

Child Safety Standards Table of Contents

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Organisational Structure

Review:

Boolarra Primary School will review the child safe practices across each of the Standards and identify priorities.

Address:

We will address gaps and priorities by developing an Action Plan, including allocating responsibilities to school personnel for completing the actions.

Determine:

We will determine timeframes for meeting gaps identified. This will include allowing time for new policies or procedures to be considered and approved by School Council.

Update:

We will update the school statement of philosophy, mission and vision and revise our Student Wellbeing policy to acknowledge the importance of child safety and protecting children from abuse.

Create:

The principal will fulfil the child safety leader role in the school to promote the Action Plan and review and report on its delivery.

Conduct:

We will provide briefing time at weekly staff meetings to ensure a high degree of awareness of the Standards and school strategies.

Boolarra PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child Safety Policy

Our school embraces the values of Getting Along, Persistence, Organisation, Confidence, Emotional Resilience and being your best. We aim to have students recognise their fullest potential through the acquisition of knowledge, skills and values in an environment where they learn and grow to enjoy a productive, rewarding and fulfilling life. In support of this

***At Boolarra Primary School,
we have a zero tolerance to child abuse.***

Rationale:

All Victorian schools are required to have a child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety that details:

- the principles that will guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe school environment; and
- 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;
- support, encourage and enable school staff, parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters; and
- support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.
- Ensure that child safety is considered in the recruitment, selection and management of staff (includes contractors and volunteers)

Student Safety and Wellbeing will be promoted through:

- A representative of the Network Student Support Services team attending a Student Safety and Wellbeing meeting at the school at least once a term.
- Student Safety and Wellbeing being an agenda item for the weekly staff meeting so concerns are shared and actions to address these are collectively developed and adhered to.
- Each year all students from prep to 6 identify "Trusted Adults" at the school who they feel comfortable talking to. If concerns arise the principal will ensure the trusted adults have time to talk with the children in question.
- Parents and other family members will be actively encouraged to let school personnel know if their children are experiencing any difficulties so support can be provided.
- Preps and other students identified as being in need will be paired up with a supportive "Buddy".
- If possible programs such as "Art Therapy", "Peer Mediation" and "Personal Development" will be provided at the school.
- During staff selection the selection panel will ask questions specifically relating to how the intending employee will ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students in their care.

Ministerial Order No. 870 (available at www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes) states that Child abuse includes –

- Any act committed against a child involving –
 - A sexual offence or
 - An offence under section 49 B (2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming)
- The infliction, on a child, of –
 - Physical violence or
 - Serious emotional or psychological harm
 - Serious neglect of a child.

BOOLARRA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Statement of Commitment

Our School is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

Boolarra Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Our school is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in our school has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Implementation:

In its planning, decision-making and operations our school will

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

BOOLARRA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Rationale:

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.
- Receive respect, kindness and courtesy and to be treated with fairness.
- Have learning continued without disruption in a supportive environment.
- Be valued for their individuality including; race, gender, cultural, physical or intellectual diversity.
- Expect the school rules are fair, consistently implemented and respect the rights of all involved.
- To be safe in every aspect of daily life at school, including Out Of School Hours Programs, camps and excursions.

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

- School staff provide opportunities for all students to learn
- School staff treat their students with courtesy 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 or not

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's child safe policy
- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities.
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability

- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership or child safety officer
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc.) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes¹²
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol to excess³ or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

Implementation:

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.

¹ Footnotes:

² SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/photoandfilm.aspx> . The policy says the school should get consent before taking and publishing photos of a student. This applies every time a photo is taken. The same policy applies for excursions and school activities.

³ SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/alcohol.aspx> . The policy says the school must obtain school council approval before alcohol can be consumed on school grounds or at a school activity. The policy says staff members should not consume alcohol during camps and excursions. It is silent on whether they can consume alcohol at other school events where students are present, this is a matter that the school needs to decide upon – draft text is provided in the guidance fact sheet

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, **whether or not mandated**, need to report to the 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.

If one staff member has a different view from another staff member about making a report and the staff member continues to hold the belief that a child is in need of protection, that person is obliged to make a report.

Please refer to the Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures Policy 2015 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 and Procedures Policy 2015*
- *Student Engagement Policy 2015*
- *Duty of Care Policy 2015*
- Ensure that all staff are up to date with the Department Mandatory Reporting online Professional Development
- Ensure that we follow the staff selection checklist before any staff member is offered employment.
- Provide a safe environment that staff can come and discuss their child safety concerns with the Principal.
- Provide students regularly with exposure to numbers such as Kids Helpline through the mechanism of our Personal Development Program.

References:

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

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 (risk controls).

Explanatory note: 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.

- As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.

- At least annually, the school must ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided 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.

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 (including sexuality);
- resilience; and
- child abuse awareness and prevention.
- The school must promote the child safety standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.

Child Safety Standards
Human Resource Practices: Staff Selection

Rationale:

Strong human resources practices promote child safe school environments and reduce the risk of child abuse. Child Safe Standard 4 requires schools to use policies and procedures for recruitment, supervision, training and managing performance that support a child safe school environment. These must comply with Ministerial Order 870.

Implementation:

Our School will:

- ensure that position descriptions for all new positions advertised from 1 August 2016 include the standard 'Child Safe Environments' clause as provided in the 'Recruitment in Schools' Guide.
- adhere to all DET requirements listed in the table below

Requirement	Departmental action	School action
1. <i>Each job or category of jobs for school staff that involves child connected work must have clear statements regarding the child safety requirements</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 'Recruitment in Schools' Guide has been updated and requires that position descriptions for all new positions advertised from 1 August 2016 include the following standard 'Child safe environments' clause: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that position descriptions for all new positions include the standard 'Child safe environments' clause as provided in the 'Recruitment in Schools' Guide.

Requirement	Departmental action	School action
<p><i>of the role and the expectations of the occupant</i></p>	<p>“Victorian government schools are child safe environments. Our schools actively promote the safety and wellbeing of all students, and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment in accordance with their legal obligations including the Child Safe Standards. The school’s Child Safety Code of Conduct is available on the school’s website.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the near future, position descriptions generated in Recruitment Online (ROL) will be automated to include a standard clause regarding child safety. • The Principal Class Contract of Employment has been updated to include the text italicised in the below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preamble: <p>The aims of the Department include: “ ... the provision of a child safe environment”</p> - Schedule B – Accountabilities of a principal – Student Support: <p>“Pt 2) Plan, implement and monitor arrangements to ensure the care, safety, security and general well-being of all students in attendance at the school including compliance with the Child Safe Standards ”</p> <p>This will apply for future contracts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For existing staff, the school will promote and embed the Child Safety Code of Conduct in accordance with Standard 3. • Note that the Principal Class Contract of Employment has been updated to include reference to the Standards, and all contracts offered on or after 1 August will include the revised wording.
<p>2. <i>All applicants for jobs that involve child connected work for the school must be informed about the school’s child safety practices (including the code of conduct).</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above
<p>3. <i>In accordance with any</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ‘Recruitment in Schools’ Guide has 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principals implement practices

Requirement	Departmental action	School action
<p><i>applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected</i></p> <p>4. <i>The school need not comply with the requirements in step (3) above if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information about a particular individual within the previous 12 months</i></p>	<p>been updated to include that, the Principal, prior to an external applicant person commencing employment, must be satisfied that the person:</p> <p><i>"meets the Child Safe Standards." (insert link to CSS site"</i></p> <p>This can be found here.</p>	<p>to ensure that they are satisfied an external applicant <i>meets the Child Safe Standards</i> prior to the applicant's employment.</p>
<p>5. <i>The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to induction and continuing suitability for child connected work</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advice on alignment of/ changes to Induction will be developed in 2016. • Advice on alignment of/ changes to Performance and Development will be developed in 2016, with changes to be determined for the 2017-18 Performance and Development cycle. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Note that further advice on requirements related to Induction and Performance and Development will be developed in 2016 to ensure schools fully meet this Standard.
<p>6. <i>The school must implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As above. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Councils to oversee and review Standard 4 as part of the school's Action Plan [Standard 1] and School Child Safe Environments policy [Standard 2]

Resources and References :

_Commission for Children and Young People (2015) *A Guide For Creating A Child Safe Organisation*, Version 2.0.

- Department of Education and Training (2016) *Recruitment in Schools*
- Department of Education and Training (2016) *Suitability for Employment*
- 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 4: Staff Selection Checklist*

Responding to and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Rationale:

As professionals who work with children, staff at Boolarra Primary School play a vital role in protecting children from abuse by responding and reporting any incidents, disclosures or suspicions. Staff are often best placed to identify signs and behaviours that may indicate that a child has been subject to abuse, or that a school community member or a school staff member may be a perpetrator of abuse.

Implementation:

- All staff will be reminded of their obligation to report any suspicion of child abuse to a member of the leadership team on a regular basis.
- All staff will be reminded of their obligation to report any suspicion that a school community member or a school staff member may be a perpetrator of abuse to a member of the leadership team on a regular basis.
- All staff will be required to complete Mandatory Reporting training annually using the DET online module
<http://www.elearn.com.au/det/protectingchildren/schools/>
- All staff will be required to complete an incident report in the case of a suspected child abuse incident or a suspicion that a school community member or a school staff member may be a perpetrator of abuse.
- All new staff at Boolarra Primary School will be made aware of their mandatory reporting obligations and Child Safety Standards during their induction at the beginning of the school year (or their contract start date).
- All staff and volunteers (such as volunteer aides, etc.) must have a current police criminal records check and/or a Working With Children Check.

Appendices:

- “Four Critical Actions for School” poster
- Incident Report – Staff

- Incident Report – Leadership
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Induction Handbook

Child Safety Standards Risk Assessment

Rationale:

Victorian Government schools have an important responsibility for keeping children safe. They need to **Assess, identify** and **document** the school's risks in relation to child safety, and plan and document risk management strategies where necessary.

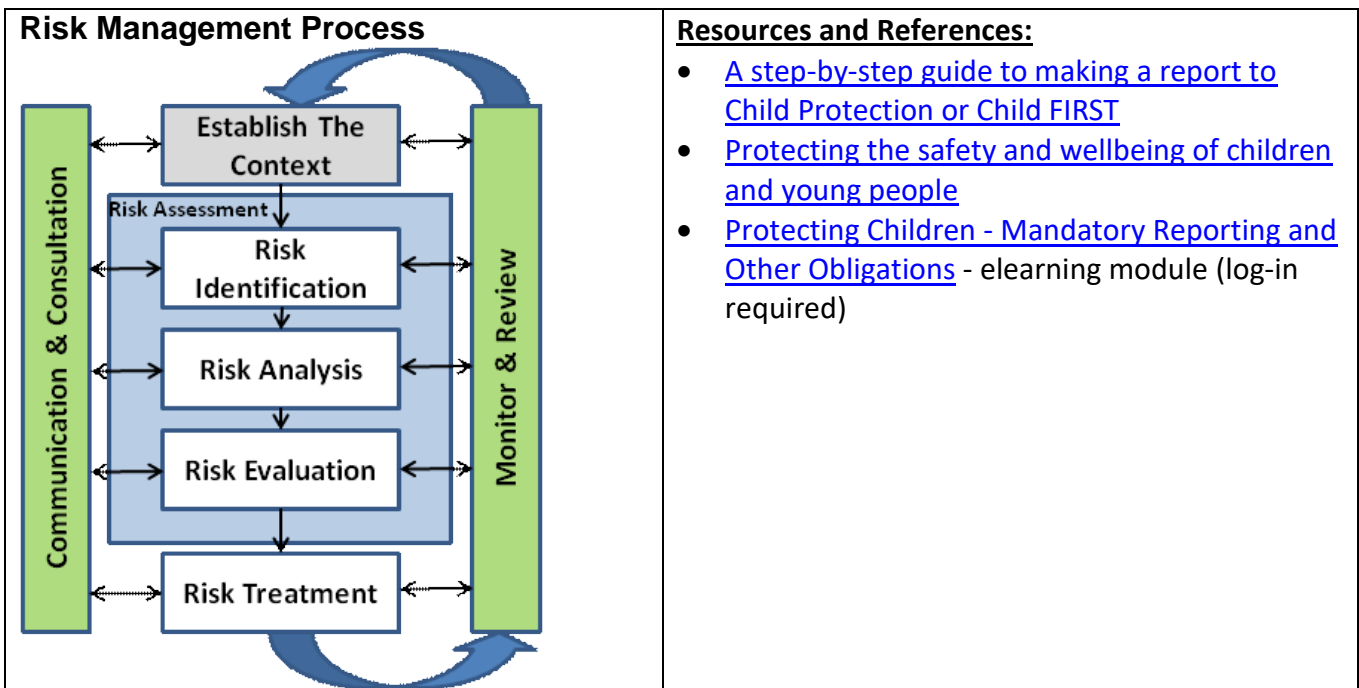
Implementation:

Our School will adopt the following Process for identifying and reducing or removing risks of child abuse;

1. Identify the school's child safety risks across the range of school environments (including excursions, camps, online) using the DET risk assessment template.
2. Identify any existing risk mitigation measures or internal 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 controls or other prevention, detection or mitigation strategies and then re-assess the risk.

The risk management process will be documented, recorded and reviewed periodically as part of weekly Staff Meetings and planning meetings prior to special events and camps. . Effective risk management strategies are dynamic and change over time as new risks arise and others may no longer be relevant.

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.



BOOLARRA PRIMARY SCHOOL

Child Safety Standards Risk Assessment Record Proforma

Risk & Date Identified	Existing strategies /controls	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Assessment	Adjusted Controls	Who is Responsible	Residual Risk

Child Safety Standards

Child Empowerment

Rationale:

Children have the right to give their views and opinions about decisions that affect them and to be listened to. Empowerment is about helping children to have their say. Children are more likely to speak up about their concerns about feeling unsafe, or make a complaint, if they feel their views are valued and welcomed.

Implementation:

Our School will deliver appropriate education about:

- standards of behaviour for students attending the school;
- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality);
- resilience; and
- child abuse awareness and prevention.

Our School will promote the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.

We will deliver appropriate education about **Standards of Behaviour** by

- ensuring clear expectations for appropriate and inappropriate behavior are monitored
- having an up to date Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy
- involving students in decision making through the Junior School Council

We will deliver appropriate education about **Healthy and Respectful Relationships** by

- implementing "Catching on Early" health and sexuality education program for grade 5/6s
- implementing a comprehensive Health and Physical Education program
- promoting mental health and wellbeing through the Personal Development program and Behaviour Management Program.

Our school delivers appropriate education about **Resilience** by

- promoting, modeling, teaching, acknowledging and celebrating resilience through the school-wide focus on desirable attitudes and skills.

We deliver appropriate education about **Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention** by

- relevant information for parents and community published in the school newsletter
- holding parent information sessions on a needs basis when appropriate