

1. **Rationale:**

The Greenvale Primary School Child Safety Policy demonstrates our school's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

2. **Aims:**

This policy provides an overview of our school's approach to implementing [Ministerial Order 1359](#) (PDF, 363KB) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

3. **Implementation:**

3.1 **Scope**

This policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school council members where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by for a student's use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

3.2 **Definitions**

The following terms in this policy have [specific definitions](#):

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school boarding environment
- school staff
- school boarding premises staff
- school governing authority
- school boarding premises governing authority
- student
- volunteer.

3.3 **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**

Greenvale Primary School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students. We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer, questioning and asexual (LGBTIQA+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability.

Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety. We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

3.4 Roles and Responsibilities

(a) School leadership team

Our school leadership team is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

Principals and assistant principals will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of, and responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

(b) School staff

All staff will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education and Training, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our Child Safety Code of Conduct
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy, including following the Four Critical Actions for Schools
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.
- 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.
- 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).

(c) School council

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, school council members will:

- promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings

- undertake annual training on child safety
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members
- when hiring school council employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe. At our school, school council employment duties are delegated to the principal who is bound by this policy

(d) Contractors and volunteers

- Contractors and volunteers will
 - Comply with the school's child safety strategies and allocated roles and responsibilities.
 - Provide relevant documentation such as current Working with Children Check.
- All volunteers are required to comply with our Volunteers Policy, which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management

3.5 Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

3.6 Managing Risks to Child Safety and Wellbeing

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

3.7 Complaints and Reporting Process

- Our school fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.
- We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's Complaint Policy. The Complaints Policy can be found at [insert link].
- If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including school council employees and homestay providers) must follow our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures [insert link]. Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.
- As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:
 - the Four Critical Actions for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
 - the Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

3.8 Communications

Our school is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including this Child Safety Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure
- displaying PROTECT - 4 Critical Actions for Schools posters in every staff office space
- updates in our school newsletter
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings

4. Policy Review:

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

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| Policy last reviewed | December 2024 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | December 2027 |

References and Related Documents:

- This Child Safety Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:
 - Acceptable Use Agreement
 - Bullying Prevention Policy
 - Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy
 - Child Safety Code of Conduct
 - Cyber Safety Policy
 - Dealing with Complaints Policy
 - Parent Helper - Volunteers Policy
 - Student Inclusion and Engagement Policy
 - Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
 - Visitors to School Policy
- *School Policy Advisory Library (PAL) – Visitors to schools*
<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/visitors/policy>