:

School Strategic Plan

The school's Strategic Plan sets the direction and the intent of the school for the coming four years. It is a key driver in achieving school improvement and is the foundation for principal and teachers' performance and development, school review and accountability, annual reporting, budgeting and capital works planning.

The school's priorities for the strategic plan should be determined from an assessment of the profile of uncertainty of achievement of the school's goals and objectives. This assessment needs to take into consideration the changing context, current and expected within the planning cycle. An understanding of how that context may change should inform the risks.

Annual Implementation Plan

An Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) is essentially a school-level work plan. It describes how the key improvement strategies in the School Strategic Plan (or School Charter) will be put into operation during the year.

Whilst developing the AIP, risk management practices should be utilised at key stages of the planning process.

Risk in school operations
As the day-to-day operations at the school are undertaken, there are many areas and contexts where risks need to be identified, assessed and communicated. These range from the ongoing risks to the achievement of the school objectives, to risks for one-off activities and projects.

For each of these areas, the method for identifying, capturing and assessing the risks is the same, only the context, goals and objectives are different. Some contexts require that a risk register be communicated either to the principal, school council or the regional office as part of an approvals process. For all contexts, it is best practice to identify the uncertainty involved to help prioritise the available resources.

The department's Planning, Risk and Governance Branch provides sample registers/templates for each of these contexts.

DAY-TO-DAY RUNNING OF THE SCHOOL:

The school leadership team reviews the risks for the day-to-day running of the school. These risks should inform decision-making at leadership meetings. This register should hold risks about essential school functions, such as:

- infrastructure and maintenance
- staffing
- financial performance
- educational outcomes

The leadership team should look at how risks change throughout the year as the school environment changes and as treatments for those risks are completed.

In the classroom
Risks that assist in achieving goals and objectives in the classroom should be considered. This should take into account lesson-specific factors, such as class demographics, venue and equipment required.
Wellbeing and safety risks will also need to be considered for classes such as:

- science practicals
- cooking
- physical education

Excursions and Incursions
It is a requirement that all risks to the achievement of the objectives of an excursion or incursion are articulated and assessed. This risk assessment is to be included in the documentation for approval by the:

- principal for single day events
- school council for overnight events

The risks to be considered should include:

- the demographics of the group
- any travel planned
- the destination and its environment
- the time of the year for planned activity
- the activities to be undertaken

The risk process will inform the planning of the event and help decide what resources, staff and equipment will be required.

An online notification of a school activity form is completed prior to the activity using the Student Activity Locator (SAL).

Education outdoors
As with excursions, it is required that the risks to the objectives of education outdoors activities, such as camps, be analysed, however, submission to the school council is required. An online notification of school activity form is completed at least three weeks prior to the activity using the Student Activity Locator (SAL). A completed approval preform must also be submitted to school council for approval. For the activities to be undertaken, the school needs to provide assurance that any third parties have appropriately assessed the risks

Projects and events
Schools may hold one-off events such as school mini fetes and concerts. To ensure these events are effective and achieve their goals and objectives, the risks to their delivery should be captured and assessed. This should take into account risks of:

- financial handling
- wellbeing and safety (e.g. food handling)
- visitor experience
- infrastructure
- resources

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY (OHS):

It is a requirement for the school to maintain a register of the OH&S risks facing the school to ensure all potential hazards on the site are identified, assessed, and appropriately managed.

COMMUNICATON:

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

- Available publicly on school website
- Placed in the newsletter
- Discussed at staff meetings as required
- Included in staff induction processes

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	15/11/2022
Consultation	Consultation with Brentwood Park School Council
Approved by	James Bell, principal and school council
Next scheduled review date	November 2026