Park Ridge Primary School  
Child Safety Policy  
November, 2016

Rationale

On 26 November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015 to introduce child safe standards into law. The standards commenced on 01 January 2016 for most organisations working with children, with the aim of promoting cultural change in the way organisations manage the risk of child abuse and neglect.

The child safe standards are part of the Victorian Government’s response to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and other Non-Government Organisations. The Betrayal of Trust Report found that while the majority of children are safe in organisations and in the community, more work could be done to strengthen existing approaches to child safety.

The child safe standards aim to drive cultural change in organisations that provide services for children so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in everyday thinking and practice.

Aim

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an entity to which the standards apply must have:

- **Standard 1**: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements (See Appendix 1)
- **Standard 2**: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety (See Appendix 2)
- **Standard 3**: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children (See Appendix 3)
- **Standard 4**: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel (See *Working with Children Check Policy*)
- **Standard 5**: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse (See *Mandatory Reporting Policy*) (See Appendix 5) (See Appendix 6) (See Appendix 7)
- **Standard 6**: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse (See Appendix 4)
- **Standard 7**: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children (See *Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy*)
**Implementation**

Park Ridge Primary School will ensure the Child Safe Standards are implemented and adhered to, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students at the School and promote an organisational culture that manages the risk of child abuse and neglect.

- The school’s Child Safe Policy will address the Ministerial order 870 and be ratified through School Council
- The Assistant Principal (Administration and Wellbeing) will be responsible for monitoring the Child Safe Policy and its implementation throughout the school community
- Current staff will be provided with a copy of the Child Safe Policy and important aspects of the policy highlighted as part of a staff meeting
- New and returning staff will be provided with a copy of the Child Safe policy and important aspects of the policy highlighted as part of the school’s induction and orientation process
- Parents will be provided with a copy of the Child Safe Policy after the initial ratification of the policy
- The School Community will be informed about the school’s Child Safe Policy through the school newsletter and the school website
- New parents will be provided with a copy of the Child Safe Policy as part of the school’s enrolment process
- All staff will be alerted to the Child Safe Policy and strategies at the beginning of each school year
- The Child Safe Policy will be uploaded to the school’s website and saved in the policy folder on the staff access only drive, StaffShare, in the School Policies folder
- The school community will be informed about the strategies and allocated roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies through the school newsletter and information via the school website
- Regular updates will be included in the school newsletter to inform members of the school community about the school’s policy and strategies for ensuring child safety
- The School Improvement Team, along with the Education Sub-Committee of school council will review the school’s child safe strategies and implementation of these at the beginning of each term as a standing agenda item. This review will take into account the Department of Education and Training (DET) Protect content to ensure procedures are aligned with Government and best practice requirements
- The school will take all reports of child abuse seriously, ensuring the mandatory reporting and follow-up procedures are implemented in line with Government requirements and ensure that appropriate support is provided to the child throughout this process
- The Principal Team and staff will follow the Department of Education’s PROTECT guidelines for *Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools* as our procedures for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse (see Appendix 5)
- The school’s procedures for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse will be made available to school staff via the school’s intranet on StaffShare
- The school’s procedures for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse will be made available to children, parents/carers and the school community through the school website and school newsletter
- The School Improvement Team will review any response to reports of child abuse to ensure continual implementation of best-practice and compliance with Government requirements
- Staff will be alerted to the Code of Conduct which outlines professional obligations in regards to their interactions with children
The school will make reasonable efforts to identify and record necessary information for a person’s employment for work including qualifications, Working with Children Check and proof of identity.

The School and its staff will follow the Step by Step Guide to Making Report to Child Protection or Child First (See Appendix 8)

The School and its staff will follow the Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools (See Appendix 5)

When identifying and responding to all forms of abuse the school and its staff will use the Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template for Victorian Schools (See Appendix 6)

The Principal Team will follow the Responding to Allegations of Student Sexual Assault Compulsory Actions for Principals flow chart (See Appendix 9)

The School and its staff will follow the School’s Mandatory Reporting Policy

All school staff will complete professional learning around the Child Safe Policy and standards. This will be documented as a standing agenda item on the school’s Professional Learning Plan for the first session of each school year.

The school curriculum will include learning for all students annually around behavioural expectations and the Student Code of Conduct.

The school’s Student Wellbeing Plan will ensure the implementation of Professional Learning for staff and the teaching and learning for students around the Berry Street Education Model, encompassing the domains of Body, Relationships, Character, Stamina and Engagement.

Our School has developed policies and procedures that aim to keep children safe. The standards will provide a framework to identify gaps and improve policy and practices around child safety.

**Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

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<td>Date Approved:</td>
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