



KILMORE PRIMARY SCHOOL



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## Child Safety Policy 2016

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### **Rationale:**

Keeping our children safe is an important responsibility we all share. Our children have the right to be protected wherever they are, and that includes at school and in other education environments away from home. All Victorian schools are required to comply with the Child Safety Standards (*compliant with Ministerial Order No 870*) and have a child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety that details;

- i) the principles that will guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe school environment; and
- ii) the actions the school proposes to take to demonstrate its commitment to child safety and monitor the school's adherence to its child safety policy;
- iii) support, encourage and enable school staff, parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters; and
- iv) support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.

The standards will build on our already strong stance on preventing and responding to child abuse, providing more accountability and more consistency about how these issues are dealt with sending a clear message that abuse will not be tolerated. The standards call for documented child safe policies, codes of conduct and clear strategies for responding to suspected abuse. Empowering children to understand their rights and raise concerns are also part of the new standards. Victoria's child safety standards include special protections for some children with a disability, Aboriginal children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

### **Implementation:**

#### **What we do to prevent abuse at KPS.**

Kilmore Primary School employs strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety. Students, staff and families are supported by the School Leadership Team, Wellbeing Coordinator, Teachers, DE&T Psychologist and Social Worker (SSSO), outside allied health professionals and specialists agencies.

Teaching staff are VIT registered which includes successfully completed Police Checks, reference/referee checks for new staff and when additional staff / personal and volunteers are supervised in classrooms or screened to work on the school site with approved Working with Children Checks.

Teachers undertake Mandatory Reporting training annually and report serious student wellbeing, health and safety concerns to School Leadership.

#### **Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation**

The school authority must develop strategies to deliver appropriate education about:

\*standards of behaviour for students attending the school

- \*healthy and respectful relationships
- \*resilience and abuse awareness and prevention
- \*Promote the child safety standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children
- \*agenda child safety as an item at meetings
- \*include questions relating to child safety in the selection process for new staff
- \*provide professional development for staff in mental health wellbeing

### **Child Safety Code of Conduct:**

To promote child safety in the school environment we acknowledge the following:

#### **All students have a right to:**

- Take part in learning programs that meet their individual needs.
- Feel secure and to be safe in a caring and supportive environment.
- Work and play without interference in an atmosphere of harmony and cooperation.
- Expect to be treated with fairness and in accordance with our school values of kind, proud and safe
- Have learning continue without disruption in a supportive environment.
- Be valued for their individuality including; race, gender, cultural, physical or intellectual diversity.
- Expect the school rules to be fair, consistently implemented and respect the rights of all involved.

#### **All students have a responsibility to:**

- Care and value themselves, others, teachers and the school community.
- Be safety conscious in relation to themselves and others.
- Treat others with respect and good manners.
- Keep the guidelines of good behaviour, modelling and supporting the school values and school rules.
- Develop a sense of accountability for their own actions.
- Work to achieve their personal best whilst allowing others to do the same.
- Allow for others to learn and to respect the rights of others.
- Explore their full potential in their learning.

#### **School staff adheres to following standards about the ways in which school staff are expected to behave with children:**

- School staff provide opportunities for all students to learn in a safe and supportive environment
- School staff treat their students with courtesy, respect and dignity
- School staff work within the limits of their professional expertise
- School staff maintain objectivity in their relationships with students
- School staff are always in a professional relationship with the students in their school whether at school, in other educational environments or general community

#### **Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse**

##### **Forming a belief on reasonable grounds**

A person may form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection after becoming aware that a child or young person's health, safety or wellbeing is at risk.

##### **Reporting a belief**

Mandated staff members (*Teachers and Principals*) must make a report to Child Protection as soon as practicable after forming a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection.

Staff members need to report to the Principal or Assistant Principal their belief when the belief is formed in the course of undertaking their professional duties. A report must be made as soon as practicable after forming the belief and on each occasion on which they become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.

***Please refer to the Kilmore Primary School Mandatory Reporting Policy 2016 for procedures in response to allegations of child abuse.***

**These procedures do not:**

prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school; state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation; require staff to make a judgment about the truth of the allegation of child abuse; or prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse.

### **Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse**

Risk management strategies have been developed within the following school policies:

*Mandatory Reporting Policy 2016*

*Student Engagement Policy 2014*

*Visitors to School Policy*

*School Philosophy and Statement*

*Critical Incident Policy and Plan 2014*

If the school identifies risks of child abuse occurring in one or more school environments the authority must make a record of those risks and specify the action(s) the school will take to reduce or remove the risks. As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.

The school must ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided annually to the individual members of the school staff about:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse;
- child abuse risks in the school environment and the school's current child safety standards.

### **Reference**

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx>

### **Useful links:**

Report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hours 7 days, toll free)

National Child Abuse Helpline (Child Wise) – 1800 991 099

A toll-free number with access to expert advice from trained counsellors and an opportunity to speak up about child abuse.

Kids Helpline 1800 551 800

For any time and for any reason – free, private and confidential phone and online counselling 24 hrs a day 7 days a week.

Headspace (National Youth Mental Health Foundation) – 1800 650 890

Headspace can help if you are aged 12 or over and you are going through a tough time. You can talk to someone at Headspace on the phone, online or in person. They also have a lot of information on their website

***This policy was last ratified at the August 2016 School Council meeting.***

