

**Holy Family Primary School  
GOWRIE**



**CHEMICAL  
SAFETY  
Policy**





# Chemical Safety Policy

## Related Policies

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CE Work Health and Safety ACT and NSW *under review*

## Purpose

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It is necessary to:

- Provide a safe, secure learning environment for all.
- Raise awareness of the issues involving WH&S.
- Reinforce within the school community what unsafe incidents are and who to report them to.
- Educate teachers to become safety officers.
- Implement procedures to address possible unsafe situations.
- Ensure that all reported incidents of unsafe practices are followed up appropriately and that support is given to WH&S officer in dealing with these situations.

## Definitions

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Descriptions of the different types of WH&S issues and Chemical Safety concerns are outlined below

### **WH&S Issues of Concern**

- Poor ventilation
- Access to high shelves by a teacher is difficult and dangerous
- Exposed electrical wiring
- Poor egress
- Loose fixtures (eg. cupboards, blackboards, whiteboards)
- Heavy single items (5kg+) stored in places where they could be pulled onto a child
- Medicines stored in classroom
- Dangerous tripping hazards
- Protruding sharp edges or splinters on furniture
- Computer wiring exposed for easy child access

## **Chemical Safety Materials of Note**

*(These items need to be locked in a ventilated area or kept off-site)*

- a) Class 2 - Gases: compressed, liquefied or dissolved under pressure;
  - (i) Class 2.1 flammable gases;
  - (ii) Class 2.2 non-flammable non-toxic gases;
  - (iii) Class 2.3 poisonous gases;
- b) Class 4 - Flammable solids;
  - (i) Class 4.1 flammable solids;
  - (ii) Class 4.2 substances liable to spontaneous combustion;
  - (iii) Class 4.3 substances which emit flammable gases on contact with water;
- c) Class 5 - Oxidising agents and organic peroxides;
  - (i) Class 5.1 oxidising agents;
  - (ii) Class 5.2 organic pesticides;
- d) Class 6 - Poisonous (toxic) and infectious substances;
  - (i) Class 6.1(a) substances which are liable to cause death or serious injury to human health if swallowed, inhaled or ingested;
  - (ii) Class 6.1(b) substances which are harmful to human health if swallowed or inhaled or by skin contact;
  - (iii) Class 6.2 infectious substances;
- e) Class 8 – Corrosive substances

## **Policy**

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Everyone at Holy Family Primary School has the right to feel safe and secure. The school ethos embodies the ideals of our Christian heritage and uses them to challenge personal and intellectual growth. This can only occur if people feel safe. A safe and secure learning environment will maximise the children's chance for educational and emotional growth.

This "Chemical Safety" policy sets out procedures to ensure that chemicals are used in a safe manner and that the risks associated with the use of chemicals are controlled. In following the procedures outlined in this policy, staff members will:

- Meet the legal requirements for the use of hazardous and dangerous goods in the School environment
- Be aware of current practice in the use of chemicals for teaching and learning;
- Be instructed in the strategies for the safe use, storage and disposal of chemicals.

Chemicals are used in schools for both educational and administrative purposes. There are two groups of chemicals defined by legislation that schools need to recognise – these are dangerous goods and hazardous substances.

Dangerous goods are substances that have the potential to cause immediate risk to health and safety and are covered under the *Dangerous Goods Act 1975* and the *Dangerous Goods Regulation 1978*. Dangerous goods are covered under nine

classes including – Explosives, Gases, Flammable/combustible liquids, Flammable solids, Oxidising substances, Toxic and infectious substances, Radioactive material, Corrosive substances and Miscellaneous dangerous goods.

Hazardous substances have the potential to harm the health of people by making contact or entering the body and are covered under the *Hazardous Substances Regulation 1996*.

Chemicals may be in the form of a solid, liquid, gas, vapour, dust, mist and fume. Chemicals must be used and stored safely in the school premises.

Staff working in schools must have appropriate training and awareness in the management of risks associated with the use of chemicals. This requirement is defined in The *Occupational Health and Safety (Hazardous Substances) Regulation 1996*. All staff are responsible for taking reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others at the workplace.

## Procedures

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### **Training of Staff**

The school's Assistant Principal is designated as the school's Chemical Safety Schools Coordinator.

The Chemical Safety in Schools Coordinator (Assistant Principal) must provide training for all newly appointed staff. This is usually done at the beginning of the school year. In the event that new staff are employed at any other time of the year they will also be provided training in the safe use and storage of chemicals in the school environment according to the procedures set out in this policy.

As part of the Professional Learning activities occurring at the start of each year, all staff are to be informed by the school's Chemical Safety In Schools Coordinator of the need to "refresh" their understanding of this "Chemical Safety in Schools" procedures policy.

### **Chemical Stocktake**

Chemical stocktakes must be conducted on a regular basis to provide information for the school's chemical register. It is a legislative requirement that a register of all chemicals, hazardous substances and dangerous goods stored on site be kept and be readily accessible to all staff. This register allows staff to identify substances used in the workplace that may affect their health and safety.

The Chemical Safety In Schools Coordinator must conduct a chemical stocktake at the beginning of Term 2 each year. All areas of the school must be included in the chemical stocktake and a register compiled indicating what chemicals are stored and how much there is of each chemical in each location.

The Chemical Stocktake Register must contain the following details:

Product Name	Manufacturer	Quantity	Unit	Code
			ml, l, g, kg	

To meet compliance recommendations Holy Family uses **MSDS Manager** as its comprehensive chemical management system. This is accessible by the Internet [www.mds.com/au](http://www.mds.com/au) and is used as a product register and to record and track stored chemicals.

### Material Safety Data Sheets

All chemical hazards must be identified and assessed to determine the level of risk. The risks must be controlled to use the chemical safely. In order for this to occur a Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) must be completed for every chemical substance stored on the school premises and listed on the school's chemical register. All chemicals should be properly labelled.

The MSDS includes the following details:

- Name and address of supplier
- Contact information in the case of an emergency
- Name of the product
- Classifications
- Common properties
- Chemical composition
- Health Hazards
- Precautions for use
- Safe handling information

The MSDS for each chemical stored on the school's premises is available in the Front Office file that contains the register of chemicals at the school. This file can be accessed by staff members at any time.

### Control Strategies

If during the course of the Chemical Stocktake, a potential chemical hazard is identified in the school it can be removed from the school premises, or its effect lessened, by using one, or a number, of the following control strategies.

*Elimination:* If the chemical is not essential it should be removed completely from the school premises (eg acid).

*Substitution:* This involves replacing the chemical with a less hazardous substance (eg in art/craft toxic paints replaced with non-toxic paints).

*Mitigation:* This involves reducing risk by reducing the amount of the chemical (eg smaller stocks are held on the school premises and only ordered on a 'just in time strategy').

*Isolation:* This involves separation of the chemicals from people by the use of barriers (eg the dangerous goods storeroom is located away from potential fire risks and people).

*Engineering controls:* This involves having engineering controls in place to reduce risks posed by chemicals (eg a fume cupboard as used in science laboratories).

*Administrative procedures:* This involves advising people of safety procedures for the safe use and disposal of chemicals eg. use of locked cupboards for chemicals.

*Personal protective equipment:* This involves people wearing safety goggles, suitable gloves and protective clothing (eg. laboratory coats) to reduce risks posed by chemicals.

### **Chemicals for curriculum purposes**

All chemicals used in school for curriculum purposes must be labelled.

If the chemical is not hazardous or dangerous the only label that is required is a label clearly displaying its name.

Hazardous or dangerous chemicals must have the legally required labels clearly visible.

Before using a chemical, staff must consult the Front Office file and note the details on the particular chemical's Material Safety Data Sheet.

### **Storing Chemicals in classrooms safely**

Chemicals used in classrooms must be stored securely in cupboards that are not readily accessible by students.

### **Using Chemicals in classroom lessons**

When chemicals are used by students (eg. in Science lessons) the students must be strictly supervised and appropriate safety procedures put in place.

Safety procedures would include using protective clothing eg. disposable gloves, eye protection and "art shirts", if appropriate; washing hands after use; and washing eyes immediately with water if accidental contact.

If a student suffers an adverse reaction to a chemical in a classroom, then the student should be immediately sent to the Sick Bay together with a description of the chemical involved.

### **Chemicals for cleaning purposes**

The school's contract cleaners store chemicals for cleaning purposes in securely locked storerooms located behind the school's main toilet blocks. These storerooms are not to be accessed by students at any time.

### **Chemicals in the staffroom**

Detergent is kept in the school's staffroom for cleaning of eating utensils. This detergent is stored securely in the cupboards underneath the sink. These cupboards are not to be accessed by students at any time.

### **Pesticides**

Pest control treatments on the school site will only be carried out by a licensed pest controller. These treatments will be performed outside of normal school hours (preferably during school vacation periods) so that staff and students are not exposed to solvent odours or chemical residues from any spraying.

### **Disposal of Chemicals**

Disposal issues are minimised in the school due to the fact that most chemicals used for educational purposes will be non-hazardous and of a domestic nature. Therefore the procedures for disposal of chemicals from the school site should follow accepted household practices.

When necessary, the school should collect and store separately for collection (preferably in original container) any oils and fats, or solvents and flammable liquids.

Domestic amounts of oil and fats may be disposed of in the normal school waste.

Collection companies can be engaged to dispose of any hazardous, dangerous and/or unsafe chemicals that are identified in the regular chemical stocktakes.

### **References**

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Nil

### **Forms**

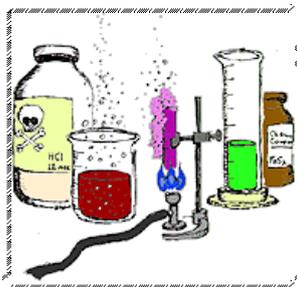
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Holy Family Primary School Chemical Safety Checklist

Approved by:	<b>Holy Family School Board</b>
Implementation Date:	
Policy last Updated:	<b>August 2014</b>
School Contact Officer:	<b>Anne-Marie Marek</b>

## Holy Family Primary School Chemical Safety Checklist

**NB:** Please complete the below checklist at the beginning of each semester.



- All of the chemicals listed below need to be in a lockable, ventilated area where they cannot be readily accessed by children.
  - If any of the chemicals below need to be used for instruction, permission should be sought from the principal by the classroom teacher.
  - Classroom cleaning agents should be approved by the principal and stored in a designated safe area.
  - Industrial general school cleaning agents should be stored in a locked area by the school cleaning contractors.
- a) Class 2 - Gases: compressed, liquefied or dissolved under pressure;
- (iv) Class 2.1 flammable gases;
  - (v) Class 2.2 non-flammable non-toxic gases;
  - (vi) Class 2.3 poisonous gases;
- b) Class 4 - Flammable solids;
- (iv) Class 4.1 flammable solids;
  - (v) Class 4.2 substances liable to spontaneous combustion;
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