

1. Rationale:

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe, including at school. Registered schools have an important responsibility for keeping children safe and protect them from abuse. All registered schools are required to develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school.

Ministerial Order 870 requires all schools to meet the minimum seven child safety standards:

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety

Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

2. Aims:

To ensure the Greenvale Primary School community including; school employees, contractors and volunteers, parents and families, visitors and children has a commitment to keeping all children safe from harm in all physical and online school environments including excursions and camps.

3. Implementation:

3.1 Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from injury or harm, child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

3.2 Child abuse includes:

- (a) any act committed against a child involving;
 - i. a sexual offense
 - ii. an offense under section 48B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming) and;
- (b) the infliction, on a child, of;
 - i. physical violence; or
 - ii. serious emotional or psychological harm and
- (c) serious neglect of a child.

Note: These are unacceptable behaviours and every member of the teaching service who reasonably believes that a child has been abused, whether in their organisation or not, has an obligation to report that belief to authorities.

(Please refer to our Mandatory Reporting Policy).

3.3 The school supports a culture (values, expectations and standards) and shared commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse, and arrangements that allow it to occur will not be tolerated. The school takes into consideration the diversity of the children attending the school, and their particular vulnerabilities. e.g. children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

3.4 Roles and Responsibilities:

3.4.1 School Council will:

- Demonstrate its commitment to child safety and monitor the school's adherence to its child safety policy and statement of commitment.
- Communicates that it has **zero tolerance of child abuse** (in any form).
- Conduct ongoing review of the effectiveness of the school's child safety practice.
- Ensure an appropriate reporting process is in place for child abuse that includes overseeing outcomes.
- Oversee and monitor the implementation and improvement of child safety strategies.
- Communicate with the school community about the school's child safety strategies and implementation.
- Report on child safety in its annual report.
- Ensure child safety values and principles guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe school environment.

3.4.2 The School Child Safety Officer will

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.
- Liaise with the principal and school leaders to maintain the visibility of child safety.
- Lead the development of the school's child safety culture, providing coordination in communicating, implementing, monitoring, enhancing and reporting on strategies to embed a culture of child safety.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child safety policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately.
- Ensure the school's child safety policy is reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Encourage among all staff a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures to protect them.
- Ensure their skills and knowledge are up to date.

3.4.3 The Principal will :

- Demonstrate commitment to child safety and monitors the school's adherence to its child safety policy and statement of commitment.
- Support, encourage and enable school staff, parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters.
- Support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.(e.g. counselling)
- Ensure processes are in place to confirm currency of Working with Children Check/Victorian Institute of Teaching registration for volunteers and staff working with students.
- Arrange induction in child safety for all staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors during the induction process.
- Follow Department of Education & Training & Child Safety guidelines when recruiting staff.
- Screen and review of the suitability of existing staff through performance appraisal procedures.
- Communicate child safety information and strategies and any updates will be to the school community by publishing information on the school website, the school newsletter, parent information booklet and parent information sessions
- Review of child safety strategies after an incident.

3.4.3 School Staff will:

- Demonstrate commitment to child safety and adherence to the school's child safety policy and statement of commitment.
- Support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.
- Undertake training to detect inappropriate behaviour including Mandatory Reporting training.
- Report inappropriate behaviour using the school's reporting procedures.
- Support the school to implement its child safety strategies for all physical school environments, that include:
 - regularly reviewing the physical environment to ensure all risks are identified and managed
 - assessing new or changed physical environments for child safety risks
 - supervising or monitoring children's activities.
- Implement the school's child safety strategies for its online environments (eg intranets, online learning systems, social media) including:
 - clear boundaries of roles between staff and children
 - proactive strategies to detect inappropriate behaviour such as online searches (Google, Facebook etc).

3.4.4 Contractors and volunteers

- Comply with the school's child safety strategies and allocated roles and responsibilities.
- Provide relevant documentation such as current Working with Children Check.

3.4.5 Children

- Understand what appropriate and inappropriate behaviours are.
- Report inappropriate behaviour to principal or teachers.

4. Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's ongoing policy and process review cycle.

References and Related Documents:

- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Child safe standards website : www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafestandards
- <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards-resources>
- Government Schools Website: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/childsafestandards
- United Nations Rights of the Child <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/ProfessionalInterest/crc.pdf>
- Further information can be found on [Reporting child abuse](#) or [Making a referral to Child FIRST](#).
- Email: child.safe.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au
- Greenvale PS related policies – **Mandatory Reporting, Working with Children Checks, Duty of Care etc**

This policy was ratified by School Council in September 2018