

## CHILD SAFETY ACTION PLAN

### 1. Strategies to embed and organisational culture of child safety

- Creating an organisational culture that protects children from abuse:

- Principal to lead the Child Safety culture.
- Appoint a **Child Safety Officer** (probably the AP)
- Update the school's statement of philosophy and values to acknowledge child safety.
- Allocate and advertise Child Safety Roles (e.g. Principal and Child Safety Officer to lead responses to allegations/concerns; include the child safety roles undertaken by other staff)
- Provide induction and training in how to recognise and respond to child abuse including what to do if an allegation is made.
- Build responsibility for embedding an organisational culture of safety into performance reviews.
- Regularly include CHILD SAFETY strategies into staff meetings/team meetings/information sessions/volunteer meetings.
- Ensure Child Safety strategies and documents are included or referenced in other school documents (e.g. Staff Handbook/Induction documents) and that they are made available to parents in hard copy or on the school's website.
- Display Child Safety messages throughout the school.
- Display and publish the school's Child Safety expectations in prominent locations.
- Provide a physical environment that is inclusive of all children
- Consider how best to make sure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children as well as children from Culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have a supported and culturally safe environment at this school.
- Consider how best to ensure the safety and participation of children with a disability at this school.
- Determine a timeline by which the school will be compliant with all child safety strategies
- Periodically review the effectiveness of the child safety strategies.
- Regularly update the School Council on Child Safety.
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- Report on Child Safety in the Annual Report.

### 2. A Child Safe Policy

- Have the Child Safe Policy ratified by School Council.
- Publish the Child Safety Policy (school's website/newsletters/ Annual Reports/recruitment advertisements/welcome packs/pre-school information packs)
- Include improvements to child safety policies and procedures as an agenda item at leadership, staff and volunteer meetings.
- Schools will be required to demonstrate evidence of a full child safe policy by the 2017 school review process and beyond.

### 3. A Child Safety Code of Conduct

Ensure the Child Safety Code of Conduct is highlighted as part of the recruitment process

- Ensure that all school staff, contractors and volunteers understand the Child Safety Code of Conducts and that they sign that they will comply with it.
- Establish a procedure for handling any breaches of the code and consequences for people who breach the code. These procedures should include documenting any breaches using:

**CS1 Child Safety Incident Report and/or CS2 DHHS Child Protection/Police/Child FIRST Report** depending upon the severity of the breach.

#### **4. School staff selection, supervision and management practices for a child-safe environment**

- All new positions from August 1<sup>st</sup> 2016 must include the standard ‘Child Safe Environments’ clause as provided in the ‘Recruitment in School’s Guide.
- All applicants for jobs that involve **child connected work** for the school must be informed about the school’s child safety practices including the Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Use **CS9 Child Safety Staff Selection Checklist** to help focus on Child Safety during the recruitment process
- Regularly assess organisational child safety training needs (through questionnaires or as part of the regular performance review processes)
- Provide ongoing training, support, supervision and performance management for all staff.
- Use culturally inclusive recruitment practices.

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

- Provide a supportive environment for children, personnel or families who report allegations of abuse or safety concerns.
- Ensure staff, volunteers, families and children know how to report allegations of abuse or child safety concerns and feel safe and comfortable doing so.
- Ensure that children are safe, and that procedures for responding to alleged abuse are fair and focus on child safety.
- Provide support and comfort to a child reporting abuse.
- Follow the school’s clear procedures for notifying authorities, including the police, of suspected child abuse that comply with all legal requirements:
  - (i) Use **CS2 DHHS Child Protection/Police/Child FIRST Report** to report child abuse or other serious concerns
  - (ii) **Follow the procedures in CS3 Child Abuse 4 Critical Actions** when responding to allegations of child abuse.
  - (iii) Follow suggestions in **CS4 Child Safety – How to respond to children and parents**, - which suggest what to say in situations where allegations of abuse have been made

**Practice** Child Safety procedures with staff (similar to other safety drills) to ensure staff clearly understand what they must do.

- Respond to other concerns about the wellbeing of a child utilising the additional information contained in CS3 – Four Critical Actions (p.14 – 15)
- Review Child Safety responses following any incidents/disclosures
- Provide counselling and other resources to support children.

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

- Assess, identify and document the school’s risks in relation to child safety to this end: evaluate the risks in the school environment ranging from health and safety risks, to potential child abuse and accidents.
- **Look for “hot spots”** in all school environments where children may be at risk because they are not clearly visible.
- Ensure there are clear supervision requirements for staff and volunteers who work with children.
- Roster staff with appropriate experience and qualifications to manage high risk environments (e.g. camp)

- Consider potential risks to Aboriginal children, children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with disabilities are identified, assessed and mitigated.
- Develop protocols for meeting with children (for example in offices/individualised music lessons) to minimise risk (e.g. leave doors open /have children nearest the door so that they can leave easily if they feel unsafe /clear windows and doors to enable visibility of occupants)
- Review how to monitor visitors including ad-hoc visitors to the school.
- Review cyber, on-line, mobile phone, risks to children.
- Provide staff and volunteers with training in identifying child abuse risks (e.g. blocked-off/out of sight spaces/opportunities for personal touch such as sports, coaching and personal care).
- Include discussion about risks or ‘near misses’ in team meetings and areas for improvement.

## **7. Strategies to promote child empowerment**

- enabling and promoting the participation of children in the school

- Have programs in place to build resilience and healthy and respectful relationships for all.
- Encourage child participation across the school.
- Continue to build the communication and leadership skills of children.
- Inform children of the Child Safe Policy – asking them what makes children at this school feel safe. They contribute valuable insight and ideas towards the creation of a meaningful child safe organisation - identifying strengths, weaknesses, risks, and dangers in activities that may not be identified by other methods.
- Teach children how to raise concerns, make complaints or let someone know if they feel unsafe and who to approach.
- Listen to what you are being told by children – acknowledge, value and take seriously the views put forward by children. Ensure adults involved are skilful in facilitating the participation of children.
- Ensure there are child friendly processes in place to provide support to any child who may be distressed as a result of their involvement in discussions or disclosure of concerns.
- Teach children to be aware of their right to safety and being cared for.
- Comprehensive, inclusive sexuality education is a compulsory part of a school’s health education; taught and assessed by teachers. Review the school’s practices.
- Develop procedures that are easily understood and accessible for all children
- Ensure that children feel safe and empowered and that they are taken seriously if they raise concerns.
- Promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, children from culturally or linguistically diverse children and the safety of children with a disability.