



PARK ORCHARDS PRIMARY SCHOOL
Child Safe Standard 1
Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety

Reviewed June- July 2018 Endorsed by School Council July 2018

INTENT OF CHILD SAFE STANDARD 1: *The Park Orchards Primary School (P.O.P.S.) has the responsibility to embed a culture of child safety and ensure that policies and procedures demonstrate zero tolerance of child abuse in the organisation. The table below describes the strategies used by P.O.P.S. to promote child safety and respond accordingly.*

CHILDREN	<p>Through Tribes Agreements, Community Circles, I wish my teacher knew (3-6), SRC meetings, Yr 6 leader meeting with Principal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We involve children when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them • We listen to their views and respect what they have to say. • We promote diversity and tolerance in our school, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. • We support and assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.
STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK (WWCC)	<p>All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our Child Safety Code of Conduct (displayed in the Office Foyer) which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All people engaged in child-related work at POPS, including parent volunteers (refer to POPS WWCC policy and procedures).</p>
TRAINING & SUPERVISION	<p>Our organisational culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns.</p> <p>We provide our staff and volunteers with information to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.</p> <p>We also support (refer to newsletter articles, Staff Handbook, Parent Handbook, website with links to relevant policies and procedures) our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds; and to promote the safety of children with a disability.</p>
NEW EMPLOYEES	<p>New employees and volunteers will be provided with an induction in child safety (refer to Staff Handbook) to ensure they understand our school’s commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse.</p> <p>They will be supervised regularly to check that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (refer to P.O.P.S. Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviour - Child Safety Code of Conduct). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.</p>
RECRUITMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. • We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our organisation understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations. • We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the recruitment process is complete. • We do retain our own records (but not the actual criminal record) if an applicant’s criminal history affected our decision-making process. If during the recruitment process a person’s records indicate a criminal history then the applicant will be given the opportunity to provide further information.



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RISK MANAGEMENT	<p>In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (Four Critical Actions to report Child Abuse). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.</p> <p>We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (refer to OH&S and Emergency Management policy and procedures for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (refer to eSmart policy and procedures for example, no staff member or volunteer is to have contact with a child on social media).</p>
ALLEGATIONS, CONCERNS & COMPLAINTS	<p>Our organisation takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations. We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.</p> <p>All adults connected to our school community have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if there is a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above). If an adult has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred they must report the incident.</p> <p>Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be (Four Critical Actions to report Child Abuse- displayed at various locations around the school):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves) • 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 behaviour.
PRIVACY	<p>All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone’s safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.</p>
LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES	<p>P.O.P.S. takes its legal responsibilities seriously, including:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Any staff who make mandatory reports must comply with their duties (refer to P.O.P.S. Child Protection policy and procedures) In cases where staff have concerns about a child or young person, they should also discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.</p>
FAIR PROCEDURES FOR PERSONNEL	<p>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. We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using an incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored. If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.</p>

RELEVANT DOCUMENTS / LINKS

- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
Child safe standards website (all schools): www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafesite
- Park Orchards Primary School: <https://pops.vic.edu.au/student-welfare-2/>
- Park Orchards Primary School Policies and Procedures: <https://pops.vic.edu.au/overview/#policies>
- DET PROTECT Children: <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/default.aspx>