

TEMPLESTOWE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Responsibility

Respect

Integrity

Pride

Optimism



2016 CHILD SAFE POLICY

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Introduction

Templestowe Park Primary School was established in 1977. It is located in an upper middle class residential area on an elevated and undulating site. Situated in Church Road, Templestowe, the School serves the Templestowe and Doncaster East corridor extending as far as the western end of Warrandyte. The school site is approximately three hectares with well-developed facilities and resources. The grounds include four separate adventure playgrounds, including a Prep/Foundation precinct and a Year 5/6 area, sealed basketball and netball courts and two ovals. The site is attractively planted with shaded, seated areas, suitable for passive activities. Buildings have been constantly improved and are spacious, attractive and decorated with fine displays of student work.

We are a school that openly declares that our students are the best part of our school.



Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the strong commitment of Templestowe Park Primary School to the care, safety and wellbeing of all students at our school. It provides an outline of the policies, procedures and strategies developed to keep students safe from harm, including all forms of abuse in our school environment, on campus, online and in other locations provided by the school.

This policy takes into account relevant legislative requirements within the state of Victoria, including the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 870.

This policy applies to all members of the school community including staff, students, school employees, volunteers and contractors.

Core Values and Principles of Child Safety

Templestowe Park Primary School uses its Mission Statement and five core values as the basis of shared expectations within the school community. It has recently developed the motto 'Learning for the future' to promote these expectations.

Templestowe Park has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that ensures that all students are valued and cared for, feel they are part of the school, and can engage

effectively in their learning and experience success. The behaviour and actions of our school community are based on our five core values.

The school's values are based on the Australian Government's nine values, for Australian schools, which are:

Care and Compassion: Care for self and others

Integrity: Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds

Doing Your Best: Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence

Respect: Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view

Fair Go: Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society

Responsibility: Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment

Freedom: Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others

Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion: Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others

Honesty and Trustworthiness: Be honest, sincere and seek the truth

Templestowe Park's five core values:

Responsibility	Being accountable for your own actions.
Pride	Achieving and celebrating personal goals and recognising and applauding successes gained by others.
Respect	Respecting one's self and caring about the feelings, rights, property, and safety of others.
Integrity	Always trying to be fair and honest.
Optimism	Focusing on positive experiences.

The following principles underpin our commitment to child safety at Templestowe Park Primary School.

- **All** students deserve as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- Our school works in partnership with families and the community to ensure that they are engaged in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on child safety and protection.
- **All** students have the right to an education that includes personal safety, in partnership with their parents/guardians/caregivers.

- **All** adults in our school have a duty to care for children, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any kind of harm or abuse.
- **All** students have a responsibility to treat each other respectfully.
- The policies, guidelines and codes of conduct for the care, wellbeing and protection of students are based on honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults and children.
- **All** persons involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.
- Staff, volunteers, contractors, parents and students should feel free to raise concerns about child safety, knowing these will be taken seriously by school leadership.
- Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed.

Definitions used in this policy

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 and serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work means work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

Proprietor in relation to a government school, means the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

School governing authority means, in the case of a government school:

- the Secretary; or
- a school council, as authorised by or under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006; or

- the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school or under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

School staff being an individual working in a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority;
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary), and including a chaplain or minister of religion. A school lead for child safety should have sufficient status and authority, including leadership support and the ability to direct other staff (where appropriate), to undertake the role effectively.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Templestowe Park Primary School is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

Templestowe Park Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Templestowe Park Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in Templestowe Park Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision-making and operations Templestowe Park Primary School will:

- take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
- value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
- foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
- respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
- provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
- engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
- ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
- report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
- share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
- value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Responsibilities and organisational arrangements

Everyone employed or volunteering at Templestowe Park Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

The school has allocated additional roles and responsibilities for child safety as follows:

Principal / Assistant Principal

- Ensure Child Safety policy and contents are adhered to by all staff, community members and contractors.
- Ensure Child Safety policy and associated policies are made accessible to all staff, community members and contractors via the school website, Compass school management system and SAM4Schools.
- Meeting and liaising with DHHS.
- Coordinating School Educational Psychologist.
- Implement 'Kids Hope' mentoring program.
- Work with and support staff in referring students for additional assistance and to provide support to students/parents/caregivers.
- Ensuring all staff have access to supporting resources such as the *Protect* documents and Four Critical Actions for Schools (see Education and Training for Staff, page 9).
- Ensure all records in particular completed *Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: Template* and associated information is confidential and securely stored.

School Educational Psychologist

- Provide counselling to the children when circumstances other than specific learning problems are hindering their academic progress and emotional stability.

Student Wellbeing Leader

- Lead the implementation of the whole school values based student wellbeing program.

Health and Safety Officer (OHS Management team)

- Maintain and monitor our school environment so that it remains safe for students, teachers and visitors.

STEM Leader

- Oversee the implementation of the school's eSmart program with specific reference to responsible student use of technology and electronic communication.

Child Safety Code of Conduct and Behaviours

Templestowe Park Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and has a responsibility for ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of Templestowe Park Primary School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of Templestowe Park Primary School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Acceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety (page 5) at all times treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities.
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Principal / Assistant Principal.
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- ensuring as quickly as possible if child abuse is suspected, that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we **must not**:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without the Principal's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting or tutoring). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- when generally interacting with students discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of delivering an approved educational (for example Family Life or Life Education) or a therapeutic setting
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

Student Safety and Participation

At Templestowe Park Primary School, we actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them. Our RRIPO program was developed and currently operates with the intention of building stronger relationships between teachers and students. As a school that is working towards being accredited as a Kids Matter school and utilises the Positive Education framework, TPPS places a high priority on the social and emotional development of our students. RRIPO, circle time and student surveys are just a few examples where students can express their views about their own safety at their school.

We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe and enable them to understand, identify, discuss and report on child safety. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers may have.

Reporting and Responding

The Principal and Assistant Principal have been appointed as Child Safety Persons with the specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children. In the instance of an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, the Principal and Assistant Principal will promptly manage and ensure that the allegation is taken seriously. They will if requested, guide and support staff that make a mandatory report.

Child protection information and reporting obligations needs to be clearly understood. Templestowe Park utilises the '*Protect. Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools*' document (DET 2016) to guide the decisions that need to be made in regards to responding to abuse.

Protect. Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools.

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandard5_SchoolsGuide.pdf

For succinct information on 'how' to immediately respond to an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse, the document '*Four Critical Actions for School. Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse*' (See Appendix) is utilised.

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/FourCriticalActions_ChildAbuse.pdf

School staff will use this template to document any incident, disclosure or suspicion that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused. This template should be used in conjunction with the Four Critical Actions For Schools.

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/PROTECT_Responding_TemplateSchools.pdf

Screening and Recruitment of School Staff

Templestowe Park takes all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with our students. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. This policy is referenced to when advertising for staff recruitment and a specific Child Safe question is included in at least one key selection criteria.

Templestowe Park understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

For teaching staff who commence at Templestowe Park, the induction process includes distribution of, and discussion of this policy with the Principal.

All people engaged by our school, including volunteers and contractors are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this check. We carry out reference checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people.

Education and Training for Staff

Annually, staff Professional Development meeting time will be allocated to re-examining the school's Child Safety Policy with a particular focus on:

1. revising the document, *Protect. Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse*.

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandard5_SchoolsGuide.pdf

2. *The Four Critical Actions for Schools. Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse* (see Appendix). This document outlines the process of responding to child abuse.

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandard5_SchoolsGuide.pdf

3. the school's mandatory reporting policy.
4. staff completing the mandatory reporting on line training module.

<http://www.elearn.com.au/det/protectingchildren/schools/>

Relevant Legislation

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)

Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic.)

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)

Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.) – Three new criminal offences have been introduced under this Act:

- 1 Failure to disclose offence: Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.
- 2 Failure to protect offence: The offence will apply where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
- 3 Grooming offence: This offence targets predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with a child. Grooming can be conducted in person or online, for example via interaction through social media, web forums and emails.

Related Policies

School based supporting policies.

Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy – Last ratified by School Council 2015

Mandatory Reporting Policy – Last ratified by School Council 2016

Working With Children's Check Policy – Last ratified by School Council 2016

Duty of Care Policy – Last ratified by School Council 2015

Review of this Policy

This policy will be reviewed by staff and the Education Sub Committee as part of the school's policy review process.

Ratified by School Council -

Last edit Oct 12th

FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse



YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

As a school staff member, you play a **critical role** in protecting children in your care.

- You **must** act, by following the 4 critical actions, as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused.
- You **must** act if you form a suspicion/reasonable belief, even if you are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (eg. if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse).
- You **must** use the *Responding to Suspected Child Abuse* template to keep clear and comprehensive notes.

*A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

1 RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

If there is no risk of immediate harm go to **Action 2**.

If a child is at immediate risk of harm you **must** ensure their safety by:

- separating alleged victims and others involved
- administering first aid
- calling **000** for urgent medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
- identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police.

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.



2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you **must** report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible. Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.

Q: Where does the source of suspected abuse come from?

WITHIN THE SCHOOL

VICTORIA POLICE

You **must** report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor or volunteer to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report internally to:

- GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**
 - School Principal and/or leadership team
 - Employee Conduct Branch
 - DET Security Services Unit

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/or school chairperson

WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION

You **must** report to DHHS Child Protection if a child is considered to be:

- in need of protection from child abuse
- at risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development.

VICTORIA POLICE

You **must also** report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report internally to:

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

- You **must also** report to:
- School Principal and/or leadership team
 - DET Security Services Unit

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- You **must also** report to:
- School Principal and/or leadership team
 - Diocesan education office

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

- You **must also** report to:
- School Principal and/or chairperson

If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but you still hold **significant concerns** for their wellbeing you must still act.

This may include making a referral or seeking advice from Child FIRST (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support), or to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.

3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

Your Principal **must** consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers. They may advise:

- not to contact** the parents/carer (eg. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish for their parent/carer to be contacted)
- to contact** the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion).

4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

Your school **must** provide support for children impacted by abuse. This should include the development of a *Student Support Plan* in consultation with wellbeing professionals. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements. Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals.

You **must** follow the *Four Critical Actions* every time you become aware of a further instance or risk of abuse. This includes reporting new information to authorities.

CONTACT

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION

AREA

North Division **1300 664 9777**

South Division **1300 655 795**

East Division **1300 360 391**

West Division (Rural) **1800 075 599**

West Division (Metro) **1300 664 9777**

AFTER HOURS

After hours, weekends, public holidays **13 12 78**

CHILD FIRST

www.dhs.vic.gov.au

VICTORIA POLICE

000 or your local police station

DET SECURITY SERVICES UNIT

(03) 9589 6266

STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT

(03) 9637 2934

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH

(03) 9637 2595

DIOCESAN OFFICE

Melbourne **(03) 9267 0228**

Ballarat **(03) 5337 7135**

Sale **(03) 5622 6600**

Sandhurst **(03) 5443 2377**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

VICTORIA

(03) 9825 7200