



**ASCOT VALE PRIMARY SCHOOL
CHILD SAFE STANDARD 1 – STRATEGIES TO EMBED AN
ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF CHILD SAFETY**

Developed July-November 2016
Passed by School Council 19th December 2016

INTENT OF CHILD SAFE STANDARD 1

The Ascot Vale PS School Council has the responsibility to embed a culture of child safety and ensure that policies and procedures demonstrate zero tolerance of child abuse in the organisation. The table below describes the strategies used by Ascot Vale Primary School to promote child safety and respond accordingly.

Implementation

<p>Children</p>	<p>We involve children when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.</p> <p>We promote diversity and tolerance in our school, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. We support and assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.</p>
<p>Staff and Volunteers – Working with Children’s Check</p>	<p>All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.</p> <p>All people engaged in child-related work, including parent volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. If you are a parent volunteering in an activity in which your child participates or normally participates in the classroom, you are exempt and do not need a Check. If you are closely related to <u>each</u> child in your child-related work you are exempt from the Check. <i>NB: ‘Closely related’ to a child means you are the: parent, spouse or domestic partner, step-parent, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister, including half siblings, step siblings, brother-in-law or sister-in-law.</i></p>
<p>Training and supervision</p>	<p>Our organisational culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.</p> <p>We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds; and to promote the safety of children with a disability.</p>

	<p>New employees and volunteers will be provided with an induction in child safety to ensure they understand our school's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse. They will be supervised regularly to check that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to Ascot Vale Primary School's Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviour - Child Safety Code of Conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.</p>
Recruitment	<p>We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our organisation understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.</p> <p>We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the recruitment process is complete. We do retain our own records (but not the actual criminal record) if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision making process.</p> <p>If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the applicant will be given the opportunity to provide further information.</p>
Fair procedures for personnel	<p>The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.</p> <p>We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using an incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.</p> <p>If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.</p>
Privacy	<p>All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.</p>
Legislative responsibilities	<p>Ascot Vale Primary School takes its legal responsibilities seriously, including:</p> <p>Failure to disclose: Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that</p>

	<p>an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.</p> <p>Failure to protect: People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.</p> <p>Any staff who make mandatory reports must comply with their duties. In cases where staff have concerns about a child or young person, they should also discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.</p>
Risk management	<p>In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.</p> <p>We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff member or volunteer is to have contact with a child on social media).</p>
Allegations, concerns and complaints	<p>Our organisation takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.</p> <p>We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.</p> <p>All adults connected to our school community have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if there is a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above). If an adult has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves) behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it observing suspicious behaviour

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.