



## CHILD SAFE STANDARD 1: STRATEGIES TO EMBED AN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF CHILD SAFETY

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Principal: Brenton Taylor

Governance arrangements, underpinned by a firm commitment from school leadership to our school's values and standards are the starting point for embedding a culture of child safety at Kerang Primary School. Strategies that seek to prevent harm and neglect (including physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, racial and cultural or religious abuse) all contribute to a child safe culture. It is therefore critical that child safety is part of the everyday thinking and practice of all within our school community. It is important to maintain the momentum of a child safe culture by monitoring performance and checking that child safety continues to be prominent in the school's governance and planning.

On 26 November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015 to introduce seven child safe standards (the Standards) into law. The Standards apply to all organisations involved in child-related work in Victoria. Ministerial Order No. 870 provides the framework for how schools will be required to comply with the Standards. Overall responsibility for ensuring compliance rests with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

The Ministerial Order specifies the following requirements for schools regarding Standard 1: "The school governing authority must:

- (a) Develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school;
- (b) Allocate roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies;
- (c) Inform the school community about the strategies, and allocated roles and responsibilities;
- (d) Put the strategies into practice, and inform the school community about these practices; and
- (e) Periodically review the effectiveness of the strategies put into practice and, if considered appropriate, revise those strategies."

### **SUSTAINING AND IMPROVING THE SCHOOL'S CHILD SAFETY CULTURE**

The Ministerial Order identifies five elements of the Standard 1 requirement, including developing strategies, allocating roles and responsibilities, informing the school community, putting the strategies into practice, and periodic review. When the school is satisfied that its culture of child safety meets or exceeds the minimum standard in the Ministerial Order, it needs to ensure that it can demonstrate the strength of its organisational culture to the VRQA.

#### **1) DEVELOP STRATEGIES TO EMBED A CULTURE OF CHILD SAFETY AT THE SCHOOL**

The following strategies have been identified that will assist us to embed a culture of child safety at Kerang Primary School:

- Ensure all documentation embeds the goal of child safety to ensure our vision, mission and strategic direction in relation to child safety is clearly conveyed
- Ensure Child Safe Standards are maintained as standing items for discussions for staff, wellbeing and School Council meetings, as reflected in the agenda and minutes
- Ensure that the diverse needs of children in the school are recognised and accounted for, particularly cohorts at higher levels of risk (such as children with a disability or young children) and risks are identified and mitigated
- Ensure all staff complete the Department of Education eLearning Module – Mandatory Reporting

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### **2) ALLOCATE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIES**

The Child Safe Leader at Kerang Primary School is Jodie Closter. She is responsible for:

- providing advice and information to members of staff and the school community
- supporting staff when making a report to DHHS or police
- the development and review of Child Safe policies and documentation
- providing the main point of contact for DHHS and community service liaison, and
- Supporting staff to extend their understanding of their responsibilities with regards to the Child Safe Standards.

Jodie is supported by members of the school's Leadership Team and the SSSO Psychologist. Our schools social worker also forms a key member of the Student Wellbeing team.

### **3) INFORM THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ABOUT THE STRATEGIES AND ALLOCATED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The school will ensure that all community members are made aware of the key roles and responsibilities held with respect to Child Safe Standards using a range of communication methods, including the school newsletter, website and hard copies of documentation. Parent and student forums will be developed and implemented as needed, to ensure all community members understand the importance of child safety, and how the school works to protect the children in our care.

### **4) PUT THE STRATEGIES INTO PRACTICE, AND INFORM THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY ABOUT THESE PRACTICES**

The following strategies have been identified that will assist us to embed a culture of child safety at Kerang Primary School:

- Development and regular review of Child Safe policies and documentation
- Regular posting of information about Child Safety to be published in the school newsletter and on our website
- Posting of Child Safe Standard documents on our school website in a format that allows translation into various languages
- Linking of translated parent information on our school website, and printed copies available at the office

### **5) PERIODICALLY REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE STRATEGIES PUT INTO PRACTICE AND, IF CONSIDERED APPROPRIATE, REVISE THOSE STRATEGIES**

The school has implemented a bi-annual schedule for periodic review (e.g. every two years) and improvement of child safety related policies and practices. In the event of an incident, a review of processes and documentation will occur within one month of the incident.

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### RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

Victorian Government, Education & Reform Act 2006, Gazette No. S2, January 2016, Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, Ministerial Order No. 870.

Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (2016) Information Sheet. CHILD SAFETY STANDARD 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety.

Commission for Children and Young People (2015) A Guide For Creating A Child Safe Organisation, Version 2.0. PROTECT | The Department of Education and Training | ©2016

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

Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people

Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations – elearning module

State of Victoria (2010) 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 School

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