



VOICE CARE FOR TEACHERS POLICY

This policy outlines the requirements in schools for voice care for teachers.

SUMMARY

- The [Occupational Health and Safety \(OHS\) Act 2004 \(Vic\)](#) requires the Department to provide or maintain, systems of work and a working environment that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe and without risk to health – including where common job tasks can create a potential health risk.
- The principal and/or their delegate, in consultation with Health and Safety Representatives (HSR) and employees, must identify, assess, implement controls and monitor the vocal health of teachers in their school, because teaching can create demands on vocal health.
- Under the OHS Act 2004, employees while at work must take reasonable care for their own health and safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions.
- Central and regional offices provide a range of supports and services to assist principals and employees to be safe and well, including access to the OHS Advisory Service and local regional officers who can provide free advice about how to manage teacher vocal health risks.
- The [Voice Care for Teachers Procedure](#) must be followed and sets out the practical step-by-step instructions for implementing this policy.
- This Policy forms part of the Department's OHS Management System.

DETAILS

The principal and/or their delegate, in consultation with the HSR and employees must:

- implement a risk management approach for identifying areas/activities that may pose a risk to teachers' vocal health by identifying the hazards that may impact on teachers' vocal health
- conduct a risk assessment to determine the risk (likelihood and consequence of injury or harm) using the [Risk Assessment Template](#)
- develop appropriate risk control strategies and allocate adequate resources to implement them by using the [OHS Risk Register](#)
- record identified and implemented risk controls to manage areas / activities that may pose a risk to teachers' vocal health on the OHS Risk Register.

DEFINITIONS

Voice care

Often called 'Vocal Hygiene or Health', caring for your voice means learning to pay attention to the signals that your voice gives you so that you take the necessary steps to avoid getting injured in the first place. It also requires that you think ahead, learning to change certain behaviours which might lead to an injured voice e.g. improving how the larynx (voice box) works through voice therapy.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed in line with new laws, regulations and best practice.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in **February 2021** and is scheduled for review in **February 2024**.

Endorsed by School Council in February 2021.