

CHILD SAFE POLICY

RATIONALE

Toolangi Primary School is committed to child safety and to our children being principled, caring, balanced members of our community. We are committed to our children's safety, participation and empowerment and have zero tolerance of child abuse. All allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

The school is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks and all staff undertake Mandatory Reporting training.

Toolangi 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 Toolangi Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually or collectively to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all children as are stated in the schools child safe policies.

When referring to child abuse the school's policies reflect all forms of child abuse including physical abuse, sexual abuse, grooming, emotional abuse, neglect and family violence.

All child safe procedures are applicable to allegations of disclosures of child abuse made by or in relation to a child, school staff, visitors or other persons connected to the school's environment.

AIMS

For our children

- to listen to their views and respect what they have to say.
- promote diversity and tolerance in our school, and welcome people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds.
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability

For our staff and volunteers

- ensure all staff and volunteers abide by our code of conduct which is detailed in our Inclusion, Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

- All staff and volunteers, have the opportunity and expertise to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

IMPLEMENTATION

The school will:

- Involve children when making decisions, especially about matters directly affecting them.
- Promote diversity and tolerance at school.
- Ensure that all staff and volunteers agree to abide by the school code of conduct which specifies the standard of conduct required when working with children.
- Provide opportunity for the school community to participate in the development of the code of conduct
- Train and support staff and volunteers to:
 - Identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse
 - Develop their skills to protect children from abuse.
 - Supervise new employees and volunteers to ensure they understand the school's commitment to child safety and that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.
- Require all teachers to have a successful police record check , and, volunteers to hold a Working with Children Check
- All allegations of abuse and safety concerns will be recorded on an incident reporting form (see attached), including investigation updates. All records are securely stored in the principal's office. If an allegation or safety concern is raised, updates will be provided to appropriate personnel on progress and actions taken.
- Take its legal responsibilities seriously, including:
 - Failure to disclose: Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police
 - Failure to protect: People of authority in the school understand that they are committing an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so
 - All personnel who make **mandatory reports** must comply with their duties
- Ensure that risk management strategies are in place to assist in identifying, assessing, and taking steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (e.g. any doors that can lock), and online environments (e.g. no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in the school on social media)
- When an adult at the school has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to a reasonable belief may be:

- A child states they or someone they know has been abused
- Behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- Someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- Observing suspicious behavior

Record Keeping

The school's procedures concerning record keeping requirements, confidentiality and privacy are that all documents are securely stored in the principal's office.

Reporting

Until any allegation of child abuse is resolved the school will take actions to protect any child connected to the alleged child abuse will reflect the advice given by welfare and legal authorities. The school is mindful of the individual nature of child abuse allegations and information and will respond appropriately.

The school will follow the attached when informing appropriate authorities about an allegation.

This policy will be revised during the life of the Schools Strategic Plan; 2013 – 2017

A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST

Protective concerns

You are concerned about a child because you have:

- received a disclosure from a child about abuse or neglect
- observed indicators of abuse or neglect
- been made aware of possible harm via your involvement in the community external to your professional role.

At all times remember to:

- record your observations
- follow appropriate protocols
- consult notes and records
- consult with appropriate colleagues if necessary
- consult with other support agencies if necessary

STEP 1	RESPONDING TO CONCERNS	STEP 2	FORMING A BELIEF ON REASONABLE GROUNDS	STEP 3	MAKING A REFERRAL TO Child FIRST	STEP 4	MAKE A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION
	<p>1. If your concerns relate to a child in need of immediate protection; or you have formed a belief that a child is at significant risk of harm*.</p> <p>Go to Step 4</p> <p>2. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services.</p> <p>Go to Step 3</p> <p>3. In all other situations</p> <p>Go to Step 2.</p> <p>* Refer to Appendix 2: Definitions of child abuse and indicators of harm in the Protocol – <i>Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people</i></p>		<p>1. Consider the level of immediate danger to the child. Ask yourself:</p> <p>a) Have I formed a belief that the child has suffered or is at risk of suffering significant harm? YES / NO and</p> <p>b) Am I in doubt about the child's safety and the parent's ability to protect the child? YES / NO</p> <p>2. If you answered yes to a) or b) Go to Step 4</p> <p>3. If you have significant concerns that a child and their family need a referral to Child FIRST for family services. Go to Step 3</p>		<p>Child Wellbeing Referral</p> <p>1. Contact your local Child FIRST provider.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See over for contact list for local Child FIRST phone numbers. <p>2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.</p>		<p>Mandatory/Protective Report*</p> <p>1. Contact your local Child Protection Intake provider immediately.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See over for contact list for local Child Protection phone numbers. • For After Hours Child Protection Emergency Services, call 131 278. <p>2. Have notes ready with your observations and child and family details.</p> <p>* <i>Non-mandated staff members who believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection are able to report their concerns to Child Protection</i></p>

For further information refer to *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people – A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools*

Contact Numbers

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Eastern	(03) 9265 2400
Northern	(03) 9488 9488
Western	(03) 9291 6500
Southern	(03) 9794 3555
RURAL REGIONS	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000
Gippsland	5127 0400
Grampians	5337 8444
Hume	5761 2100
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111

Office for Children and Licensed Children's Services:

METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Eastern	(03) 9265 2400
Northern	(03) 9412 5333
Western	(03) 9275 7000
Southern	(03) 9096 9555
RURAL REGIONS	
Barwon South Western	5225 1000
Gippsland	5127 0400
Grampians	5337 8444
Hume	5761 2100
Loddon Mallee	5440 3111

Important information for government schools

Principals of Victorian Government schools must report all incidents to the Emergency and Security Management Unit on **03 9589 6266**.

Victorian Government schools should contact the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit (SCIAU), Student Wellbeing Division, for advice and support when responding to allegations of student sexual assault or inappropriate sexual behaviours.

The SCIAU can be contacted on **03 9637 2934** or **03 9637 2487**.

Victorian Government School Principals should refer to the flowchart – *Responding to Allegations of Student Sexual Assault Compulsory Actions for Principals* at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/childprotection/childprotection.htm>

Department of Human Services Child Protection

METROPOLITAN REGIONS		METROPOLITAN REGIONS	
Intake Unit	Regional Office	Intake Unit	Regional Office
Eastern	1300 360 391 Box Hill	(03) 9843 6000	
North and West	1300 664 977 Preston Footscray	1300 664 977	1300 360 462
Southern	1300 655 795 Dandenong	(03) 9213 2111	
RURAL REGIONS		Regional Office	
Barwon South Western	1800 075 599 Geelong	(03) 5226 4540	
Gippsland	1800 020 202 Traralgon	(03) 5177 2500	
Grampians	1800 000 551 Ballarat	(03) 5333 6530	
Hume	1800 650 227 Wangaratta	(03) 5722 0555	
Loddon Mallee	1800 675 598 Bendigo	(02) 6055 7777	
		(03) 5434 5555	

After hours Child Protection Emergency Services (AHCPEs)

Statewide number for all emergency child protection matters outside of normal business hours (24 hours, 7 days a week):

131 278

Victoria Police

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Catholic Education Offices

Catholic Education Office, Melbourne	(03) 9267 0228
Catholic Education Office, Ballarat Diocese	5337 7135
Catholic Education Office, Sale Diocese	562 6600
Catholic Education Office, Sandhurst Diocese	5443 2377

Independent Schools Victoria

(03) 9825 7200

Other

Victorian Aboriginal Education Association, Inc.	(03) 9481 0800
Victoria Police Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Unit	(03) 9247 6666
Centre Against Sexual Assault	1800 806 292
Gatehouse Centre, Royal Children's Hospital (for specialist counselling and medical assistance)	(03) 9345 6391
Child Safety Commissioner	(03) 8601 5884
Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency	(03) 8388 1855

CHILD FIRST

Local Catchment Area	Contact
Barwon South Western	Greater Geelong, Queenscliff, Surf Coast 1300 551 948
Gippsland	Colac – Otway, Corangamite 5232 5500
	Warrambool, Moyne, Glenelg, Southern Grampians 1300 889 713
	East Gippsland 5152 0052
	Wellington 5144 7777
	La Trobe, Baw Baw 1800 339 100
	South Gippsland, Bass Coast 5662 5150
Grampians	Northern Grampians, West Wimmera, Hindmarsh, Yarrambat, Horsham 1800 195 114
	Ararat, Pyrenees, Hepburn, Ballarat, Golden Plains, Moorabool 1300 783 341
Hume	Wodonga, Towong, Indigo 1800 705 211
	Alpine, Benalla, Mansfield, Wangaratta 1800 705 211
	Greater Shepparton, Strathbogie, Moira 1300 854 944
Loddon Mallee	Mitchell, Murrindindi 1800 663 107
	Greater Bendigo, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mount Alexander 1800 260 338
	Buloke, Goonawarra, Swan Hill, Mildura 1800 625 533 1800 MALLEE
Eastern Metropolitan	Yarra Ranges, Knox, Maroondah 1300 369 146
	Monash, Whitehorse, Manningham, Boroondarra 1300 762 125
North and West Metropolitan	Nillumbik, Whittlesea, Banyule, Yarra and Darebin (03) 9450 0955
	Brimbank, Melton 1300 138 180
	Hume, Moreland 1300 786 433
	Hobson's Bay, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Moonee Valley and Wyndham 1300 775 160
Southern Metropolitan	Casey, Cardinia, Greater Dandenong (03) 9705 3939
	Aboriginal children and families (Casey, Cardinia and Great Dandenong) (03) 9794 5973
	Frankston, Mornington Peninsula 1300 721 383
	Kingston, Bayside, Glen Eira, Stonington, Port Phillip 1300 367 441