



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office.

Phone: [\(03\) 9398 2806](tel:0393982806)

Email: seaholme.ps@education.vic.gov.au

PURPOSE & OBJECTIVE

To ensure that Seaholme Primary School appropriately supports staff working from home during a pandemic.

In the event of a contagious pandemic Seaholme Primary School will implement a Working from Home arrangement in order to continue to maintain services and to:

- minimise the workplace risk to the health and safety of our staff and students, and the wider community; as well as
- ensure that, as far as reasonably practical, privacy and confidentiality obligations continue to be met.

This policy will apply to all Seaholme Primary School staff if the DET, Victorian or Federal governments issue advice to instigate working from home arrangements. The principal will advise staff of working from home arrangements.

During a pandemic as far as reasonably practicable:

- all current Seaholme Primary School policies will remain in force including those relating to leave applications, child protection, social media, bullying, harassment and discrimination.
- Seaholme Primary School will consult with staff with respect to the application of this policy. Staff should discuss any concerns or queries with the principal, or any other person directed by the Seaholme Primary School to deal with these concerns or queries.

Note: This policy will only apply if schools are directed by the Victorian or Federal governments of Australia to implement a period of remote learning due to a pandemic.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

Some, or all staff that may be required to work from home or at school during a pandemic.

Note: Working from home may not be a suitable option for all staff, and in those situations Seaholme Primary School will discuss alternatives with those individuals.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Your Contract of Employment

The terms and conditions of employment set out in your employment contract will continue to apply during any pandemic including any working from home arrangement except where it is not reasonably practical to do so.

Working from Home

Working Hours & Check-ins

Unless otherwise agreed all staff are to maintain the same working hours that they would normally work.

As it is important that Seaholme Primary School is aware of your attendance you will need to comply with any directions such as regularly checking in with the school.

Notice of Inability to Work

If you are unable to work for any reason during a pandemic, including sickness or caring responsibilities, we ask that you advise the principal, or another person as directed by the Seaholme Primary School with as much notice as is reasonably practicable, preferably before your usual start time. If you are able to provide earlier notice this will assist in staff scheduling and maintaining continuity of our operations.

Working from Home - workplace health and safety

If in the event of a pandemic, when staff work from home, your work area becomes your “workplace” and it is important that we ensure, as far as reasonably practicable, that your workplace is safe.

To ensure your workplace is safe, as is reasonably practicable and that we can address any safety issues that may arise, we ask that you:

- Complete the Working from Home OHS Checklist; and
- Advise the principal, immediately, in the event of any changes to your situation that may affect your personal safety.

If there is any immediate danger to your personal safety by working from home, please advise the principal immediately. Work should not proceed until this danger has been effectively controlled or removed. When working from home you are responsible for taking all reasonable measures to look after your own health and safety and that of anyone who may be affected by your work activities.

Child Safe Standards

Our school is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with [Ministerial Order 1359 - Child Safe Standards - Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools](#). In the event of a period of remote learning due to a pandemic, Seaholme Primary School commitment to the Child Safe standards remains the same.

Mandatory reporting

Mandatory reporters’ obligations under law remain the same.

Reporting child abuse

During online school learning, if school staff become aware of an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has been abused or is at risk of abuse, they must follow all normal procedures for responding to and reporting child abuse, including the four critical actions for schools.

Maintaining Privacy and Confidentiality

All staff are reminded of their privacy and confidentiality requirements.

Particular care should be taken to ensure that:

- Hardcopy confidential and personal information is kept securely.
- IT equipment belonging to Seaholme Primary School is not used by non-employees.
- Privacy and confidentiality is maintained when making work-related phone calls or participating in online meetings.
- You remain vigilant to cybersecurity concerns.
- If you suspect that there has been a data breach whether as a result of lost devices or hacking, phishing, or other external event, you must immediately notify the principal and/or Seaholme Primary School Privacy Office.

Important Notifications

You must immediately notify the Seaholme Primary School if:

- You are injured while working from home.

- There is any significant change to your working from home environment that may present a safety hazard.
- There is a personal information data breach.
- You become aware of a child protection incident or situation.

Procedure Before Commencing to Work from Home

Prior to commencing working from home you should:

1. Identify the area that you will be using in your home and take necessary action to adapt it to your working needs.
2. Complete the Working from Home OHS Checklist and return this to Seaholme Primary School as soon as reasonably practicable.
3. Discuss with the principal, or another person as directed by Seaholme Primary School any remedial action which may need to be taken in relation to any foreseeable safety hazards identified in the Checklist.
4. Discuss with the principal, or another person as directed by Seaholme Primary school any equipment needs.
5. Ensure that you have provided the school with up to date contact information including your mobile phone number and address.
6. Ensure you have access to all relevant information, hardcopy and electronic, that you will need to maintain efficient working from home.

Working at school during a pandemic

The following steps must be, as per the AHPPC recommendations, be adhered to while working on school premises:

Social Distancing Standards and Practises

- a. Maximum number of 10 children in a room.
- b. A minimum teacher-to-student ratio of 1:8 to ensure staff can assist their colleagues with breaks, relief and other support where required. This staffing ratio can include the use of relevant support staff.
- c. Where possible, staff and students should endeavour to keep 1.5 metres distance from each other.
- d. Based on a room size of 40 square metres, a room should have no more than 10 occupants at any given time. **Note:** Occupancy rates may be adjusted for larger room sizes, as long as there is no more than one occupant per four square meters of floor space.
- e. Schools supporting students with complex health needs may need to adapt these requirements to meet individual student and equipment requirements.
- f. Students should be spaced out as much as possible. For example, a minimum of two desk spaces between each child or young person.
- g. Fixed seating arrangements and/or exam style seating should also be considered where practical and appropriate.
- h. Windows should be open during the day to promote air flow.
- i. Hand sanitisers and tissues should be made available in all learning and office spaces.
- j. Office space should have one staff member per four square meters of office floor space.
- k. Staff should use separate offices where possible.
- l. Mixing of staff and students between rooms should be avoided where possible. It is acknowledged that staff may need to move between rooms to support breaks.
- m. Staff in schools supporting students with complex health needs will need to regularly assist different groups across the course of the day. In these situations, staff should use best practice hand hygiene.

Teaching practice

- a. Where possible, classroom furniture should be rearranged to provide maximum space between tables.

- b. Seating arrangements should also be changed to maximise distance between students. For example, students can be seated along the short edges and well as long edges of tables, and tables can be moved to the full front, back and side walls of the classroom.
- c. Student group work should be suspended, except where students are collaborating using digital technologies. Except for very young students, student work can be handed to a teacher for feedback rather than feedback being provided immediately by the teacher in close proximity to the student

Start and finish of day, lunchtime, recess and breaks

- a. In order to reduce the gathering of large groups at any one time, schools should consider staggering the start and finish of the school day (where this does not extend the school day to an unreasonable degree.
- b. Breaks and time outside should be staggered to limit contact between groups.
- c. Where students line up to enter class, they should be encouraged to keep 1.5 metres between each other where possible.
- d. Where students usually enter and leave class in an unstructured manner, this practice can be changed so students enter in a more structured way so a distance of 1.5 metres is maintained.
- e. Students, especially in secondary schools, should be encouraged to keep a distance of 1.5 metres between each other and between themselves and staff.
- f. Greetings should take the form of non-contact greetings.
- g. The highest standards of hygiene should be practiced in staffrooms, including washing drink and food containers with hot water and detergent and regularly wiping down surfaces with disinfectant.

Assemblies, gatherings and meetings

Schools should suspend any large gatherings of staff and students at one time, such as whole school or sub-school assemblies and large information evenings. Schools must not hold any outdoor events that involve over 500 people, or indoor events of more than 100 people.

COMMUNICATION

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

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website communications platform (COMPASS)
- Included in staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

[Schools Operations Guide](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This policy will be reviewed as needed.

Policy last reviewed	October 2022
Approved by	Principal
Consultation	Noting at SC October 2022
Next scheduled review date	October 2026