



Child Safe Policy

(Statement of Commitment)

PURPOSE

Roberts McCubbin Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

The school provides:

- A child safe environment where children and young people feel safe, and their voices are heard when decisions are made that affect their lives.
- Cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and a safe environment for children with a disability children who are vulnerable, is a shared responsibility.

GUIDELINES

Roberts McCubbin Primary School has clear and comprehensive policies, procedures and accountability mechanisms to regulate the conduct and decisions of school staff for the benefit of its students. All staff, volunteers and other adults contracted, employed or engaged by Roberts McCubbin Primary School are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children. Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in the policies and procedures regarding an allegation or disclosure of child abuse does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

IMPLEMENTATION

Staff at Roberts McCubbin Primary School **are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:**

- Ensuring compliance with Ministerial Order No.870 and the Child Safe Standards and with reporting obligations under child protection law and criminal law.
- Abiding by the Child Safety Code of Conduct to include Acceptable and Unacceptable behaviour with respect to child safety and child abuse.
- Taking a preventative, proactive and a participatory approach to child safety.
- Modelling inclusive behaviour, and reporting any behaviour that appears racist, discriminatory or prejudiced.
- Supporting, enabling and encouraging school staff, parents and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters.
- Supporting and respecting all children, our staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring children know who to talk to with if they are worried or feeling unsafe and that they are encourage to raise such issues.
- Fostering a culture of openness that support all persons to safely disclose risk of harm to children.

- Observing the school's values of: Creativity, Endeavour, Respect, Trust, Honesty, and Friendliness.
- Supporting children to be safe, happy and empowered.
- Being committed to the prevention of child abuse, identifying risks early as well as removing and reducing these risks.
- Reporting suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the authorities.
- Participating in training and guidance in regard to the school's child safety policies and practices. Roberts McCubbin Primary School will provide, at least annually, professional learning that provides appropriate guidance and training about:
 - individual and collective obligations for managing the risks of child abuse
 - child abuse risks in the school environment
 - the school's current child safety standards
- Having specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

Recruitment:

- Making reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record information about a person who is engaged to perform child related work ensuring:
 - All teachers are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
 - Additional people engaged in child-connected work, including volunteers, hold a current Working with Children Check.
 - Reference checks and police record checks are conducted when employing.
 - Proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications.
- Developing selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. When recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations
- That all applicants for jobs that involve child-connected work for the school are informed about the school's child safety practices (including this Code of Conduct)
- Actively encouraging applications from Aboriginal peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

Fair Procedures for Personnel:

- The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.
- If and allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and on progress and actions we as an organisation take.
- All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, unless there is risk to someone's safety.
- The school has safeguard and practices to ensure records are confidential and securely stored any personal information is protected.

Legislative Responsibilities:

Roberts McCubbin Primary School takes 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 our organisation will commit 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.

Risk Management:

Roberts McCubbin Primary School follows the Child Safe Standards to minimize risk. The school has risk management strategies to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock) and online environments (for example no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in organisations on social media).

The school's risk management strategies include:

- The Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Sign in process at the school office
- Screening as part of the staff recruitment process
- Working with Children Checks
- ICT eSmart Policy for students
- On and off site supervision of children during recess and lunch breaks, and 15 minutes before and after school
- Protocols to ensure that all students are fully supervised at all times.
- Out of bounds areas are in the school to ensure that children are not placed at risk.

DEFINITIONS**School staff means:**

An individual working in a school environment who is:

- Employed under Part 2.4 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (ERT Act) in the government or teaching service or
- Employed under contract of service by the Scholl Council under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act or
- A volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary)

School environment means:

- All onsite locations both indoors and outdoors
- All other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including without limitations, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events)
- Online school environments (including email and intranet systems)

Child means:

- A child enrolled as a student in the school

Child-connected work means:

- Work authorised by the school governing authority (the Principal) and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present

Child abuse includes:

- Any act committed against a child involving-
 - A sexual offence or
 - An offence under section 49B 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 Safety Officer is:

A person at Roberts McCubbin PS who has knowledge of safety issues, and could be a point of for others who have questions or concerns or want to report an allegation of child abuse.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed by Council Annually.

Last approved and ratified in March 2019

REFERENCES

Other policies which underpin this policy:

- Duty of Care Policy
- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- Student Engagement and Well-Being Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy (including Mandatory Reporting)
- Statement of Values – Promoting Healthy, Safe and Respectful School Communities
- School Camps and Excursion Policy
- Incursion and Excursion Policy (External Provider)
- ICT/eSmart Policy
- *Safe & Happy Book*