



CHILD SAFE STANDARDS ENVIRONMENT

PURPOSE

The Roberts McCubbin Primary School 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.

The policy applies to all school staff per the definition below. The policy is inclusive of all school environments per the definition below.

DEFINITIONS

Ministerial Order 870 provides definitions, including:

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.

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

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 being: an individual working in a school environment, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people, who is:

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

Roberts McCubbin Primary School Statement of Commitment and Principles

The school is committed to supporting, encouraging and enabling a child safe environment by:

- ensuring all staff at Roberts McCubbin Primary School are committed to:
 - child safety
 - ensuring the protection of all students from child abuse
 - managing the risk of child abuse
 - providing support to a child at risk of child abuse
 - responding appropriately to incidents or allegations of child abuse.
- supporting, encouraging and enabling all staff, parents and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
- supporting children to be safe, happy and empowered
- supporting and respecting all children, our staff and volunteers
- having zero tolerance of child abuse, with all allegations and safety concerns being treated seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures
- acting upon our legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, and adhering to them rigorously
- being committed to the prevention of child abuse, identifying risks early as well as removing and reducing these risks
- having robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers
- regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks
- being aware of the cultural safety of Indigenous children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and providing a safe environment for children with a disability
- having specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments

Those responsible for managing the school's response to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse are:

The Principal, Assistant Principal- (who is the Student Wellbeing Leader in the school), and the school leadership team (which includes Team Leaders Foundation, 1/2, 3/4, 5/6 and specialist leader)

A child-safe culture

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 plan for creating a child safe culture can be found on the Roberts McCubbin Primary School website.

Personnel understand their roles and responsibilities/ Code of conduct

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 *Child Safety Code of Conduct*.

The school's *Child Safety Code of Conduct* sets out clear awareness of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

Human resources practices and training

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 (Department of Health and Human Services) 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.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The 'Four Critical Actions For School' document outlining the critical actions for reporting a child safety concern or complaint can be found on the website.

Risk reduction and management

The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures. Because the school believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, it is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management strategies are in place.

The school's approach to Child Safety risk reduction and management can be found on the website.

Listening to children

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.

All staff and volunteers will be expected to respond appropriately to a child who makes or is affected by an allegation of child abuse.

Confidentiality and Privacy

This school collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law.

Related policies and documents

Equal Opportunity

Engagement and Well-Being Policy

Duty of Care Policy

Inclusion and Diversity

Bullying Prevention Policy

Mandatory Reporting Policy

Statement of Values – Promoting Healthy, Safe and Respectful School Communities

RMPS Commitment to Child Safety

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Policy evaluation and review

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 will be reviewed by School Council on an annual basis.

Last reviewed: September 2018