

BUNDOORA PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY	CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT	DATE RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL September 2016 and May 2018
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Purpose	<p>The Child Safe Environment Policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sets out the school's approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe; provides the policy framework for the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards
Scope	<p>Who will this policy apply to? All staff, volunteers, contractors and all personnel, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people.</p> <p>When will this policy apply? Across a range of school forums (e.g. camps, online) and outside of school hours. Partner organisations (such as Out Of School Hours Care providers) will be made aware of the policy and the school's underlying philosophy towards the care of children.</p>
Statement of Commitment & Principles	Bundoora Primary School has prepared a Statement of Commitment to Child Safety. This is included in this document.
Policy and procedures	Policies and procedures outlining school's approach to the Child Safe Standards are included in this document. You may wish to discuss these with the Principal, Ms Lee Pollard, the Acting Assistant Principal, Mrs Julie Dunn, the PLT Leaders, or the Primary Wellbeing Officer, Mrs Kate Bonazza.
A child safe culture	The school's culture encourages staff to raise, discuss and scrutinise concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden. The school's plan for creating a child safe culture can be found on the website at www.bundooraps.vic.edu.au .
Personnel understand their roles and responsibilities/ Code of conduct	<p>School leaders and managers will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school's Code of Conduct.</p> <p>The school's Code of Conduct sets out clear awareness of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.</p>
Human resources, practices and training	The school applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. We will ensure that staff induction, education and training programs are

	<p>a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect. All prospective staff and volunteers are required to undergo National Criminal History Records check and maintain a valid Working with Children Check.</p> <p><i>The school's approach to Human Resources practices that ensure child safety can be found within the Child Safe school policy - Child Safe Standard 4.</i></p>
Reporting a child safety concern or complaint	<p>The school has clear expectations for staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. Immediate action should include reporting their concerns to the DHHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency and notifying the Principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The school will take action to respond to a complaint.</p> <p><i>The school's approach to Human Resources practices that ensure accurate and efficient reporting of child safety can be found within the Child Safe school policy – Child Safe Incident Report Form</i></p>
Risk reduction and management	<p>The School believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes. The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures.</p>
Listening to children	<p>The school has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities.</p> <p>When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with, or abuse of, a child the school will listen to the complainant's account of things and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (or their parents/carers) informed about progress.</p>
Confidentiality and Privacy	<p>This school collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the School Privacy Policy.</p>
Policy evaluation and review	<p>To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.</p>
Definitions	<p>Ministerial Order 870 provides definitions, including: Child abuse includes—</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• any act committed against a child involving:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- a sexual offence or- an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming)• the infliction, on a child, of:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- physical violence or- serious emotional or psychological harm- serious neglect of a child. <p>Child-connected work means work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.</p> <p>Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.</p> <p>School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a campus of the school• online school environments (including email and intranet systems)• other locations provided by the school for a child’s use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events). <p>School staff being: an individual working in a school environment who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority;• a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary); or• a minister of religion
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CHILD SAFE STANDARD 2:

Statement of COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Bundoora Primary 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. Bundoora Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse. Bundoora Primary 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 Bundoora Primary 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.

Bundoora Primary School's PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFETY:

In its planning, decision-making and operations Bundoora Primary School will:

- Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
- Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
- Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
- Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
- Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
- Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
- 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;
- Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
- Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
- Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 3:

CODE OF CONDUCT

Bundoora Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of Bundoora Primary School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of Bundoora Primary School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

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 .
- 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.
- 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 purposes.
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

This Code of Conduct was endorsed/approved by the Bundoora Primary School's Council on September 2016. It will be reviewed if legislative or other changes require or no later than December 2018.

August, 2016

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 4:

SCHOOL STAFF SELECTION, SUPERVISION AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR A CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT

BACKGROUND:

On 26 November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015 to introduce seven child safe standards (the Standards) into law. The Standards apply to all organisations involved in child-related work in Victoria.

Ministerial Order No. 870 provides the framework for how schools will be required to comply with the Standards. Overall responsibility for ensuring compliance rests with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA).

The Ministerial Order specifies the following requirements for schools regarding Standard 4:

- 1. Each job or category of jobs for school staff that involves child connected work must have a clear statement that sets out: a) the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety; and b) the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.*
- 2. 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).*
- 3. In accordance with any 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 work: a) Working with Children Check status, or similar check; b) proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications; c) the person's history of work involving children; and d) references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.*
- 4. 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 set out in steps (3)(a) to (3)(d), above about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.*
- 5. The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to: a) the induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child connected work; and b) monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for child connected work.*
- 6. 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.*

Explanatory note: To be 'satisfied', it is not necessary that the school governing authority make each decision about the selection and supervision of school staff engaged in child-connected work. The school governing authority needs to be satisfied about the appropriateness of the school's arrangements that would regulate or guide other people who make such decisions for school's arrangements who make such decisions for or on behalf of the school about child safety matters and child-connected work.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 5:

PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING ALLEGATIONS OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

- BPS has established processes for reporting and acting on disclosures from students about their safety.
- We have a NO Tolerance culture towards Child abuse
- Where possible, we follow the Four Critical Actions, as stated in the Child Safety manual Section 5/Page 21. (summary).
- The Principal follows the steps, as listed, in the Principal's Checklist.
- All staff are aware that the Principal delegates responsibility for reporting child abuse and managing the process, in her absence.
- We understand that our responsibility to the child extends beyond the report to the authorities.
- We have processes in-house to manage any critical situations that may arise, that are needed to protect the child from harm. Whilst we are waiting for attendance or action from the appropriate authority, we keep the child in a safe and supported environment, thereby preventing or limiting the child's exposure to further harm or abuse, until official direction is given that ensures the child's safety.
- We maintain documentation of reports to DHHS and all linked agencies. The Principal frequently reminds staff about the legal requirements of documenting their concerns about the wellbeing of their students. All disclosures by students and all subsequent interactions are documented and stored securely.
- We build caring, supportive relationships with our students, which enables their level of trust in us to be high.
- We have a Primary Wellbeing Officer for 3 days each week. Our staff focus on building supportive and trusting relationships with students. We state often and clearly that students should always come to us with their concerns. The staff maintain a vigilant eye on all students, whether in their care or not, and report their concerns to the Principal/delegate.
- Our staff have participated in professional learning about the different types of abuse, as well as the indicators of adults abusing children.
- We are vigilant in reporting any disclosures about child abuse, whether that disclosure is made directly by the child, or through a third party.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 6:

STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY AND REDUCE OR REMOVE RISKS OF CHILD ABUSE

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children. 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 and online environments. To ensure a child safe environment, we:

- Ensure all staff are trained in Mandatory Reporting.
- Include *Child Safety* on all school agendas.

- Prepare Risk Management plans to protect our children from harm.
- Consider the school's environmental factors, to ensure adequate supervision and safety.
- Ensure line of sight for all children, especially those designated at risk.
- Ensure regular evacuation drills.
- Maintain all aspects of Contractor and Visitor processes.
- Apply the WWCC as a mandated standard for all parent helpers, volunteers and contractors and maintain a data base of all WWCC records.
- Sensitively consider the cultural and learning needs of our CALD, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Liaise closely with all external agencies to provide protective services, as required.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 7:

STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE CHILD EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION

We base all our interactions on respect and kindness. Our school has a calm environment, which is evident in classes, class tasks and playground activities.

- We are registered for the Respectful Relationships program and will include this in our new Strategic Plan.
- We have been a KidsMatter school since 2013 and have set programs and processes in place to identify emotional and mental wellbeing issues and apply appropriate strategies.
- We build resilience in our children, through specific learning sessions and our daily interactions.
- We have mindfulness sessions after lunch each day to assist our students' wellbeing and emotional health.
- We inform our students of their rights to protection within a safe and supportive environment.
- We have opportunities for participation that incorporate planning, preparation, action and feedback across the different areas of the school. Student Voice is a current improvement target, to build students' understanding of their rights and responsibilities in our community and society.
- We encourage student leadership in all areas and implement a very successful *Step up to Leadership* training program.
- We have targeted learning tasks that consider the ability of each student.
- We build relationships with students and their parents/carers to build trust, respect and resilience.
- We maintain information for community information regarding services that support families.
- We employ a Primary Wellbeing Officer to assist our students.
- We have used BounceBack to support resilience, confidence and wellbeing across the school.