1. **Rationale:**

   1.1 Policies are central to successful school management. They provide the specifications for what is to be achieved now and in the future.

   1.2 A policy is a definite course of action, decided upon by the school council in consultation with the staff and the parents. It is a vital statement that provides a clear picture of a particular school function, eg computer education, indicates what the school council views as important, and the direction it expects the school to take with regard to that particular function. It is a set of aims and instructions.

   1.3 The school needs policies to guide it along the path to success. We should not lose sight of the fact that the prime aim of schooling is to educate today’s students to be useful, contributing members of society now and in the future.

2. **Aims:**

   2.1 Policies stipulate how the school’s goals will be put into practice. They set out the rationale and aims for a particular school function, eg. mathematics, and give details of how to achieve the aims, the financial requirements and method of evaluation.

   2.2 Policies assist the school council in making educational arrangements, setting priorities and distributing finances in the most appropriate way to help the staff provide the best possible instruction so the students realise their full potential.

   2.3 Policies also help reduce stress and conflict, because the policies have been agreed to by those responsible for doing the job. People know what is expected.

3. **Implementation:**

   3.1 Policy writing is not to be regarded as a difficult process which is left to the principal and leadership team. Obviously the teaching staff, with their professional expertise, will lead teams in writing policies on learning, while the principal and leadership team will have a major contribution to make in the development of management policies.

   3.2 If the school’s policies are to reflect the goals, values and beliefs of its community and satisfy its needs, as many people as possible should be involved, drawn from the school council, staff and the school community.

   3.3 Policies should be written by a team, although they may be written by an individual, and presented to school council, staff and parents for comment. A shared leadership approach will ensure that everyone associated with the school will have the opportunity to make contributions and become involved in the process.

   3.4 A policy should be a one to two-page description, written in simple, clear language, of both the goals and needs of the school community and government policy in relation to a particular school activity. It should have realistic expectations of the staff and students and be ratified by the school council and accepted by the staff and parents. The policy should be published and accessible and evaluated on a regular basis. It may be written by anyone associated with the school.

   3.5 Under normal circumstance, policies will be evaluated on a 3 year cycle. Some financial policies though, must be evaluated and approved on an annual basis.

   3.6 A policy should contain five sections:

   * **Rationale:** The rationale or purpose statement explains “why” the policy is being written. Why is the policy needed? Why does it exist? The rationale may also contain or
refer to background materials or more explanatory details regarding educational, environmental, legal, regulatory, or other factors that led to the development of the policy.

- **Aims:** The aims are the desired intentions of the policy. What we will do to implement the goals of the school? They give guidance as to what the implementation should contain. Aims should be clear, achievable, realistic and reflect government policy, valid recent research, and the needs of the students, staff, parents and the school community.

**Implementation:** The implementation develops from the rationale and the aims. It explains how the aims of the policy are to be achieved, through specific details of the approaches to be used.

- In many cases it will have seven points as specified here:
  - The title of the person, group or committee in charge and a brief description of the role expectations.
  - The course, document, manual, handbook or a special set of procedures which will be followed to implement the aims.
  - The time span necessary to achieve the aims.
  - Suggestions as to support personnel, such as parents, visiting consultants, or speakers who may be engaged from time to time.
  - Organisational, instructional or special functions which may help satisfy the aims, such as assessment of class sizes, decision making, or teaching approaches.
  - Indications as to how the policy will support another policy, or may need the support of another policy.
  - Details of the nature of repairs, maintenance and storage of materials and equipment.

- **Evaluation:** Each policy will be evaluated on a regular basis. The evaluation section should state the timeline for evaluation and what specific approaches may be used.

- **References:** Specific guidelines, legislation and or documents to which the policy refers or on which the policy is based.

3.7 Although a policy provides a clear, specific statement which gives guidance, if necessary it can be changed during the year. However, any changes to the policy would have to be effected after formal evaluation through the development of an amended or new policy.

4. **Evaluation:**

4.1 This policy will be evaluated in line with the school’s three year policy review cycle.

References: Lyndhurst Primary School Policy template: Microsoft Word