

## CHILD SAFE POLICY

### RATIONALE

Schools have an important responsibility for keeping children safe. Princes Hill Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse, commitment to children's best interests and keeping them safe, and actively works to listen to and empowers children in the school.

### PURPOSE

To articulate how the school's approach and culture provides the highest level of protection for children in its care. This policy requires the school to commit to the active demonstration of a child safe culture.

### SCOPE

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. This policy applies to Teachers and Casual Relief Teachers (CRTs), Education Support staff, departmental staff, crossing supervisors, contractors, Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) staff, instrumental music teachers, educational program providers, parents, children and volunteers.

### DEFINITION

#### 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.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### Commitment to child safety

1. All children who come to Princes Hill Primary School have a right to feel and be safe.
2. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse. All allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.
3. This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, children and individuals involved in our school.

#### Children's rights to safety and participation

Princes Hill Primary School staff and volunteers encourage children to express their views.

1. Children are actively encouraged to 'have a say' about things that are important to them.
2. Children are taught about what they can do if they feel unsafe.
3. We listen to and act on any concerns children, or their parents, raise with us.

#### Valuing diversity

We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

1. Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and their families

2. Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
3. Welcome children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation
4. Seek appropriate staff from diverse cultural backgrounds.

#### Recruiting staff and volunteers

Princes Hill Primary School applies the best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers.

1. We interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers and require police checks and Working with Children Checks for relevant positions.
2. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements.

#### Roles and Responsibilities

The School **Governing Authority must:**

1. Develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school;
2. Allocate roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies
3. Inform the school community about the strategies, and allocated roles and responsibilities
4. Put the strategies into practice, and inform the school community about these practices
5. Periodically review the effectiveness of the strategies put into practice and, if considered appropriate, revise those strategies

The School **Child Safety Leader** is responsible for:

1. Providing authoritative advice on matters of child safety
2. Raising awareness of the issue of child safety
3. Undertaking regular training in matters of child safety

**School community members** are responsible for responding to any incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse that they become aware of.

#### Supporting staff and volunteers

Princes Hill Primary School seeks to attract and retain the best staff and volunteers.

1. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated.
2. We are committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks, and inclusion of Aboriginal children, children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.
3. We have developed a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code. (See *Staff Code of Conduct*.)

#### Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

Princes Hill Primary School has a Mandatory Reporting policy which:

1. Defines the roles and responsibilities of school staff in protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
2. Enables staff to identify the indicators of a child or young person who may be in need of protection.
3. Enables staff to make a report of a child or young person who may be in need of protection (See *Mandatory Reporting Policy*.)

### Risk Management

We recognise the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policy, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

### **REVIEW**

This policy is to be reviewed in 2018

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the VRQA Safe Standards website:

<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes/Pages/default.html>

This policy is to be read in conjunction with [Ministerial Order 870](#)

See also Princes Hill Primary School policies:

*Student Engagement*

*Student Wellbeing*

*Access and Equity*

*Code of Conduct*

*Reporting Policy*

*OSHC Policy*

*Visitors Policy*