

CHILD SAFETY STANDARDS – at this school

- 1 Strategies to embed and organisational culture of child safety
- 2 A Child Safety Policy
- 3 A child safety Code of Conduct
- 4 School staff selection, supervision and management practices for a child-safe environment
- 5 Procedures for responding to and reporting to allegations of suspected child abuse
- 6 Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- 7 Strategies to promote child empowerment

- This school has a commitment to **zero tolerance of child abuse**. The school shares this commitment openly and transparently with all members of the school community, including staff (which includes school employees, contractors and volunteers) parents and families. Everyone at this school has a role to play in keeping children safe from child abuse.
- The school Principal, and Assistant Principal who also has the role of being the **Child Safety Officer**, ensure that the school is compliant with the Child Safety Standards. They also hold key roles in situations where disclosures, allegations or incidents of child abuse come to light.
- The School's **CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT** in detail outlines expectations for appropriate behaviour by school staff with children. It describes very clearly:
 - What is **acceptable behaviour** with respect to child safety and child abuse
 - What is **unacceptable behaviour** with respect to child safety and child abuse
 All staff including volunteers must comply with the Child Safety Code of Conduct. Teachers are always in a professional relationship with the children in their school whether at school or not. They hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. Teachers can be friendly with children but their relationship must always remain professional and should never be on a personal footing. The Child Safety Code of Conduct is publically available.
- **There are Legal Obligations connected to child safety:**

Failure to disclose criminal offence requires all adults (aged 18 and over) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 to disclose that information to police (unless they have a reasonable excuse not to, for example because they fear for their safety or the safety of another).

Whilst **failure to disclose covers child sexual abuse**, all adults should report other forms of child abuse to authorities. Failure to disclose does not change mandatory reporting responsibilities.

Failure to protect: A person in a position of authority in an organisation will commit this offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), Principals and police) must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse. Refer to the school's Mandatory Reporting policy for further information.
- The school's **CHILD SAFE POLICY** details the school's commitment to child safety. The school's child safety strategies take into account the diversity of children attending the school and their particular vulnerabilities (including children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds).

- All teachers have a **duty of care** to take all reasonable steps to protect students from risks of harm and from foreseeable risk situations against which preventative measures can be taken.

Preventing child abuse at this school is focused upon identifying and minimising or reducing risks both environmental, to make sure that children are not placed in a vulnerable position, as well as in relation to human interactions at this school.

Careful selection of staff is crucial to this strategy. New staff go through a rigorous process of selection and are supervised and monitored upon appointment to the school. Discussing child safety is an on-going process for staff at this school. All staff including volunteers **MUST** comply with the Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Child safety strategies** are also about **empowering children** by promoting the participation of children in the school. Healthy and respectful relationships are promoted as well as an awareness of their right to feel safe and cared for. Children are taught how to raise concerns, make complaints or let someone know if they feel unsafe as well as whom to approach in the school for this purpose. The school has procedures in place to ensure that children feel safe and that they are taken seriously.
- Response to disclosures, allegations and incidents of child abuse is swift and thorough. The procedures followed are detailed in the school's document **CHILD ABUSE 4 CRITICAL ACTIONS**. The school does not hesitate to contact authorities (Human Services Child Protection or the Victoria Police) when appropriate. All records are securely stored. There will always be follow up and support for any child involved. The procedures used in this school for reporting suspected child abuse are publically available.
- The school has range of policies focusing on the safety of children which both directly and indirectly support the school's commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse. These include:

 - Behaviour Management Policy
 - Bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy
 - Child Safe Policy**
 - Duty of Care Policy
 - Excursions Policy
 - Incursion and Excursion Policy When Learning From An External Provider – Policy
 - Internet Policy
 - Mandatory Reporting Policy**
 - On Site Supervision of students Policy
 - School Attendance Policy
 - School Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
 - Student Welfare Policy
- The school's values of RESPECT, RESPONSIBILITY, RESILIENCE and LEARNING underpin how the school operates. The school's values are introduced beginning in Preps and are regularly referred to and revised across all levels of the school and including both adults, students. These are also prominently displayed in the school buildings. The wider school community receive regular updates through forums such as the school's newsletter, the school's website and school assemblies.