

TEMPLESTOWE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

Responsibility

Respect

Integrity

Pride

Optimism



CHILD SAFE STANDARD 2

Child Safe Policy

Child Safe Standard 2: Child Safe Policy

Purpose

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.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Templestowe Park Primary School is committed to the 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 and Torres Strait Islander 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.

Listening to Children

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, and students and students. As a school that 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 1) 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 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 entire document with the Principal / Assistant 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 safe documents with a particular focus on:

1. revising the document, *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

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/FourCriticalActions_ChildAbuse.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 reviewed by Ed. Sub Committee 2018

Mandatory Reporting Policy – Last reviewed by Ed. Sub Committee 2018

Volunteers Policy – Last approved by School Council 2018

Duty of Care Policy – Last approved by School Council 2018

Definitions

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.

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 every two years.

Approved by School Council on 28/8/2018 and is scheduled for review in August 2020.