

# Mornington Primary School



## Child Protection and Safety Policy

**This policy has been developed in accordance with**

**Ministerial Order 870: CHILD SAFE STANDARDS – MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS**

### **Clause 8 - CHILD SAFE STANDARDS – MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS**

#### **Rationale**

Mornington Primary School has developed the following Child Protection and Safety Policy as an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse. This policy describes the processes and practices our school implements to create a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and provides the policy framework for the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

#### **Objectives**

This policy provides the framework for:

- development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection within the School;
- creation of a positive and robust child protection culture;
- promotion and open discussion of child protection issues within the School; and
- compliance with all laws, regulations

#### **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**

Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence. Mornington Primary School is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and has a zero tolerance for child abuse.

The School is committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The School regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations to maintain a child safe culture and environment.

Every person involved in Mornington Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he or 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.

## **Implementation:**

In its planning, decision-making and operations, Mornington Primary School will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
7. Ensure children know who they can talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk
10. Value the input of families and carers and correspond with them regularly.

## **Mornington Primary School Child Safe Principles**

Our School's commitment to child safety is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.

1. All children have the right to be safe.
2. The welfare and best interests of every child are paramount.
3. The views of a child and a child's privacy must be respected.
4. Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in our Child Safety Code of Conduct. (see below)
5. The safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture.
6. Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within our School community.
7. Procedures are in place to screen all staff, volunteers who have direct contact, third party contractors and external education providers who have direct contact with children.
8. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
9. Child protection training is mandatory for all staff. This will involve all staff completing the 'Mandatory Reporting Module' according to DET guidelines.
10. Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of the school community.
11. Children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
12. Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.

## **Clause 7 - CHILD SAFE STANDARDS – MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS**

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. At Mornington Primary School all members of the staff and School Council, as well as direct and indirect volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children.

Specific responsibilities include:

#### **The Principal**

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable, for taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Protection and Safety Policy is implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the School.

#### **School Council**

**School Council is required to endorse this policy and actively seek to ensure it is effectively implemented within the School. (School Council Operations Manual and Induction)**

#### **The School's Leadership Team**

The Assistant Principal/s and level team coordinators who comprise the school Leadership Team are nominated as the first point of contact for raising child protection concerns within our school. They are also responsible for promoting child protection within the school and assisting the principal to coordinate responses to child protection incidents.

#### **Staff Members**

All staff members are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with a member of the school's leadership team and Principal.

#### **Direct Contact Volunteers**

Direct Contact Volunteers are those volunteers who are involved in providing support and services while directly assisting a specific group of students. Direct contact volunteers may be responsible for supervising students and may have "unsupervised" contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

All Direct Contact Volunteers are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Safety Code of Conduct and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. Examples of Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include:

- School excursions or camps.
- Assisting in classrooms.
- Mentoring individual or groups of students.
- Running lunchtime or club activities.
- Coaching sporting teams.
- Etc

It is the responsibility of each individual to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with a member of the school's leadership team.

## **Indirect Contact Volunteers**

Indirect Contact Volunteers are those volunteers who are involved in providing support and services whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students. Indirect contact volunteers are not responsible for supervising students and would not have "unsupervised" contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

All indirect volunteers are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment. All indirect volunteers are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program. Examples of Indirect Contact Volunteer activities may include:

- assisting with School functions.
- School canteen.
- Fundraising activities.
- Barbeques.
- Etc.

## **Third Party Contractors**

All Third Party Contractors (service providers) engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

All service providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program. The School only uses third party contractors who have undergone an extensive due diligence process which includes provision of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct.

## **External Education Providers**

An external education provider is any organization that the School has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the School.

The delivery of such a course may take place on School premises or elsewhere. All external education providers engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

All external education providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy.

Mornington Primary School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the external education provider

## **Reporting Concerns**

Our School Mandatory Reporting Policy (see appendix 2) provides detailed guidance for members of the School Council, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to the Principal or one of our School's Leadership team. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities, including a link to the *DET School Policy & Advisory Guide: Child Protection – Reporting Obligations*.

Third party contractors, external education providers, indirect contact volunteers, students, parents/guardians or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse

are asked to contact the Principal or one of the School's Leadership team. Communications will be treated confidentially on a “need to know basis” and all Personal Information will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Privacy Policy.

#### **Clause 11 - CHILD SAFE STANDARDS – MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS**

**Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.**

#### **Related Policies and Procedures and Programs**

- Risk Management Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Program
- **Recruitment and Selection Procedures**
- **Duty of care Policy**
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Induction Program

#### **Policy evaluation and review**

This policy will be reviewed in 2017 to ensure it continuous to meet the Child Safe Standards. Thereafter, it will be review every two years or as determined by School Council.

**Mornington Primary School Code of Conduct: Child Abuse**

**Child abuse is unacceptable. Ensuring children’s safety is a top priority for the Victorian Government.**

**What is child abuse?**

Child abuse includes any act committed against a child involving:

- a sexual offence
- a grooming offence; or
- the infliction on a child of physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm or serious neglect.

Our aim is to create a culture where protecting children from abuse is part of everyday thinking and practice. To strengthen existing approaches to preventing and responding to child abuse and provide for consistency in how these issues are managed. We all have a responsibility for keeping children safe.

All registered schools are required to develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school. At Mornington Primary we will:

- embed a culture of child safety at the school
- allocate roles and responsibilities to ensure child safe practices are adhered to
- inform the school community about the strategies being employed at the school

**What is organisational culture and how does it relate to child safety?**

Embedding an organisational culture of child safety is critical to reducing the risk of child abuse in schools.

To successfully embed a culture of child safety, a commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse must be led by the Principal and the School Council. This is a commitment that must be shared, openly and transparently, by all members of the school community, including staff, school employees, contractors and volunteers, parents and families, visitors and children.

**All staff, volunteers and School Council members of Mornington Primary School are responsible for supporting the Mornington Primary School Child Protection and Safety Policy by:**

- Adhering to the School’s child safe policy at all times / upholding Mornington Primary School’s statement of commitment to child safety at all time
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- Treating everyone with respect
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child’s self-identification)

- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the School's Leadership team and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- Reporting any child safety concerns to a member of the Mornington Primary School's leadership team– if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- Encouraging children to contribute to the school culture and participate in a manner that empowers them to influence their participation in school activities (clause 13).

**Staff and volunteers must not:**

- Develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children).
- Exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps).
- Put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- Discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- Have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate)
- Have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters)
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards, you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the Principal.

**NB: These procedures are not intended to:**

- prohibit or discourage school any staff from reporting an allegation of **child abuse** to a person external to the school;
- state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation;
- require staff to make a judgment about the truth of the allegation of **child abuse** ; or
- prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of **child abuse** .

In the case of an allegation of **child abuse**, you will:

1. inform appropriate authorities about the allegation (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);
2. protect within reasonable means any child connected to the alleged **child abuse** until the allegation is resolved; and
3. make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of **child abuse** and the school's response to it.
4. **phone 000 if you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse.**

**References:**

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/childprotection.aspx>

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/protecting-children-together>

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children%2c-youth-and-families/child-protection/specialist-practice-resources-for-child-protection-workers/child-development-and-trauma-specialist-practice-resource>

[http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/586465/information-guide-registered-teachers-principals.pdf](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/586465/information-guide-registered-teachers-principals.pdf)

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/about-child-abuse>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/divequity>



**CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY POLICY COMMITMENT**

As a:

- member of staff
- School Council member
- direct volunteer
- indirect volunteer

I agree to adhere to the Mornington Primary Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct.

**In fulfilling my roles and responsibilities I understand that this does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if I reasonably believe that a child is at risk of child abuse.**

In the case of an allegation of **child abuse**, I will:

1. Inform appropriate authorities about the allegation (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);
2. Protect within reasonable means any child connected to the alleged **child abuse** until the allegation is resolved; and
3. Make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of **child abuse** and the school's response to it.
4. Phone 000 if I believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse.

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

## Clause 10 – CHILD SAFE STANDARDS – MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS

### Needs to be completed

All staff selected at MPS must meet the child safe standards as indicated on the DET guidelines Recruitment in Schools, as below:

#### **Position description**

A position description should be prepared for any vacant position. From 1 August, all position descriptions must include the following statement:

*Victorian government schools are child safe environments. Our schools actively promote the safety and wellbeing of all students, and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment, in accordance with their legal obligations including child safe standards. The school's Child Safety Code of Conduct is available on the school's website.*

To assist applicants it is recommended that principals provide information specific to the school such as the school strategic plan and the school's special characteristics, features and programs.

All applicants must receive the same information in relation to a particular position. Additional material may be provided at the request of the applicant.

### **All employment at MPS must satisfy the requirements of the Working with Children Act, 2005:**

[http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web\\_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/51dea49770555ea6ca256da4001b90cd/8f876779761031fbca25707b00249985/\\$FILE/05-057a.pdf](http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/Domino/Web_Notes/LDMS/PubStatbook.nsf/51dea49770555ea6ca256da4001b90cd/8f876779761031fbca25707b00249985/$FILE/05-057a.pdf)

### **Clause 12:**

MPS Risk Management Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risk of child abuse:

MPS Mandatory Reporting Policy (available on school intranet)

MPS Engagement & Wellbeing Policy

MPS Critical Incident Policy (available on school intranet)

MPS Camps, Excursions and Incursions Policy (available on school intranet)

MPS End User Policy (available on school intranet)

MPS Guidelines and Information for camp parent volunteers (available on school intranet)

MPS Mobile Phone and Digital Devices Policy (available on school intranet)

MPS Outdoor Adventure Policy (available on school intranet)

MPS Unwanted Visitor Policy (available on school intranet)

MPS Swimming Policy (available on school intranet)

MPS Working with Children Policy (available on school intranet)

**MPS Instrumental Teachers Program**

**MPS Mentor Program**

MPS Sports Coaching / Lightning Premierships / Athletics / Interschool Sport

MPS Guidelines for bathroom and change room usage.

MPS Playground Duty procedures

MPS Out of School Hours Care Program

MPS After school activities: cooking classes (Stir Crazy Kids – Canteens)

MPS School Council Operations Manual: *Refer to clause 12 for information (School Council Induction)*

Pre-service teacher policy

RACV Policy

### **Clause 13: CHILD SAFE STANDARDS – MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS**

#### **Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation**

(1) The school governing authority must develop strategies to deliver appropriate education about:

1. (a) standards of behaviour for students attending the school;

Student Engagement & Wellbeing Policy

2. (b) healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality);

PYP: Learner Profile & Attitudes, Units of Inquiry; Positive Classroom Culture

3. (c) resilience; and

PYP: Learner Profile & Attitudes, Units of Inquiry; Positive Classroom Culture

4. (d) child abuse awareness and prevention:

**Investigate this within units of inquiry; ??**

(2) The school governing authority must promote the child safety standards required by this Order in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.

?????

# Appendix 1

## Victoria Government Gazette

No. S 2 Thursday 7 January 2016 By Authority of Victorian Government Printer

### Education and Training Reform Act 2006

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS – MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS Ministerial Order No. 870

The Minister for Education makes the following Order. Dated 22 December 2015

### PART 1 – PRELIMINARY

#### 1. Objective

The objective of this Order is to specify the matters regarding which:

1. (a) a person or body applying for registration of a school; and
2. (b) registered schools;

must take action for the purposes of:

- (c) embedding a culture in Victoria's schools of 'no tolerance' for child abuse; and
- (d) complying with the prescribed minimum standard for the registration of schools in

section 4.3.1(6)(d) of the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**.

#### 2. Commencement

**This Order comes into operation on 1 August 2016.**

#### 3. Authorising provisions

**This Order is made under section 5.10.4 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, and section 13 of the Interpretation of Legislation Act 1984.**

#### 4. Definitions

(1) In this Order:

**ETR Act** means the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006** as amended from time to time.

**child** means a child enrolled as a student at the school.

**child-connected work** means work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

**child abuse** includes –

1. (a) any act committed against a child involving –
  1. (i) a sexual offence; or
  2. (ii) an offence under section 49B(2) of the **Crimes Act 1958** (grooming); and
2. (b) the infliction, on a child, of –
  1. (i) physical violence; or
  2. (ii) serious emotional or psychological harm; and

3. (c) serious neglect of a child.

**child safety** encompasses matters related to protecting all children from 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.

JAMES MERLINO, MP Minister for Education

## **SPECIAL**

2 S 2 7 January 2016 Victoria Government Gazette

**minister of religion** has the same meaning as in the **Working with Children Act 2005**.

**proprietor**, in relation to a school, means the person who is ultimately responsible for the way the school is managed and conducted:

- (a) in the case of a Government school, the Secretary;
- (b) in the case of a non-Government school, the proprietor of the school.

**school environment** means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- (a) a campus of the school;
- (b) online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- (c) other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

**school governing authority** means:

1. (a) the proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor; or
2. (b) the governing body for a school (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of a school or the ETR Act; or
3. (c) the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the ETR Act.

Explanatory note: There is a wide variety of school governance arrangements. Depending on the way a school is constituted and operated, the governing body for a school may be the school board, the school council, or some other person or entity. The school governing authorities may share or assign responsibility for discharging the requirements imposed by this Order, in accordance with the school's internal governance arrangements.

**school staff** means:

1. (a) in a Government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:
  1. (i) employed under Part 2.4 of the ETR Act in the government teaching service; or
  2. (ii) employed under a contract of service by the council of the school under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act; or
  3. (iii) a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).
2. (b) in a non-Government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:
  - (i) directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority;

(ii) a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary); or

(iii) a minister of religion.

(2) The following terms have the same meaning as in the ETR Act (as amended from time to time):

1

(i) child abuse;

(ii) government school;

(iii) government teaching service; (iv) non-Government school;

(v) parent;

1

For ease of reference, the text of the ETR Act definition of **child abuse** is included in the definitions clause of this Order.

*Victoria Government Gazette S 2 7 January 2016 3*

6. (vi) principal;

7. (vii) registered school;

8. (viii) school; and

9. (ix) the Secretary.

## **PART 2 – MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR A CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT 5. Schools to meet minimum child safety standards**

(1) The school must implement the following minimum child safety standards:

1. (a) strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety in accordance with Clause 7;

2. (b) a child safety policy or a statement of commitment to child safety in accordance with Clause 8;

3. (c) a child safety code of conduct in accordance with Clause 9;

4. (d) screening, supervision, training, and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse in accordance with Clause 10;

5. (e) procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse in accordance with Clause 11;

6. (f) strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse in accordance with Clause 12; and

7. (g) strategies to promote child participation and empowerment in accordance with Clause 13.

### **6. Principle of inclusion**

(1) In implementing the minimum child safety standards in accordance with this Order, school governing authorities must:

1. (a) take account of the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable; and
2. (b) make reasonable efforts to accommodate the matters referred to in Clause 6(a).

## **7. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety**

(1) The school governing authority must:

1. (a) develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school;
2. (b) allocate roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies;
3. (c) inform the school community about the strategies, and allocated roles and responsibilities;
4. (d) put the strategies into practice, and inform the school community about these practices; and
5. (e) periodically review the effectiveness of the strategies put into practice and, if considered appropriate, revise those strategies.

## **8. A child safety policy or a statement of commitment to child safety**

(1) The school governing authority must ensure that the school has a child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety that details:

1. (a) the values and principles that will guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe school environment; and
2. (b) the actions the school proposes to take to:

(i) demonstrate its commitment to child safety and monitor the school's adherence to its child safety policy or statement of commitment;

*4 S 2 7 January 2016 Victoria Government Gazette*

2. (ii) support, encourage and enable school staff, parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters; and
3. (iii) support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.

(2) The school governing authority must inform the school community about the policy or statement, and make the policy or statement publicly available.

## **9. A child safety code of conduct**

(1) The school governing authority must develop, endorse, and make publicly available a code of conduct that:

1. (a) has the objective of promoting child safety in the school environment;
2. (b) sets standards about the ways in which school staff are expected to behave with children;
3. (c) takes into account the interests of school staff (including other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular school staff), and the needs of all children; and
4. (d) is consistent with the school's child safety strategies, policies and procedures as revised from time to time.

## **10. School staff selection, supervision and management practices for a child-safe environment**

1. (1) Subject to the requirements of the ETR Act, the school governing authority must ensure that the school implements practices for a child-safe environment in accordance with this clause.
2. (2) Each job or category of jobs for school staff that involves child-connected work must have a clear statement that sets out:
  1. (a) the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety; and
  2. (b) the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.
3. (3) All applicants for jobs that involve child-connected work for the school must be informed about the school's child safety practices (including the code of conduct).

4. (4) In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child-connected work:
  1. (a) Working with Children Check status, or similar check;
  2. (b) proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
  3. (c) the person's history of work involving children; and
  4. (d) references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
5. (5) The school need not comply with the requirements in Clause 10(4) if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information set out in Clauses 10(4)(a) to 10(4)(d) about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.
6. (6) The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:

(a) the induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child-connected work; and

(b) monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for child-connected work.

2

Please refer to the **Working with Children Act 2005** which establishes a process to screen persons engaging or intending to engage in child-related work through a Working with Children Check, and also sets out exemptions from that requirement for volunteers, parents and others.

*Victoria Government Gazette S 2 7 January 2016 5*

(7) The school must implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

Explanatory note: To be 'satisfied', it is not necessary that the school governing authority make each decision about the selection and supervision of school staff engaged in child-connected work. The school governing authority needs to be satisfied about the appropriateness of the school's arrangements that would regulate or guide other people who make such decisions for or on behalf of the school about child safety matters and child-connected work.

## **11. Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse**

1. (1) The school governing authority must have a clear procedure or set of procedures for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse in accordance with this clause and other legal obligations.
2. (2) The school governing authority must ensure that the procedure is:
  1. (a) sensitive to the diversity characteristics of the school community;
  2. (b) made publicly available; and
  3. (c) accessible to children, school staff, and the wider community.
3. (3) The procedure must:
  1. (a) cover all forms of 'child abuse' as defined in the ETR Act;

2. (b) apply to allegations or disclosures of child abuse made by or in relation to a child, school staff, visitors, or other persons while connected to a school environment;
3. (c) identify the positions of the person or people who are responsible for:
  1. (i) promptly managing the school's response to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, and ensuring that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously;
  2. (ii) responding appropriately to a child who makes or is affected by an allegation of child abuse;
  3. (iii) monitoring overall school compliance with this procedure; and
  4. (iv) managing an alternative procedure for responding to an allegation or disclosure if the person allocated responsibility under Clause 11(3)(c)(i) cannot perform his or her role;
4. (d) include a statement that fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in the procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse;
5. (e) clearly describe the actions the school will take to respond to an allegation of child abuse, including actions to:
  1. (i) inform appropriate authorities about the allegation (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);
  2. (ii) protect any child connected to the alleged child abuse until the allegation is resolved; and
  3. (iii) make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of child abuse and the school's response to it.
4. (4) The procedure must not:
  1. (a) prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school;
  2. (b) state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation;
  3. (c) require staff to make a judgment about the truth of the allegation of child abuse; or
  4. (d) prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse.

6 S 2 7 January 2016 Victoria Government Gazette

### **13. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse**

1. **(1) The school governing authority must develop and implement risk management strategies regarding child safety in school environments.**
2. **(2) The school's risk management strategies regarding child safety must identify and mitigate the risk(s) of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of each school environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.**
3. **(3) If the school governing authority identifies risks of child abuse occurring in one or more school environments the authority must make a record of those risks and specify the action(s) the school will take to reduce or remove the risks (risk controls).**

**Explanatory note: Different risk controls may be necessary for particular groups of children depending on the nature of the risk and the diversity characteristics of children affected by the risk.**

4. **(4) As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school governing authority must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.**
5. **(5) At least annually, the school governing authority must ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to the individual members of the school governing authority and school staff about:**
  1. **(a) individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse;**
  2. **(b) child abuse risks in the school environment; and**
  3. **(c) the school's current child safety standards.**

### **14. Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation**

4. **(1) The school governing authority must develop strategies to deliver appropriate education about:**
    1. **(a) standards of behaviour for students attending the school;**
    2. **(b) healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality);**
    3. **(c) resilience; and**
    4. **(d) child abuse awareness and prevention.**
  5. **(2) The school governing authority must promote the child safety standards required by this Order in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.**
-

*Victoria Government Gazette S 2 7 January 2016 7*

This page was left blank intentionally

8 S 2

7 January 2016

*Victoria Government Gazette*

The *Victoria Government Gazette* is published by Blue Star Print with the authority of the Government Printer for the State of Victoria

State of Victoria 2016

This publication is copyright. No part may be reproduced by any process except in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act.

Address all enquiries to the Government Printer for the State of Victoria  
Level 2, 1 Macarthur Street  
Melbourne 3002

Victoria Australia

### **How To Order**

#### **FAX**

□

### **Retail & Mail Sales**

**Telephone Fax  
email**

### **Victoria Government Gazette**

Level 5, 460 Bourke Street Melbourne 3000

PO Box 1957 Melbourne 3001 DX 106 Melbourne  
(03) 8523 4601

(03) 9600 0478 [gazette@bluestargroup.com.au](mailto:gazette@bluestargroup.com.au)

### **Price Code A**

# Mornington Primary School



## Working with Children Policy

### RATIONALE

Any person whose duties usually involve, or is likely to involve work in a school (paid or unpaid) is considered to be engaged in 'child-related work' and must be compliant with the Working with Children Act. The Working With Children Check is a minimum checking standard set by the *Working with Children Act 2005* for those who work with children, either on a paid or voluntary basis.

### AIM

To ensure all volunteers and staff employed by the Department of Education and Mornington Primary School fall within the guidelines determined by the Working with Children Act 2005 and are school compliant with the Act.

### IMPLEMENTATION

As of 2015, all volunteers at Mornington Primary School working in both the school setting and beyond, will need a Working with Children (WWC) Card provided by the Department of Justice. This card is:

- valid for 5 years
- transferable between volunteer organisations
- free of charge for volunteers, but cannot be used for paid employment.

**Note:** WWC Checks for paid employment can be used to show suitability for volunteer work.

- Until the beginning of 2015, any volunteer accompanying students leaving the school will be required to provide a current WWC card – this includes excursions, camps and swimming. Until the beginning of 2015 at Mornington Primary School, a Volunteer/s who is a parent and whose child/ren would normally participate in the activity at school, is exempt from the requirements of the Act.
- A person who is a registered teacher under the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006** is exempt from a working with children check. Any staff member registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) is exempt from requiring a Working with Children Check – Employment (WWC)
- Any staff member registered with VIT must provide a copy of current registration on renewal.
- Any person registered with VIT seeking contract or casual employment must provide a copy of a current registration before commencing.
- All CRT's employed must be registered with VIT.
- All current ESO staff employed to undertake work at Mornington Primary School must have undertaken a Working with Children Check –Employment.
- All new ESO staff employed after 31/12/2007 must provide evidence of undertaking a Working with Children Check – Employment, prior to confirmation of employment.
- Mornington Primary School will maintain a WWC register for all school volunteers. The school will sight the original WWCC and retain a copy.
- All employees, current and prospective are responsible for undertaking and paying for their own WWCC required for employment.
- All volunteers, current and prospective are responsible for undertaking the WWCC required for volunteers.

- Contractors who work at the school on a scheduled or regular basis within school hours for Maintenance, Gardening, Canteen staff and Cleaners must hold a Working with Children Check –Employment.
- If a person is issued with a negative notice they must not engage in child related work even if directly supervised.
- If the cardholders' personal details change, it is the responsibility of the cardholder to inform the Department of Justice.
- A volunteer can commence work in a school when they provide a receipt as proof they have applied for a Working With Children Check with the Department of Justice.
- As of Term 3, 2014, Mornington Primary School will ensure that regular reminders for Working With Children Checks will be included in newsletters throughout the year
- The need for Working With Children Checks should be mentioned at all Prep information sessions and included in the Mornington Primary School information packs
- Notes sent home requesting parent helpers for school activities that involve children should include Working With Children information
- It will be a volunteer's responsibility to keep their Working With Children Check up to date.
- It will be the responsibility of staff involved in organising volunteers to check that the volunteers Working With Children Check is up to date before accepting their assistance
- If a WWCC changes status at any stage, the person who is working with a child/ren's position will be reviewed immediately by the School Principal.

This document relates to the following Mornington Primary School policies:

- Camps, Incursions and excursions
- Contractor Management checklist
- Equal Opportunity
- Mandatory reporting
- Outside School Hours program
- Parent handbook
- Privacy
- Risk management
- School Travel
- Swimming
- Use of Contractors
- Volunteer Workers

\*Please note that the Working With Children Act 2005 provides a list of people who may volunteer to work at Mornington Primary School, who are exempt from requiring a Working With Children check.

## **RESOURCES**

Application forms and information regarding the working with children check are available through the post office or via web site [www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren) or by contacting the information line on 1300 652 879

## **EVALUATION**

This policy will be required to be formally minuted and reviewed by School Council annually.

## **RESPONSIBILITY**

- Principal
- Staff members organising excursions / camps / activities
- School Administration Staff

This Policy is to be reviewed in 2016

# Mornington Primary School



## Mandatory Reporting Policy

### Rationale:

- All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe. As teachers, we have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to serious incidences involving abuse and neglect of the children with whom we have contact, and to report instances that we believe involve physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

### Purpose:

- To ensure that children's rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against physical and sexual abuse, and neglect.

### Implementation:

- All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs of physical and/or sexual abuse, and neglect. Any staff member who believes on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection, must report their concerns to the Department of Health and Human Services Child Protection.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually and mandated staff will be required to complete online modules as supplied by DET on an annual basis. This module includes information on "Duty of Care" "Forming a Reasonable Belief" "Types of abuse and indicators of Harm" "When to report" and "Making a report"
- Staff must print their Mandatory Reporting Certificate and provide a copy to the office when complete. The MPS office will keep a record of Mandatory Reporting module completion and will follow up with staff who have not handed in their certificates.
- All concerns must be reported immediately to the Principal or an Assistant Principal.
- The Principal or Assistant Principal will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern.
- If a belief has been formed by a staff member that sexual or physical abuse has taken place a "Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet" available from the Principal or Assistant Principal must be completed and filed in the Principal's office.
- The teacher and/or the Principal class officer will contact the Department of Human Services by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification.
- All "Mandatory Reporting Information Sheets" remain filed in the Principal's or Assistant Principals office.
- All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information are to be recorded and remain strictly confidential.
- All incidents to be monitored, and any subsequent signs or indications of abuse are also to be reported.
- The Child Protection Guidelines available on <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotection.aspx> will be referred to when dealing with issues involving student safety and wellbeing.

### Evaluation:

This policy was reviewed in 2015 and will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.