

Wooragee Primary School  
Child Safety and Safe Environments  
Policy

**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, including through effective leadership arrangements  
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.

**Aim:**

To ensure the Wooragee 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.

**Definitions:**

**Child abuse includes:**

- (a) any act committed against a child involving;
  - 1. a sexual offense
  - ii. an offense under section 48B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming) and;
- (b) the infliction, on a child, of;
  - 1. 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).

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.

The school supports a culture (values, expectations and standards, including respect, fairness and equality) 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.

**Bullying:** Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.<sup>1</sup>

**The different types of bullying include:**

**Verbal or written abuse** - such as targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters

**Violence** - including threats of violence

**Sexual harassment** - unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation

**Homophobia** and other hostile behaviour towards students relating to gender and sexuality

**Discrimination including racial discrimination** - treating people differently because of their identity

**Cyber bullying** - either online or via mobile phone.<sup>2</sup>

Implementation:

- . Where ever possible the school will keep children safe, prevent children from being abused and identify and prevent risks to child safety.

Children will be explicitly informed about child abuse, the forms it can take, preventative strategies and how to report concerns through our Bounce Back and Healthy Together Schools Achievement Program.

- . The school's commitment to child safety statement will be displayed around the school and on the school website.
- . Child safety will be a standing item on school council agenda and the school's child safety strategies will be endorsed by school council.

School staff, school council members, contractors and volunteers will be trained in child safety strategies through the school's induction process.

- . The school will follow DET Human Resources Recruitment in Schools guidelines when recruiting staff to reduce the risk of child abuse.
- . The school will maintain a current working with children check (WWCC) register for volunteers working in the school.

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<sup>1</sup>

<sup>2</sup> DEECD What is Bullying? <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/what.aspx> (last updated 28 September 2013)

- . Child safety information and strategies and any updates will be communicated to the school community by:
  - . publishing information on the school website
  - . articles in the school newsletters
  - parent information booklet and parent information sessions

## Roles and Responsibilities:

### School Council:

- 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).
- Ensure child safety is a standing item for discussion at meetings of the school council.
- 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.
- Ensure an appropriate reporting process is in place if a student is suspected of being at risk of or experiencing social, emotional, behavioural or bullying difficulties
- Oversees 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.
- Staff, families and students are involved in guiding the development and implementation of the whole-school safe environment policy and are provided with information about policy requirements.
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### Principal:

- 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.
- Serve as the child safety contact person.
- Support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.(e.g. counselling)
- Confirm currency of Working with Children Check/Victorian Institute of Teaching registration for volunteers and staff working with students.
- Assist volunteers with applying for WWCC.
- Arrange induction in child safety for all staff, contractors, volunteers and visitors during the induction process.
- Follow DET HR & Child Safety guidelines when recruiting staff.
- Screen and review of the suitability of existing staff through performance appraisal procedures.
- Lead or deliver programs for children about the school's child safety strategies.
- Review of child safety strategies after an incident.
- The school provides a welcoming and inclusive physical environment, which reflects the diversity and interests of the students, families and staff.
- The school ensures the use of appropriate and properly fitted protective equipment during physical activity to reduce risk of injury.
- The school takes action to minimise hazards from road traffic, particularly during pick up, drop off periods and other high risk times.

- The school provides a safe, inclusive and empowering social environment that promotes a culture of respect, fairness and equality.
- The school implements strategies to promote positive and responsible behaviour and to prevent and respond to bullying, discrimination and harassment.
- Staff and families recognise that they are role models and are encouraged to demonstrate behaviours that promote safety.

#### School Staff:

- 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).
- Social and emotional learning, safety education and related health messages are incorporated across the curriculum from Foundation to year 6 and are delivered in one or more key learning areas of the curriculum.
- The school provides a curriculum that actively engages and builds students' self-awareness, social awareness, responsible decision making, self-management and relationship skills
- Collaborative group activities that encourage inclusion, participation, team-work and cooperation are incorporated in the curriculum.
- Staff are supported to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote safe environments and behaviours.
- Families, students and staff are key partners in developing and supporting safety initiatives and are provided with information, ideas and practical strategies on a regular basis to support safety in the school and at home.
- Students are engaged in developing and implementing safety initiatives via junior school council, student action teams or other representative structures.
- Staff are encouraged to develop competencies to facilitate engagement of families and students from diverse cultural backgrounds.
- Staff are encouraged to work with local health professionals, services and organisations to increase the school's capacity to deliver safety initiatives and promote safe environments.
- The school works with local government and other agencies to minimise safety hazards in the surrounding area.

#### 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.

#### Children

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

#### Further information

- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Child safe standards website : [www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe](http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe)
- <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](http://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](mailto:child.safe.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au)

#### Wooragee Primary School Related Policies:

- Administration of Medication
- Anaphylaxis
- Bullying & Harassment
- Care of sick students
- Duty of Care
- eSmart & ICT
- Facebook
- First Aid
- Mandatory Reporting
- Onsite Supervision
- Private Car Use
- School Camp
- School Excursion
- School Incursion
- Student Engagement
- Student Welfare & Wellbeing

#### Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed every 3 years or earlier as required.

Ratified 17<sup>th</sup> August 2016

Review date August 2019

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