

DECISION MAKING POLICY

1. **Rationale:**

Good decision making is a critical factor in the long term effectiveness of a school. It can contribute significantly to the achievement of organisational goals; the maximising of parent involvement; the increase in the morale, well-being and productivity of staff, and ultimately the enhancement of student learning. The Education Act, Regulations and Administrative Instructions detail clear expectations for Principals and School Councils with regard to school based decision-making.

All individuals and groups within a school community have the right to participate and be fairly represented in relevant decision making. Involvement of members of the school community will vary according to the issue under consideration.

A school community consists of the students, staff, parents and organisations within the local area. Where these appropriate stakeholders are involved in decision making it is a more satisfying and professionally rewarding place for students, staff and parents. It is a true community.

Decisions are made using a process of consultation with individuals and groups. Staff, parents and students are expected to participate in decision-making processes related to issues in which they have an interest, stake or expertise.

The school's organisational structure provides opportunities for people to make decisions on matters related to their roles and in accordance with established policies and procedures.

2. **Principles:**

At Brighton Secondary School we believe:

Our policies, practices and decisions will be characterised by:

- Democratic principles ensuring consultation, ownership and evaluation.
- An inclusive approach ensuring the needs of students as learners and teachers as professionals are addressed.

Decision-making works well when:

- Inclusive practices are in place.
- There is an atmosphere of trust and respect.
- Decisions are made within a framework of a shared vision, values and agreed goals.
- Different opinions and ideas are listened to and respected.
- People feel supported, considered and rewarded for their contribution.
- Stakeholders accept and support decisions made, although the decision may not always be their preferred position.
- The modes of decision-making vary according to needs of the groups and participants are clear on the process.
- People's roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and expectations made explicit.
- Consultation and participation are routine aspects of the decision making process.

- Processes are clear for information sharing, deliberation, negotiation, participation and making decisions.
 - Organisational support ensures the implementation of decision into practice.
- The above principles underpin our decision-making policy and accompanying procedures.

3. Role of the Principal

The Principal is accountable to the Chief Executive for the educational leadership and management of the school, and to the Governing Council for the implementation of the school's Strategic Plan and the Site Learning Plan.

It is incumbent on the Principal to establish decision-making procedures which give full opportunity for staff and other members of the school community to participate as appropriate.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring there is a mutual understanding of the roles and responsibilities of individuals and groups.

4. Role of Teachers

Under the Education Act / Regulations, teachers are responsible to the Principal for the welfare and development of students in their care, participating in the development and review of policies and actively assisting in the general management of the school. In relation to decision-making, it is their responsibility to:

- Participate in decision-making and use the decision-making structures that are in place.
- Ensure that the decisions they make in relation to teaching and learning, or their job, follow the principles above.

5. Role of Ancillary Staff

Ancillary staff are responsible to the Principal for providing quality support services, participating in the development and review of policies and actively assisting in the general management of the school.

6. General Principles

Those affected by a decision are given an opportunity to participate in the process so that their views are considered.

The introduction of new policies and procedures or major changes to existing policies must be ratified by the Governing Council.

Established committees are expected to consult more widely (i.e. outside the immediate group) on occasions when insufficient information is available.

Decisions are recorded in minutes of meetings and the person or group responsible for implementation is identified in the documentation.

Types of Decisions

Individual Decisions

- These informed decisions are made when action is mandated by DECD or an individual exercises his/her judgement to facilitate smooth day to day operations.
- If the decision or proposal only impacts on the individual staff member making the decision (or their core business) then the decision can be implemented.
- Such decisions, however, must be made within the school's broad policies and DECD regulations.
 - **Example of an Individual Decision: the decision to have an outdoor lesson.**

Collaborative Decisions

- Groups share ideas and make collaborative decisions to give direction for a particular purpose. If the decision or proposal falls within the group's mandate (see group responsibilities) and affects only the group (or their primary stakeholders), the decision can be implemented.
- Groups are responsible for ensuring that any decisions are taken in the best interests of their key stakeholders and any decisions, are made within the school's broad policies and DECD regulations.
- Individual members should demonstrate selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership.
 - **Example of a Collaborative Decision: the decision to include an exam at Stage 1 for a particular subject.**

Consultative Decisions

- These are decisions that will impact the whole staff, school and/or wider community. These require consultation with all key stakeholders. The degree of consultation will depend on the gravity of the decision or change, and whom it is likely to affect.
 - **Example of a Consultative Decision: the decision to change the start time for the school day.**

Emergency Decisions

- Principal or Principal's nominee will have emergency decision-making powers when an urgent decision must be made and the situation makes it impossible to follow the usual decision-making process.
 - **Example of an Emergency Decision: cancellation of an event due to inclement weather.**

Proviso

- In any school decision-making process the Principal retains the power of veto. If agreed and appropriate decision-making processes are used, this situation would be rare.
- Decisions arrived at must not:
 - contravene DECD guidelines or be illegal
 - affect the safety and wellbeing of children by placing them at risk contravene the school Guiding Principles or equity principles.

Committees are required to review regularly their progress in achieving stated goals and objectives.

Individuals and groups are committed to equal opportunity and inclusivity principles when making decisions.

Governing Council

- To involve the school community in the governance of the school by providing a focus and a forum for the parents and the school community.
- To set the broad direction and vision of the school through strategic planning.
- To ratify policies.
- To oversee financial resources available to the school including the regular review of the budget.
- To report to the school community and the Minister.
- To arrange for the conduct of facilities and services to enhance the education, development, care, safety, health or welfare of children and students.
- May raise money for school related purposes.

Membership – Elected parents, students and staff, Business Manager, Principal and community members.

Finance Committee

- Advise the Governing Council on budgetary and finance matters, including, the preparation of the budget document for Council approval, and the monitoring of income and expenditure.
- Manage the finances in an equitable and socially just manner in support of school priorities as stated in the Site learning Plan.
- To develop implement and evaluate policies, systems and procedures to ensure effective delegation and management of financial resources.
- To advise the Governing Council on School Fees, charges and monetary policies.
- To receive regular financial reports, oversee investments, and monitor the school's financial position, taking corrective steps as appropriate.

Membership –Governing Council Treasurer (Chair), Principal, Business Manager, Finance Manager, two elected staff, up to two Prefects and nominated Governing Council members.

Music Parent Support Group

- Provide advice to the School Council and staff on Policy relating to Music.
- Raise funds to support the sustainability of the Music Special Interest Program.

Membership – Head of Music, Music Coordinator, student representatives and parents.

Volleyball Parent Support Committee

- Provide advice to the School Council and staff on Policy relating to Volleyball.
- Raise funds to support the sustainability of the Volleyball Special Interest Program.

Membership – Volleyball Coordinator, student representatives and parents.

Student Leadership Team

Students Teams include:

- Year 12 Prefects
- Student Leadership Council
- House, Sports, Special Interest Music, Special Interest Volleyball, International Captains.
- Advocacy groups such as LGBT (Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender)+ Alliance

Each of these teams are represented on the Brighton Up Committee which coordinate student leadership activities and events.

The role of Student Leadership Teams is to promote a positive school culture and a healthy learning environment for all students and to represent the school in the wider community.

Membership – elected house captains and vice captains, elected SLC (Student Leadership Council) team and Prefects.

Principal Team

- Whole school administration, strategic planning and policy development/ review.
- Leadership according to delegated roles – Curriculum, International, ICT (Information Communication Technology), Music, Timetabling, Daily Routines, Business Management.

Membership – Principal, Business Manager, Deputy Principal and Assistant Principals.

Leaders Team

- Undertake Faculty strategic planning, administration and support aligned with Site Learning Plan and Guiding Principles.
- Provide a forum for information sharing between the school's leadership teams.
- Provide a forum through which school leaders can manage school development issues.
- Provide leadership to staff in implementing school policies.
- Ensures the day-to-day management strategies are in place and implemented.
- Provides advice on emerging issues that require coordination across the school.
- Monitor and review decision-making processes and decision implementation.
- Coordinate communication between faculty teams, house teams and staff.
- Manage 8-12 issues as required.
- Ensure that curriculum is aligned with student needs and current DECD policy.
- Monitor and review existing practices so that curriculum and pedagogy renewal is ongoing.
- Collection of Performance Development Plans.

Membership – Principal, Curriculum Leaders, House Leaders, Business Manager.

Digital Learning Advisory Committee

- Monitor whole school ICT development and strategic planning.
- Ensure that ICT facilities match student needs across the curriculum.
- Support the professional learning requirements of staff.

Membership – Principal, Assistant Principal Learner Management System, Leader Digital Learning, Faculty representatives.

House Teams

- Strategic planning with respect to wellbeing, student services & career development.
- Provide advice on matters relating to student wellbeing, care and support.
- Individual case management, support and education of students with special learning or wellbeing needs.
- Facilitate access to external support agencies.
- Monitor and respond to Student Wellbeing Register through case management and tailored intervention programs.
- Development, implementation and review of Student Life and whole school wellbeing programs.
- Ensure teachers implement accommodations and modifications where necessary for identified students NEP (Negotiated Education Plan), ATSI (Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander), GOM (Guardianship of Minister).
- Implementation of LAP (Learning Assistance Program).
- Development, implementation and review of school policies pertaining to student behaviour, harassment, uniform, attendance.
- Support home group teachers in implementing school policies and associated expectations ie. Attendance, behaviour, uniform.

Membership – Assistant Principal School Ethos, House Leaders, Counsellors, Curriculum Support Teacher and SSOs (School Service Officers), ATSI Teacher and ASETO (Aboriginal Secondary Education Transition Officer), and Pastoral Care Worker.

School Support Officers Team

- Provides advice to the Business Manager on all issues relating to the management of School Support Services.
- Provide and facilitate a diverse range of school support and administrative services.

Membership – All School Support Officers, Business Manager, Grounds Staff.

Personnel Advisory Committee

- Provide advice to the Principal on matters such as:
 - the number, nature, profile, tenure and special emphasis of leadership positions within the context of the school's Site Learning Plan
 - job and person specifications prior to seeking approval.
 - consultation with staff for filling all acting/limited tenure leadership vacancies
 - management of class organisation, structure, teaching loads, and allocation of classes
 - staffing classifications in line with any agreement between DECD and AEU (Australian Education Union).
- Develop strategies to settle disputes related to the above.

Membership – Principal, elected staff representative, elected SSO representative, elected AEU representative.

Work Health & Safety Committee

- Ensure a safe and healthy working environment for all employees, students, volunteers and visitors.
- Initiate, develop, implement and monitor WHS policies and practices.
- Ensure compliance with relevant legislation including DECD and Work Cover requirements.
- Consult with and educate staff about WHS issues.
- Resolve specific WHS issues and assist injured employees to return to work.
- Perform functions mutually agreed to by the school administration and the committee.
- Support the role of the elected WHS representative.

Membership – Assistant Principal School Operations, Principal, Business Manager, Site Representative, Chief Warden, elected faculty representatives.

Timetable Committee

- Plans and maintains the timetable.
- Gives advice to the Principal regarding the efficient deployment of staff.
- Membership: Assistant Principal Human Resources, Assistant Principal Daily Operations, Maths Coordinator and up to 5 volunteer teachers.

Professional Learning Committee

- Identify Professional Learning needs of all staff.
- Make recommendations for relevant professional learning (individual, faculty and whole staff).
- Support & facilitate the delivery of relevant professional learning.

Membership – Deputy Principal: Curriculum & Professional Learning, Self-nominated staff.

Positive Education Team

- Interested staff members, parents and students meet regularly as the Positive Education Team to develop strategies to promote positive outcomes for students and staff.

Membership – Director of Curriculum, Assistant Principal School Life, faculty staff representatives, parents, students.

Professional Learning Community

- Information sharing and reporting
- Discussion, consultation and feedback on school policy and procedures.
- Staff to raise issues of concern.
- Staff decision on matters referred by Leaders committee.
- Professional Learning.

Membership – Elected chairperson, all teaching staff and SSO staff.

Faculty Teams

- Implementation of Faculty Action Plans.
- Development and implementation of curriculum and programs aligned with ACARA (Australian Curriculum Assessment and Reporting Authority) & SACE (South Australian Certificate of Education) requirements.
- Professional Learning and sharing.

- Performance Development.
- Consultation, feedback and implementation of school policies.

Membership – Faculty Coordinator, faculty teaching staff

7. Structures and Procedures

Committees are structured to encourage participation in decision-making and assist with information flow. Vacancies are filled by either an election process at the beginning of each year; or for the beginning of Term 2 for the PAC (Personnel Advisory Committee) or by volunteering.

In term one a register of committees which contributes to decision-making is published. This includes the name of the convener, role of each committee and membership of the group.

Convenors are responsible for ensuring that:

- meeting dates are publicised and agendas distributed to committee members at least twenty four hours prior to meetings
- inclusive practices and effective teamwork characterize meetings
- minutes of meetings are recorded on the school's intranet j.communications and committees/year/general committees
- decision-making processes to be used are negotiated and acceptable to the group
- when decisions are made, the person responsible for implementation is identified in the minutes
- the role of the committee is explained and individual members are clear about their roles and responsibilities.

Groups and committees which comprise the school's decision-making structures are as follows:

- Principal Team
- Canteen Committee
- Leaders Team (includes Library)
- Individual Faculty Teams, including Think Bright and Research Project
- Finances and Resources Committee
- Governing Council
- House Teams
- Work Health and Safety
- Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Committee
- Digital Learning Advisory Team
- Personnel Advisory Committee
- Research Project Implementation Team
- School Services Officers
- Professional Learning Community
- Student Leadership Council
- Uniform Committee
- International Student Programs
- Timetable Committee

The following committees are not part of the decision-making structure of the school:

- Lift Dance Theatre
- Ski Trip Committee
- Staff Association Committee
- Staff Happy Hour Committee
- World Challenge Team
- Yearbook Team

8. How Issues are Raised

An issue may be brought to the attention of the relevant person (e.g. a staff member, parent or student leader)

Alternatively, the chairperson of the appropriate committee may be asked to include issue(s) on the agenda for the next meeting.

If neither of these alternatives suits, the matter should be taken to a member of the school's Principal Team.

The issue will be discussed at Principal Team level, resolved and the decision communicated in the minutes.

or

The issue will be discussed at Principal Team level and referred to a relevant forum for a decision or further consultation.

or

The issue will be discussed at Principal Team level and an ad hoc committee, consisting of interested staff, established to deal with it.

9. Appeals/Grievance Procedure

Members of the school community are encouraged to use established grievance procedures in the first instance.

Alternatively, the Personnel Advisory Committee (PAC) may be asked to mediate on grievance issues and resolve disputes if required.

The decision of the PAC is to be final.

There may be times when decisions need to be reconsidered. In addition to normal grievance procedures, any staff member, student or parent may lodge in writing a grievance with the Principal detailing the nature of the decision and the reasons for being reconsidered. These reasons may include:

- Consultation or participation inadequate.
- Decision was outside role / responsibility of individual / team / committee that made decision.
- Decision not in best interests of students, staff or wider community.