

# CHILD SAFETY RISK MANAGEMENT

## **Purpose**

The Child Safe Standards require schools to have strategies to embed a school culture of child safety. We must act to protect children from abuse and build an environment where children feel safe, respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. This requires a culture of child safety to be embedded throughout Murrumbeena Primary School so that child safety is part of everyone's everyday thinking and practice. Such a culture is achieved through proactive approach to developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating risk management strategies to ensure child safety in school environments.

## **Aims**

- The school's risk management strategies regarding child safety will identify and mitigate the risk(s) of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of our school environment, the activities expected to be conducted (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all children within our school.
- Different risk controls may be necessary for particular groups of children depending on the nature of the risk and the diversity characteristics of children affected by the risk.
- Staff will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.
- The School Principal / Assistant Principal) will ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to the individual members of the school governing authority and school staff about:
  - a) Individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse;
  - b) Child abuse risks in the school environment; and
  - c) The school's current child safety standards.

Staff will facilitate learning opportunities and discussions to empower and promote students in decision-making processes that affect their safety or the safety of other children. (see Standard 7)

## **Guidelines**

### **Process for identifying and reducing or removing risks of child abuse**

Risk management assessments and strategies will involve the following steps and considerations.

1. Identify the school's child safety risks across the range of school environments (including excursions, camps, online). A sample risk assessment is at the end of this document.
2. Identify any existing risk mitigation measures or existing controls.
3. Assess and rate the school's child safety risks given the existing controls in place, taking into account the likelihood of risk, and the likely consequence of the risk.
4. If the risk rating is more than the 'acceptable level', identify further risk management strategies through additional treatments or other prevention, detection or mitigation strategies and then re-assess the risk (once in place these treatments will then become controls).
5. The risk management process will be documented, recorded and reviewed periodically. Effective risk management strategies are dynamic and change over time as new risks arise and others may no longer be relevant.
6. We believe effective risk management strategies need to be transparent, well understood and diverse, to take account of the increased level of risk associated with the specific nature of some activities and the vulnerability of particular groups.

## Risk Management Plan

At Murrumbena Primary School we use the following template to analyse, record, monitor and evaluate risk management strategies. This template demonstrates an example.

Risk Event or Environment	Existing risk management strategies or existing controls	Likelihood	Consequence	Current risk rating	New risk management strategies or treatments	Who is responsible?	Target risk rating
No organisational culture of child safety – lack of leadership, public commitment and frequent messaging	Child safety code of conduct Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety	Possible	Severe	Extreme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategies to embed organisational culture of child safety are reviewed</li> <li>Statement of commitment to child safety is publicly available</li> </ul>	Principal, School Council Chair	Low
Inappropriate behaviour is not reported and addressed	Child safety code of conduct Clear child safety reporting procedures Performance management procedures	Unlikely	Severe	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategies to embed organisational culture of child safety are reviewed</li> <li>Refresher training for staff – see eLearning mandatory reporting module</li> </ul>	Principal, School Council Chair	Low
Unquestioning trust of long term employees and contractors or norms	Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety Clear child safety reporting procedures	Possible	Major	High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refresher training for staff – see eLearning mandatory reporting module</li> </ul>	Principal, School Council Chair	Low
Recruitment of an inappropriate person	WWCC or Victorian Institute of Teaching registration	Unlikely	Major	Medium	Processes updated to require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Criminal history search</li> <li>Pre-employment reference check includes asking about child safety</li> </ul>	Principal, School Council Chair	Low
Engagement with children online	Child safety code of conduct Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety	Possible	Moderate	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Train students and staff to detect inappropriate behaviour</li> <li>Ensure appropriate settings on all student technologies</li> </ul>	Principal, School Council Chair	Low
Unknown people and environments at excursions and camps	Child safety code of conduct Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety Clear child safety reporting procedures	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessment of new or changed environments for child safety risks</li> <li>Ensure Code and strategies apply in all school contexts</li> </ul>	Principal, School Council Chair	Low
Ad-hoc contractors on the premises (eg maintenance)	Child safe environments Information and awareness for visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors Adequate monitoring	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refresher training for frequent contractors</li> </ul>	Principal, School Council Chair	Low

## **Resources and References**

To support the implementation of the Child Safety Risk Assessment and Management Policy (Standard 6), the following resources and references will be utilised.

- [A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST](#)
- Commission for Children and Young People (2015) [A Guide For Creating A Child Safe Organisation, Version 2.0.](#)
- Department of Education and Training (2016) *School Policy Advisory Guide: [Risk Management Policy](#)*, and associated tools:
  - School risk register which can be edited and has automatic tools embedded is available, see: [Risk Management in Schools – Risk Register](#).
  - Subordinate risk registers for specific activities such as overseas travel/excursions or projects, see: [Risk Management in Outdoor Education – Education Outdoor tools](#).
  - Online risk management module: [Risk Management - Online Risk Module](#)
- [Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people](#)
- [Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations](#) - elearning module
- State of Victoria (2010) [Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people](#): A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children’s Services and Victorian Schools.
- Victorian Government, Education & Reform Act 2006, Gazette No. S2, January 2016, [Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, Ministerial Order No. 870](#).
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (2016) [Child Safety Standard 6: Child safety risk management strategies](#)