

Purpose:

The child safe environments policy sets out the school's approach to creating 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

Scope:

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, contractors and whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people across a range of school forums (e.g. camps, online) and outside of school hours."

Implementation:

- The school's culture encourages staff to raise, discuss and scrutinise concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden. The school's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety for creating a child safe culture can be found on the school's website
- School leaders and managers will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school's Code of Conduct.
- The school's Code of Conduct sets out clear awareness of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. A copy of the Code of conduct is available at the school office and is also available on the school's website
- The school applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. We will ensure that staff induction, education and training programs are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect. All prospective staff and volunteers are required to undergo National Criminal History Records check and maintain a valid Working with Children Check. A copy of the school's approach to human resources practices that ensure child safety can be requested from the principal.
- The school has clear expectations for staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. Immediate action should include reporting their concerns to the DHHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The school will take action to respond to a complaint. The school's Complaints Policy can be accessed on the school's website.
- The School believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes. The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures.
- The school has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities
- When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with, or abuse of, a child the school will listen to the complainant's account of things and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (or their parents/carers) informed about progress

- This school collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the Schools Privacy Policy. Please note that Woodville Primary School abides by the DET Privacy Policy which complies with Victorian privacy Law.

Definitions

Ministerial Order 870 provides definitions, including:

Child abuse

Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving:
 - a sexual offence, or
 - an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming)

the infliction, on a child, of:

- physical violence
- serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work

- 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 safety

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.

School environment

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 campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- 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 staff

School staff being: an individual working in a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary)
- a minister of religion.

Evaluation:

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

This policy was last reviewed in February 2019

February 2019