



MOOLAP PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

RATIONALE

Moolap Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Moolap Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability. Every person involved in Moolap Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

This policy outlines how we will/have created and will maintain a Child Safe school environment (this includes on school premises, camps, excursions, online and other school events). It addresses each of the seven standards outlined by the Victorian Regulation and Qualifications Authority as being integral to maintaining a culture of safety for children.

DEFINITION:

Child abuse can be defined as an act by parents or caregivers which endangers a child or young person's physical or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident, but usually takes place over time. In Victoria, under the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 a child or young person is a person under eighteen years of age. Child abuse can occur in the following ways:

- Physical abuse occurs when a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from an injury inflicted by a child's parent or caregiver. The injury may be inflicted intentionally or may be the inadvertent consequence of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment of a child. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.
- Sexual abuse occurs when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve the child in sexual activity and the child's parent or caregiver has not protected the child. Physical force is sometimes involved. Child sexual abuse involves a wide range of sexual activity. It includes fondling of the child's genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or other object, or exposure of the child to pornography.
- Emotional Abuse occurs when a child's parent or caregiver repeatedly rejects the child or uses threats to frighten the child. This may involve name calling, put downs or continual coldness from the parent or caregiver, to the extent that it significantly damages the child's physical, social, intellectual or emotional development.
- Neglect is the failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, medical attention or supervision, to the extent that the child's health and **development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed.** (Source: **Department of Health and Human Services**)

AIMS:

To ensure that Moolap Primary School:

- Fosters an organisational culture in which safety, inclusivity and support for all children underpins all decisions and actions.
- Ensures that maintaining a culture of Child Safety is a cornerstone of the future development of policy and procedure.
- Details the actions it will take to promote child safety.
- Supports, encourages and enables School Council, the Principal, school staff, parents and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters.
- Supports or assists children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.
- Inform and educate the school community about the Child Safe Standards.

- Are compliant with Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) policies and procedures, the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 and Ministerial Order No. 870.

¹ Adapted from Our Community (2016) *Child Protection Toolkit: What every not-for-profit organisation must do now*.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Although this policy is the responsibility of all members of the school community, the Principal has the overall responsibility of implementing this policy, however may choose to delegate certain roles to suitably qualified staff.
- All members of the school community will be made clear about their individual roles and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards.
- External service providers that engage with the school have their own regulatory body to ensure they meet the Child Safe Standards, however the school will ensure that they have suitable qualifications and meet these standards.
- The Child Safe Standards and this policy will be communicated to the school community at least once a year in the following ways:
 - School Council: brief/review of Child Safe Standards once a year and review of the policy as per school schedule
 - Staff: Briefing at the start of each school year. New staff will have the Child Safe Standards included as part of their induction
 - Parents: information related to the Child Safe Standards will be included in the newsletter at appropriate and meaningful times throughout the year. All information regarding the Child Safe Standards will be on the school website.
 - Students: Through daily Moolap Way sessions, students will be supported in understanding what safety means, how to support each other and how to seek help if needed.
- The school will implement the following strategies, aligned to the seven Child Safety Standards (Ministerial Order No. 870) to ensure a culture of safety for its children:

Procedures and Guidelines outlining school's approach to the Child Safe Standards are outlined over page.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

STANDARD 1:

STRATEGIES TO EMBED AN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF CHILD SAFETY, INCLUDING THOROUGH EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP

ARRANGEMENTS

- *strategy development and implementation*
- *roles and responsibilities*
- *informing the community*

Moolap Primary School will:

- 1.1 Have goals and related strategies in its School Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) related to Student Engagement and Student Wellbeing.
- 1.2 Have a dedicated Wellbeing Team who will discuss and review wellbeing practices, including those of child safety, in regular meetings.
- 1.3 Ensure there is provision in the school budgets to fund child safety and student welfare priorities.
- 1.4 Assign Student Wellbeing Team Leader and Student Learning Coordinator as core roles of staff in the school.
- 1.5 Ensure that the School Improvement Team (SIT) continue implementing and refining online safety initiatives throughout the school.
- 1.6 Have meetings (as required) with DET SSSO Staff (Social Worker, Psychologist and Speech Pathologist) to discuss student wellbeing, safety and educational needs.
- 1.7 Support all students' (and their family's) safety and wellbeing through the PSD (Program for Students with a Disability).
- 1.8 Assign Integration Aides to break-time supervision to monitor the welfare and safety of identified students.
- 1.9 Assign meeting dates in the school calendar to allow for professional development related to child safety and staff training (e.g. Mandatory Reporting Training).
- 1.10 Ensure staff complete an appropriate amount of professional learning relating to teaching and working with students and families with a disability, in accordance with the Victorian Institute of Teaching regulations.
- 1.11 As part of the induction and mentoring of new staff share and discuss this policy.
- 1.12 Use Sentral (Student Management System), or interim measures, throughout the school to keep a record of student safety and wellbeing issues. Highly confidential issues will be kept in a locked file in the Principals Office including reports from SSSO professionals.
- 1.13 Maintain a record of parents with Working with Children Checks (WWCC) and conduct random audits to ensure parents are updating cards on expiry.
- 1.14 Review child safety practices each year, utilising the DET's Risk Management Template (Appendix 2)
- 1.15 Review child safety as part of the annual report as per DET guidelines.

STANDARD 2:

A CHILD SAFE POLICY OR STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Moolap Primary School will:

- 2.1 Ensure the following policies (all of which support the maintenance of a Child Safe Environment) are implemented, regularly reviewed and available on the school's website:
 - Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy: outlines proactive and reactive responses the school takes with regard to student engagement, wellbeing and inclusion
 - Bullying & Harassment Policy: outlines the proactive and reactive measures the school implements when incidences of bullying occur.
 - Internet Use (ICT Acceptable Use) Policy: outlines the manner in which the school educates students with regard to cyber safety and being safe online.
 - Volunteers Policy: outlines the processes in place to ensure that all volunteers are suitably credentialed to be working within the school, including ensuring Working with Children Checks are required.
 - Child Protection Reporting Policy (DET): outlines the process and requirement for reporting incidences of child abuse.
 - Criminal Record Checks Policy: outlines the procedures in place for ensuring all people working within the school have had the required checks to ensure their suitability to work with children
 - Disabilities & Impairment Policy: outlines how the school works to include students and families that have a disability.
 - First Aid Policy: outlines how the school manages incidences of physical harm and communicates these to parents / carers.
 - Visitors Policy: outlines the processes in place to ensure that all visitors are checked into the school via the office.

STANDARD 3:

A CODE OF CONDUCT THAT ESTABLISHES CLEAR EXPECTATIONS FOR APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOUR WITH CHILDREN

Moolap Primary School will:

- 3.1 Adopt the Code of Conduct (Appendix 1) which establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children, clearly outlining acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.
- 3.2 Use the DET's Statement of Values (Appendix 3) as a way of outlining clear expectations of behaviour with regard to their interactions with each other from the Principal, Teachers, Parents and Students and it also forms part of the school's Engagement and Inclusion Policy.
- 3.3 Circulate this Statement of Values to the school community annually, through the newsletter and is available on the school's website.

STANDARD 4:

SCREENING, SUPERVISION, TRAINING AND OTHER HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES THAT REDUCE THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE BY NEW AND EXISTING PERSONNEL

Moolap Primary School will:

- 4.1 Follow Merit and Equity-based recruiting processes outlined by DET whilst adhering to the Child Safe Standards.
- 4.2 Include the 'Child Safe Environments' clause (as provided in the Recruitment Online School's Guide) in all position descriptions for job vacancies.
- 4.3 During the application process, the panel will assess the applicant's:
 - Motivation to work with children
 - Relevant and verifiable child-related work experience
 - Understanding of professional boundaries
 - Communication and interpersonal skills
- 4.4 Before a letter of offer is provided, the chair of the selection panel (or a delegate) will check the following:
 - Two forms of identification e.g. driver's licence, passport etc.
 - Academic transcripts/qualifications
 - Work history and previous employment details are accurate
 - Gaps in the applicant's employment history and are there valid reasons for this e.g. travel, study, family leave
- 4.5 Check that the applicant has any relevant experience working with children outside employment e.g. volunteering, tutoring or coaching?
- 4.6 Ensure all teachers have a current VIT (Victorian Institute of Teaching) card. Through the VIT process teachers will undertake a police check (timing deemed by VIT).
- 4.7 That referees (preferably the most current employer / manager) can verify:
 - There is not a personal relationship between the applicant's supervisor or manager that may affect the objectivity of the reference
 - They have directly supervised the applicant working with children and/or deem them suitable to do so.
 - They see them as being suitable to the applied for role
 - Has the referee any concerns with the applicant working with children?
 - Did the referee have any concerns about the applicant adhering to Child Safe Standards?
 - Have the referees observed the applicant managing the behaviour of a child and what did they notice?
 - That any written referee statements are authentic.
- 4.8 Ensure volunteers provide a copy of their Working with Children Check (WWCC) and are signed in at the office (see Volunteer and Criminal Records Check Policies for more detail).
- 4.9 Sight WWCC of contractors and other visitors who enter the school and ensure they are signed in at the office and (see Criminal Records Check Policy for more detail).
- 4.10 Ensure visitors sign in at the office (see Visitor and Criminal Records Check Policies for more detail).
- 4.11 Ensure all new staff are aware of child safe standards and their obligations for mandatory reporting as part of the induction and mentoring process.
- 4.12 Ensure time is allocated for staff to update their Mandatory Reporting Training each year (DET requirement). Provisions will be made in the school calendar of any other professional development sessions we need to undertake related to child safety.

STANDARD 5:

PROCESSES FOR RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Moolap Primary School will:

- 5.1 Comply with the DET's Mandatory Reporting Policy outlining all DET employee's response to suspected child abuse.
- 5.2 Ensure all staff are trained annually in this area using resources provided by the DET.
- 5.3 In any cases where a staff member is considering making a report, ensure they consult the Step by Step Guide to Making a Report to Child Protection or Child FIRST (Appendix 4) and inform the Principal.
- 5.4 In accordance with the DET's Mandatory Reporting Policy, ensure that:
 - All members of the Teaching Service who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse, must report their concerns to Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection.
 - All other school staff who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection or therapeutic treatment or have significant concerns, are encouraged to report their concerns to DHS Child Protection, Victoria Police or Child First.
 - All adults are required to report to police if they know or reasonably believe that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16. It will be a criminal offence to fail to comply with this obligation.
 - Staff are to keep their own notes of any interactions / reports to DHHS or Child First and discuss this with the Principal so they can update their files.

STANDARD 6:

STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY AND REDUCE OR REMOVE THE RISK OF ABUSE

Moolap Primary School will:

- 6.1 Monitor sick bay attendances and student absences on an ongoing basis through our Sentral database. Specific incidences, trends and children of concern are discussed and followed up as required.
- 6.2 Ask for parent permission to use photographs or video of students for public forums, eg. newspapers, online, newsletters and adhere to any requests not to publish documents.
- 6.3 Keep photos and videos of students on a secure network.
- 6.4 Provide two, yard duty teachers for both breaks and one teacher from 8:45-9:00am and from 3:20-3:35pm. Integration Aides to provide supervision as directed during first break.
- 6.5 Complete risk assessments for any excursions considering the Child Safe Standards when doing so.
- 6.6 Consider Child Safe practices and potential issues in our risk registers for Camps and Excursions.
- 6.7 Risks are reviewed after any incidences and adjustments made.
- 6.8 Ensure provisions are made for staff training and professional development around child safety.
- 6.9 Ensure our school grounds are safe for children and that children are encouraged to display safe and sensible behaviours (such as not playing along the fence lines)

STANDARD 7:

STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE THE PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT OF CHILDREN

Moolap Primary School will:

- 7.1 Display the school values (Respect Responsibility Integrity Safety) throughout the school and ensure that the language of these values is used throughout the school and explicitly taught.
- 7.2 Teach social literacy throughout the school using the Kids Matter with focuses of the school values.
- 7.3 Utilise any aspects of the Respectful Relationships resources, appropriate and relevant to the Life Education curriculum.
- 7.4 Students in the early years participate in the Bravehearts Program (personal safety education program). Year 5 & 6 students are provided the opportunity of participating in the Puberty Program. Each year all students are provided the opportunity to participate in the Life Education Program.
- 7.5 Parents are provided the opportunity to attend Parent Information Sessions for all of the above programs.

EVALUATION:

This policy is to be reviewed annually.

REFERENCE:

- VRQA <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes/Pages/standards.html>
- DET www.education.vic.gov.au/protect

Date Ratified at School Council - 24 October 2016

Next Review Date - 2017