

## Child Safety: Screening, Supervision and Training

Fitzroy Primary School has human resources practices in place to help protect children from abuse.

We foster a culture of openness and inclusiveness, while continuing to be aware that child safety is paramount in all schools. Our human resources practices are a way of reducing risks to the safety of children. Human resources practices include the recruitment, training and supervision of all personnel.

We provide opportunities for staff and volunteers to develop and maintain skills to ensure child safety. This will enable staff and volunteers to understand the importance of child safety and wellbeing, and consistently follow child safety policies and procedures.

### **Child Safety Officer**

At Fitzroy Primary School, staff and volunteers are supported through the appointment of an individual child safety officer with specified 'child-safe' duties in their job description. In this school this role is performed by the Principal and Assistant Principal. Duties of this role include being the designated person(s) to hear or be informed about all allegations or concerns, and providing support to other personnel. This role also provides a clear contact for children, parents and employees/volunteers to seek advice and support regarding the safety and wellbeing of children associated with the school.

### **Training and induction**

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. Employees and volunteers (in addition to parents/guardians and children) need to be supported to discuss child protection issues and to detect signs of potential child abuse.

Staff receive induction and ongoing training. New staff receive support and information when they begin their new role, and existing staff are given opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of their positions and expand their career options.

Training and support ensures that appropriate standards of care are met by employees and volunteers to ensure that the school meets its duty of care when providing services to children.

All staff commit to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children by acknowledging the school's Code of Conduct. Professional learning is focused on enhancing the skills and knowledge of staff and volunteers, in order to reduce exposure to risks.

Staff and volunteers receive training in the following areas:

- identifying, assessing and reducing or removing child abuse risks
- School policies and procedures (including the Code Of Conduct and Child Safety Policy)
- legislative requirements, such as obligations to report child abuse, reduce and remove known risks of child abuse, and to hold Working with Children Checks where required

- how to handle a disclosure or suspicion of abuse, including your organisation's reporting guidelines
- cultural awareness training

Formal professional learning includes:

- higher education training and accreditation
- training offered by external organisations
- training developed and delivered internally
- in house training meeting key objectives

Informal professional learning includes:

- inviting other professionals to speak at meetings or functions
- inviting local Aboriginal Elders, Aboriginal community controlled organisations and community members to speak at meetings and events
- inviting local culturally and/or linguistically diverse community members to speak at meetings and events
- internal mentoring and coaching

### **Supervision of Staff**

New staff and volunteers are routinely supervised to ensure they understand their role and learn skills, as well as to check that their behaviour towards children is appropriate. Any warning signs are reported to the Principal/Assistant Principal, the Department of Health and Human Services (child protection), or police if a child is believed to be at imminent risk.

### **Performance and Development Review**

The Performance and Development Review cycle provides an opportunity to improve knowledge and skills in working with children, as well as ensuring that all staff meet the school's standards of conduct and care.

### **Risk Management**

FPS has a Risk Management Program which includes a process designed to evaluate risks posed to children, taking into account the school's activities, size and resources, and the types of children we work with. The Principal and Assistant Principal take responsibility for risk management and regularly discusses child protection and any incidents/reports that have been made with an aim of assessing and limiting/eliminating any ongoing risk. This includes:

- Removing risks to children where possible (e.g. terminate staff/. volunteers who are not suitable to work with children – seek legal advice before terminating such a relationship).
- Removing physical risks to children.
- Always learn from past lessons and talk about incidents/complaints to ensure that learnings are shared and benefited from across the organisation.

Code of Conduct and disciplinary procedures

FPS October 2018

For example behaviour, please see An Overview of the Victorian child safe standards:  
<[www.dhs.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards\\_overview.doc](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/___data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc)>

Disciplinary procedures will be used if an allegation of child abuse is made, or a breach of the code of conduct is known or suspected.

Employees and volunteers are aware of reporting and disciplinary procedures and how to communicate concerns regarding the improper behaviour of any person within the organisation. Staff are also aware of their duty to raise concerns about the behaviour of any person who may present a risk of child abuse, without fear of repercussions.

Our code of conduct is publicly available. Children and their families are encouraged to raise any concerns about the behaviour of any person, and can expect to be listened to and supported.

### **Further information**

Further information on child safe standards can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services' website <[www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/projects-and-initiatives/children,-youth-and-family-services/creating-child-safe-organisations](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/projects-and-initiatives/children,-youth-and-family-services/creating-child-safe-organisations)>.

Additional resources for organisations in the child safe standards toolkit can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website: <[www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards)>. In particular, An Overview to the Victorian child safe standards, has information to help organisations understand the requirements of each of the child safe standards, including examples of measures organisations can put in place, a self-audit tool and a glossary of key terms: <[www.dhs.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards\\_overview.doc](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc)>

Note for registered schools: a forthcoming Ministerial Order under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 will contain the minimum actions that schools must take to meet each of the child safe standards. There will be a lead in time before regulation will commence to allow schools time to prepare. The Department of Education and Training and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority will provide information and materials specifically for schools to assist with capacity building and compliance.

Registered schools can contact the Department of Education and Training:  
[child.safe.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:child.safe.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Early childhood services operating under the National Quality Framework or Children's Services Act 1996 should contact: [licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Licensed children's services enquiry line: 1300 30

This policy was endorsed by School Council on October 17<sup>th</sup> 2016.

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<[www.dhs.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/word\\_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards\\_overview.doc](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc)>