



## Child Safe Documents

### Standard One- Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, through effective leadership arrangements.

#### School Philosophy

At Portland Primary School we believe that each child is a unique individual who needs a secure, caring, and stimulating atmosphere in which to grow and mature emotionally, intellectually, physically, and socially. It is our desire as educators to help students reach their fullest potential in these areas by providing an environment that is safe, supports risk-taking, and invites a sharing of ideas. We acknowledge the importance of child safety and protecting children from abuse (Please see Child Safety Policy for definition of abuse).

We believe each and every child has the potential to bring something unique and special to the world. We will help children to develop their potential by believing in them as capable individuals. We will assist children in discovering who they are, so they can express their own opinions and nurture their own ideas. We have a vision of a world where people learn to respect, accept, and embrace the differences between us, as the core of what makes life so fascinating.

Every classroom presents a unique community of learners that varies not only in abilities, but also in learning styles. The role of the school and teachers within the school is to give children the tools with which to cultivate their own knowledge. To accomplish this goal, teachers at PPS will teach to the needs of each child so that all learners can feel capable and successful. Teachers will present curriculum that involves the interests of the children and makes learning relevant to life. Teachers will incorporate themes, integrated units, projects, group work, individual work, and hands-on learning in order to make children active learners.

Finally, we will tie learning into the world community to help children become caring and active members of society.

#### Child Safety Officer/ Leader- Stephanie Carter

#### Key Activities and Roles of the Child Safety Officer/ Leader

A school lead for child safety should have sufficient status and authority, including leadership support and the ability to direct other staff (where appropriate), to undertake the role effectively

Broad areas of the role are to:

##### **PROVIDE AUTHORITATIVE ADVICE**

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.
- Liaise with the principal and school leaders to maintain the visibility of child safety.

- Lead the development of the school's child safety culture, including being a child safety champion and providing coordination in communicating, implementing, monitoring, enhancing and reporting on strategies to embed a culture of child safety.

### **RAISE AWARENESS**

- Ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately.
- Ensure the school's child safety policy is reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Encourage among all staff a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures to protect them.

### **TRAIN**

Being authoritative in providing advice by:

- keeping their skills up to date with appropriate training carried out every two years
- having a working knowledge of how the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Community Service Organisations conduct a child protection case conference to be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child safety policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest DHHS and DET policies and guidance.

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## Standard Two- A Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety



### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

*Portland 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.*

*Portland Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.*

*Portland 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 Portland 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.*

"In its planning, decision-making and operations Portland Primary 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."



## Child Safe Policy

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PRIMARY SCHOOL

## 1. Introduction

At **Portland PS** we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school.

## 2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the strong commitment of **Portland PS** to the care, safety and wellbeing of all students at our school. It provides an outline of the policies, procedures and strategies developed to keep students safe from harm, including all forms of abuse in our school environment, on campus, online and in other locations provided by the school.

This policy takes into account relevant legislative requirements within the state of Victoria, including the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 870.

This policy applies to school staff, including school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy.

## 3. Principles

State schools have a moral and legal responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe.

**The following principles underpin our commitment to child safety at Portland PS:**

- All students deserve, as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- Our school works in partnership with families and the community to ensure that they are engaged in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on child safety and protection.
- All students have the right to a thorough and systematic education in all aspects of personal safety, in partnership with their parents/guardians/caregivers.
  - All adults in our school, including teaching and non-teaching staff, volunteers and contractors as well as the broader school community have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any kind of harm or abuse.
  - The policies, guidelines and codes of conduct for the care, wellbeing and protection of students are based on honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults and children and young people.
  - Policies and practices demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements and cooperation with governments, the police and human services agencies.
  - All persons involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.
  - Staff, volunteers, contractors, parents/guardians and students should feel free to raise concerns about child safety, knowing these will be taken seriously by school leadership.
  - Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally or pastorally.

## 4. Definitions used in this Policy

**Child:** A child or a young person enrolled as a student at the school.

**Child abuse** includes:

- (a) any act committed against a child involving:
- (i) a sexual offence
  - (ii) an offence under section 49B(2) of the **Crimes Act 1958** (grooming)
- (b) the infliction, on a child, of:
- (i) physical violence
  - (ii) serious emotional or psychological harm
- (c) serious neglect of a child. ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#))

**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. ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#))

**Child neglect:** The failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional development and wellbeing. ([Safe Schools Hub](#))

**Child physical abuse:** Generally, child physical abuse refers to the non-accidental use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behaviours include shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning. The fabrication or induction of an illness by a parent or carer (previously known as Munchausen syndrome by proxy) is also considered physically abusive behaviour. ([Safe Schools Hub](#))

**Child protection:** Statutory services designed to protect children who are at risk of serious harm. ([Safe Schools Hub](#))

**Child sexual abuse:** Any sexual activity between a child under the age of consent (16) and an adult or older person (i.e. a person five or more years older than the victim) is child sexual abuse.

Child sexual abuse can also be:

- any sexual behaviour between a child and an adult in a position of power or authority over them (e.g. a teacher); the age of consent laws do not apply in such instances due to the strong imbalance of power that exists between young people and authority figures, as well as the breaching of both personal and public trust that occurs when professional boundaries are violated
- any sexual behaviour between a child and an adult family member, regardless of issues of consent, equality or coercion
- sexual activity between peers that is non-consensual or involves the use of power or coercion
- non-consensual sexual activity between minors (e.g. a 14-year-old and an 11-year-old), or any sexual behaviour between a child and another child or adolescent who, due to their age or stage of development, is in a position of power, trust or responsibility over the victim. Sexual activity between adolescents at a similar developmental level is not considered abuse. ([Safe Schools Hub](#))

**Mandatory Reporting:** The legal requirement to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect is known as mandatory reporting. Mandated persons include teachers, nurses, police, psychologists, psychiatrists and medical practitioners. ([Safe Schools Hub](#))

**Reasonable Belief:** When staff are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, they must assess that concern to determine if a report should be made to the relevant agency. This process of considering all relevant information and observations is known as forming a 'reasonable belief'. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

**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:

- (a) a campus of the school
- (b) 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). (Ministerial Order No. 870)

**School staff** means an individual working in a school environment who is:

- (a) directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
- (b) a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) (Ministerial Order No. 870)

## 5. Policy Commitments

All students enrolled at **Portland PS** have the right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we do not and will not tolerate child abuse. We aim to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where children are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety. There is particular attention paid to the most vulnerable children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

### Our commitment to our students

- (a) We commit to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people enrolled in our school.
- (b) We commit to providing children and young people with positive and nurturing experiences.
- (c) We commit to listening to children and young people and empowering them by taking their views seriously, and addressing any concerns that they raise with us.
- (d) We commit to taking action to ensure that children and young people are protected from abuse or harm.
- (e) We commit to teaching children and young people the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.
- (f) We commit to seeking input and feedback from students regarding the creation of a safe school environment.

### Our commitment to parents and guardians

- (a) We commit to communicating honestly and openly with parents and carers about the wellbeing and safety of their children.
- (b) We commit to engaging with, and listening to, the views of parents and carers about our child-safety practice, policies and procedures.
- (c) We commit to transparency in our decision-making with parents and carers where it will not compromise the safety of children or young people.
- (d) We commit to acknowledging the cultural diversity of students and families, and being sensitive to how this may impact on student safety issues.
- (e) We commit to continuously reviewing and improving our systems to protect children from abuse.

### Our commitment to our school staff (school employees, volunteers and contractors.)

- (a) We commit to providing all **Portland PS** staff with the necessary support to enable them to fulfil their roles. This will include regular and appropriate learning opportunities.
- (b) We commit to providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm policy and procedures in relation to child safety and young people's protection and wellbeing. This will include annual training in the principles and intent of the Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct, and staff responsibilities to report concerns.
- (c) We commit to listening to all concerns voiced by **Portland PS** staff, volunteers, and contractors about keeping children and young people safe from harm.
- (d) We commit to providing opportunities for **Portland PS** school employees, volunteers and contractors to receive formal debriefing and counselling arising from incidents of the abuse of a child or young person.

## 6. Responsibilities and Organisational Arrangements

Everyone employed or volunteering at **Portland PS** 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 students is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

The school has allocated roles and responsibilities for child safety as follows:

### 6.1 Guide to Responsibilities of School Leadership

The principal, the school governing authority and school leaders at **Portland PS** recognise their particular responsibility to ensure the development of preventative and proactive strategies that promote a culture of openness, awareness of and shared responsibility for child safety. Responsibilities include:

- creating an environment for children and young people to be safe and to feel safe
- upholding high principles and standards for all staff, volunteers, and contractors
- promoting models of behaviour between adults and children and young people based on mutual respect and consideration
- ensuring thorough and rigorous practices are applied in the recruitment, screening and ongoing professional learning of staff
- ensuring that school personnel have regular and appropriate learning to develop their knowledge of, openness to and ability to address child safety matters
- providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm legislative obligations, policy and procedures in relation to child and young people's protection and wellbeing
- ensuring the school meets the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in [Ministerial Order No. 870](#).

### 6.2 Guide to Responsibilities of School Staff

Responsibilities of school staff (school employees, volunteers and contractors) include:

- treating children and young people with dignity and respect, acting with propriety, providing a duty of care, and protecting children and young people in their care
- following the legislative and internal school processes in the course of their work, if they form a reasonable belief that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected
- providing a physically and psychologically safe environment where the wellbeing of children and young people is nurtured
- undertaking regular training and education in order to understand their individual responsibilities in relation to child safety and the wellbeing of children and young people
- assisting children and young people to develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from abuse
- following the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct.

## 7. Expectation of our School Staff – Child Safety Code of Conduct

At **Portland PS** community level, we expect school employees, volunteers and contractors to proactively ensure the safety of students at all times and to take appropriate action if there are concerns about the safety of any child at the school. All school staff must remain familiar with the relevant laws, the code of conduct, and policies and procedures in relation to child protection and to comply with all requirements. We have developed a Child Safety Code of Conduct, which recognises the critical role that school staff play in protecting the students in our care and establishes clear expectations of school employees, volunteers and contractors for appropriate behaviour with children in order to safeguard them against abuse and or neglect.



Our Code also protects school staff through clarification of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. (See Standard 3 for Child Safe- Code Of Conduct)

## 8. Student Safety and Participation

At **Portland PS** we actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.

We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe and enable them to understand, identify, discuss and report on child safety. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us.

## 9. Reporting and Responding

Our school records any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and stores the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements. Our school complies with legal obligations that relate to managing the risk of child abuse under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.), the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic.) and the recommendations of the *Betrayal of Trust* report.

Child protection reporting obligations fall under separate pieces of legislation with differing reporting requirements.

Our school's **Mandatory Reporting Policy (Appendix A)** sets out the actions required under the relevant legislation when there is a reasonable belief that a child at our school is in need of protection or a criminal offence has been committed, and provides guidance and procedures on how to make a report.

Our policy assists staff, volunteers and families to:

- identify the indicators of a child or young person who may be in need of protection
- understand how a 'reasonable belief' is formed
- make a report of a child or young person who may be in need of protection
- comply with mandatory reporting obligations under child protection law and their legal obligations relating to criminal child abuse and grooming under criminal law.

Our school has also established internal processes to ensure that appropriate action is taken to respond to concerns about the wellbeing and/or safety of a student.

## 10. Screening and Recruitment of School Staff

**Portland PS** will apply thorough and rigorous screening processes in the recruitment of employees and volunteers involved in child-connected work. Our commitment to child safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements for such employee, contractor and volunteer positions, and all applicants are provided with copies of the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Child Safety Policy.

When recruiting and selecting employees, contractors and volunteers involved in child-connected work, we make all reasonable efforts to:

- confirm the applicant's Working with Children Check and National Police Check status and/or professional registration (as relevant)
- obtain proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications
- verify the applicant's history of work involving children
- obtain references that address the applicant's suitability for the job and working with children.

We have processes for monitoring and assessing the continuing suitability of school staff to work with children, including regular reviews of the status of Working with Children Checks and staff professional registration requirements such as Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration.

## 11. Child Safety – Education and Training for School Staff

**Portland PS** provides employees and volunteers with regular and appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge of, openness to and ability to address child safety matters. This includes induction, ongoing training and professional learning to ensure that everyone understands their professional and legal obligations and responsibilities, and the procedures for reporting suspicion of child abuse and neglect.

All staff at Portland PS will complete the Department of Education and Training Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations as outlined at the following website - <http://www.elearn.com.au/det/protectingchildren/>

## 12. Risk Management

At **Portland PS** we are committed to proactively and systematically identifying and assessing risks to student safety across our whole school environment, and reducing or eliminating (where possible) all potential sources of harm. We document, implement, monitor and periodically review our risk management strategies for child safety and ensure that the strategies change as needed and as new risks arise.

## 13. Relevant Legislation

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.)
- *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic.)
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic.)
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
- *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic.) – Three new criminal offences have been introduced under this Act:
  - a) **Failure to disclose offence:** Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.
  - b) **Failure to protect offence:** The offence will apply where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
  - i) **Grooming offence:** This offence targets predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with a child. Grooming can be conducted in person or online, for example via interaction through social media, web forums and emails.

## 14. Related Policies

### 14.1 Department of Education Policies

- Policy 2.2: Guidelines Relating to the Employment of Staff (currently under review)
- Policy 2.19: Child Protection – Reporting Obligations
- Policy 2.19a: School Guidelines –Police and DHHS Interview Protocols
- Ministerial Order 199
- Mandatory Reporting

### 14.2 School Policies

- Mandatory Reporting Policy (**Appendix A**)
- Student Engagement/ Welfare Policy (**Appendix B**)

- Complaint Policy (**Appendix C**)
- Working With Children Policy (**Appendix D**)
- Duty Of Care Policy (**Appendix E**)
- Bullying and Harassment Policy (**Appendix F**)
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy (**Appendix G**)
- Incident Management Policy (**Appendix H**)
- On Site Supervision of Students Policy (**Appendix I**)

## 15. Breach of Policy

Where an **employee** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this Policy, **Portland PS** may start the process under Complaints, Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance guidelines for managing employment concerns. This may result in disciplinary consequences.

Where the **principal** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this policy, the concerned party is advised to contact the Regional Director. Relevant notification should also be made to the Department of Education and Training.

Where any **other member of the school community** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this policy, the school is to take appropriate action.

## 16. Review of this Child Safety Policy

At **Portland PS** we are committed to continuous improvement of our child safety systems and practices. We intend this policy to be a dynamic document that will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is working in practice and updated to accommodate changes in legislation or circumstance.

We will maintain a history of updates to the policy.

### History of Updates to Policy

Date	Comment (e.g. major review, minor review)

## 17. References

Responding to allegations of student sexual assault

[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/sexualassault.aspx#1](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/sexualassault.aspx#1)

Government Schools Website:

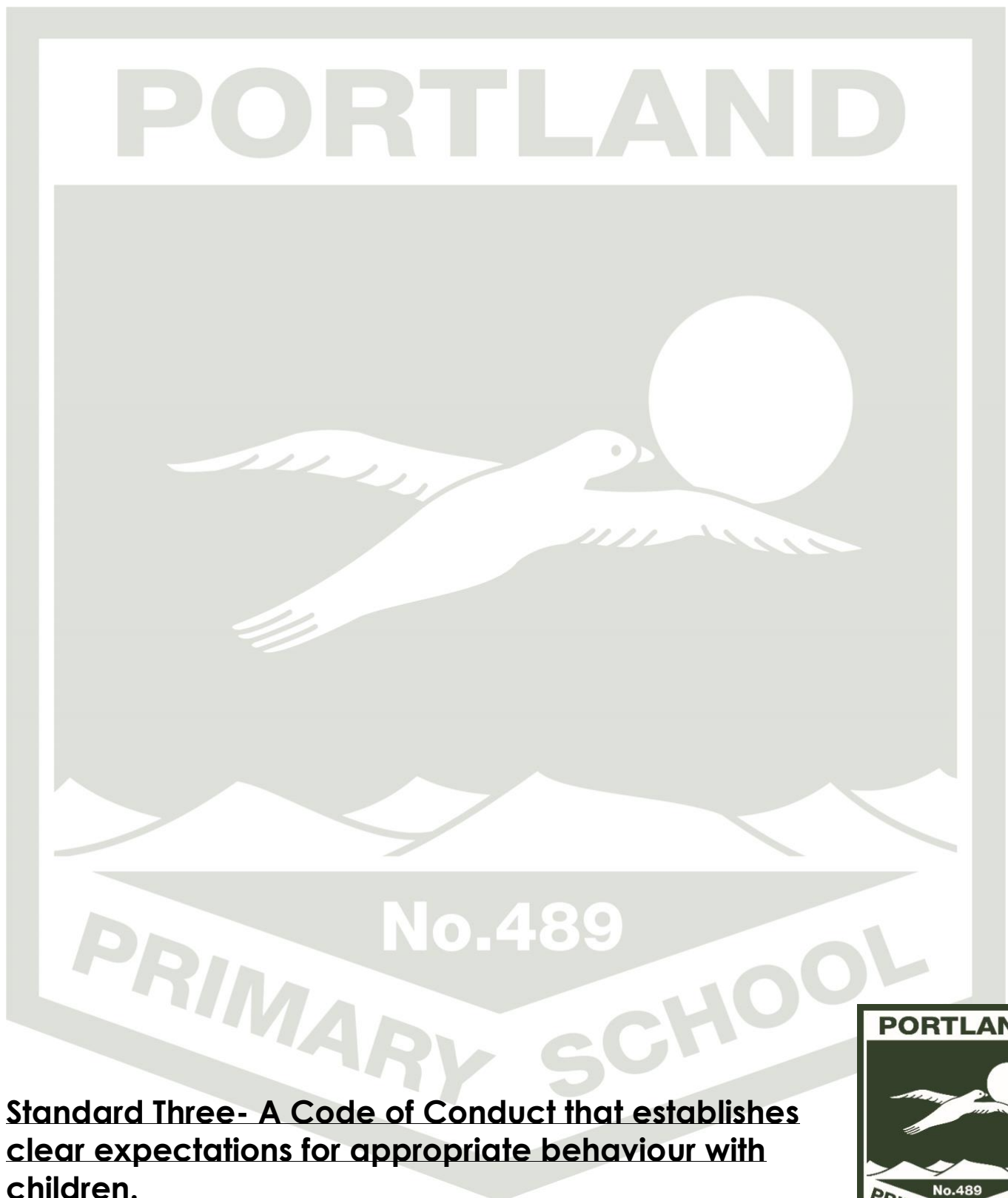
[www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/childsafestandards](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/childsafestandards)

Safe Schools Hub 2014, *National Safe Schools Framework Glossary*, Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

State of Victoria 2016, *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools: Ministerial Order No. 870*, Education & Training Reform Act 2006, Victorian Government Gazette No. S2.

Victorian Government Department of Justice 2016, *Betrayal of Trust Implementation*.

Victorian Institute of Teaching For Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics and information about employee responsibilities to report action against registered teachers in response to allegations and concerns about registered teachers.



**Standard Three- A Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.**



## **Portland Primary School**

# Child Safe - Code of Conduct

Portland 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 Portland 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 Portland 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.

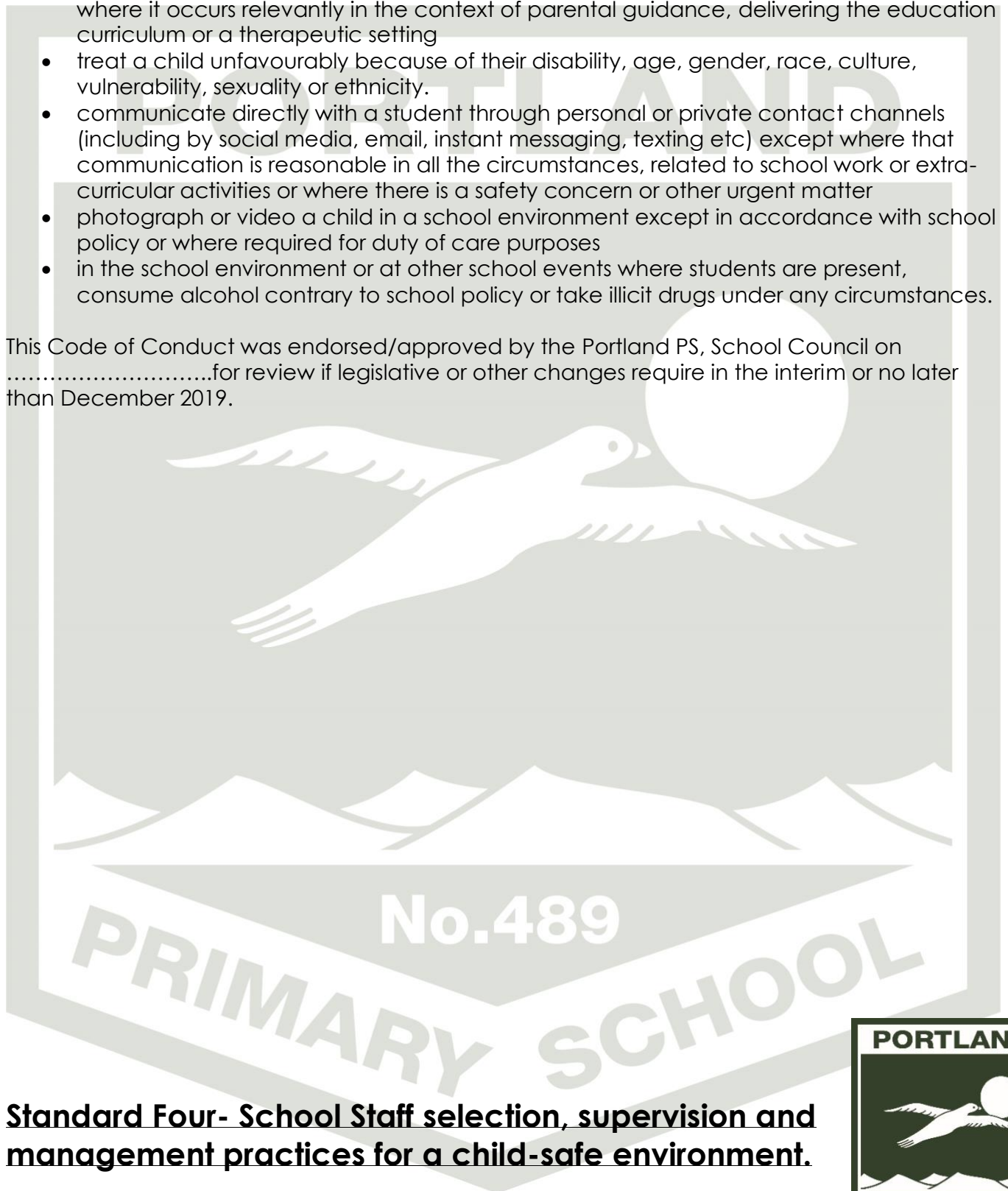
## Unacceptable behaviours

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 Portland PS, School Council on .....for review if legislative or other changes require in the interim or no later than December 2019.



**Standard Four- School Staff selection, supervision and management practices for a child-safe environment.**

**Position descriptions for all new positions advertised from 1<sup>st</sup> August, 2016 to include the standard ‘Child Safe Environments’ clause as provided in the ‘Recruitment in Schools’ Guide. Please see the ‘Background’ information below.**



## 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.

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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 or on behalf of the school about child safety matters and child-connected work.

#### IMPLEMENTING CHILD SAFE STANDARD 4- DEPARTMENTAL AND SCHOOL ACTIONS

The table below outlines the steps to implement the requirements of Standard 4.

Requirement	Departmental Action	School Action
<p>1. Each job or category of jobs for school staff that involves child connected work must have clear statements regarding the child safety requirements of the role and the expectations of the occupant</p>	<p>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:</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> <p>. In the near future, position descriptions generated in Recruitment Online (ROL) will be automated to include a standard clause regarding child safety.</p> <p>. The Principal Class Contract of Employment has been updated to include the text italicised in the below:</p> <p>- Preamble:</p> <p>The aims of the Department include: " ... the provision of a child safe environment"</p> <p>- Schedule B – Accountabilities of a principal – Student Support:</p> <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>	<p>Ensure that position descriptions for all new positions include the standard 'Child safe environments' clause as provided in the 'Recruitment in Schools' Guide.</p> <p>. For existing staff, the school will promote and embed the Child Safety Code of Conduct in accordance with Standard 3.</p> <p>. 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>



<p>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).</p> <p>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</p>	<p><b>As Above</b></p> <p>The 'Recruitment in Schools' Guide has been updated to include that, the Principal, prior to an external applicant person commencing employment, must be satisfied that the person: "meets the Child Safe Standards."</p>	<p><b>As Above</b></p> <p>Principals implement practices to ensure that they are satisfied an external applicant meets the Child Safe Standards prior to the applicant's employment.</p>
<p>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 about a particular individual within the previous 12 months</p>		
<p>5. The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to induction and continuing suitability for child connected work</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Note that further advice on requirements related to Induction and Performance and Development will be developed in 2016 to ensure schools fully</p>
<p>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</p>	<p>No.489</p>	<p>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]</p>

## Standard Five- Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

Through robust discussion at PLC meetings familiarise all staff with 'Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools', booklet.



<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/schoolsguide.aspx>

Provide staff with a copy of the 'Four Critical Actions for Schools- Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse', flowchart. Display chart and/ or make chart available for all staff at the school.

All staff to be made aware of and provided with a link to or copy of the following template to be used for reporting.

Four Critical Actions for Schools- Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse' - (Appendix J)

## RESPONDING TO AN INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

PLEASE NOTE: IF YOU ARE MAKING A REPORT TO DHHS CHILD PROTECTION OR VICTORIA POLICE YOU MUST SEEK ADVICE BEFORE CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS SO AS NOT TO COMPROMISE ANY INVESTIGATION OR PLACE A CHILD AT FURTHER RISK

### STAFF MEMBER LEADING THE RESPONSE

NAME:

OCCUPATION:

LOCATION (SCHOOL ADDRESS):

RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD:

### Critical action 1: Immediate response to an incident

If anyone is in immediate danger school staff should report immediately to Victoria Police on 000.

See action 1 of Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse.

### RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

DID THE CHILD REQUIRE FIRST AID? PROVIDE DETAILS IF 'YES'.

WHO ADMINISTERED THIS? (NAME AND TITLE)

DID THE CHILD REQUIRE FURTHER IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ASSISTANCE?

CURRENT LOCATION AND SAFETY STATUS:  
E.G. ARE ALL IMPACTED STUDENTS SAFE AND NOT IN ANY IMMEDIATE DANGER?  
IF A CHILD IS IN IMMEDIATE DANGER SCHOOL STAFF SHOULD REPORT IMMEDIATELY TO VICTORIA POLICE ON 000

## Child's information

### PERSONAL DETAILS

### FAMILY BACKGROUND

FAMILY COMPOSITION (IF KNOWN):

LIST PARENTING OR CARE ARRANGEMENTS AND SIBLING NAMES AND AGES

DATE OF BIRTH:

RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS:

PARENT/CARER NAME/S:

ANY OTHER PEOPLE LIVING WITH THE CHILD (IF KNOWN):

LANGUAGE(S) SPOKEN BY CHILD:

DISABILITIES, MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUES:

### FAMILY BACKGROUND

DISABILITY, MENTAL OR PHYSICAL HEALTH ISSUES IN FAMILY (IF KNOWN):

### CHILD'S BACKGROUND

CULTURAL STATUS AND RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

IF THE CHILD IS OF ABORIGINAL OR TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER BACKGROUND, GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS MUST CONTACT THEIR KOORIE ENGAGEMENT SUPPORT OFFICER, AND CATHOLIC SCHOOLS MUST CONTACT THE DIOCESAN EDUCATION OFFICE TO ARRANGE CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE SUPPORT. IF THE CHILD IS AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT YOU MUST NOTIFY THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION DIVISION ON (03) 9637 2990

ANY KNOWN PREVIOUS HISTORY OF SUSPECTED ABUSE

(IF THIS IS THE INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION OF INVOLVEMENT WITH AGENCIES),  
LIKELY REACTION TO A REPORT BEING MADE (IF KNOWN):

## Details of the incident, disclosure or suspicion

GROUNDS FOR YOUR BELIEF THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN, OR IS AT RISK OF ABUSE

INDICATORS OR INSTANCES WHICH LED YOU TO BELIEVE THAT A CHILD/CHILDREN ARE SUBJECT TO CHILD ABUSE, OR AT RISK OF ABUSE:

DETAIL ANY DISCLOSURES OR INCIDENTS OR SUSPICIONS (INCLUDING NAMES, TIMES AND DATES DOCUMENTING A CHILD'S EXACT WORDS AS FAR AS POSSIBLE). INCLUDE SPECIFIC DETAIL HERE ON WHAT LED YOU TO FORM A REASONABLE BELIEF THAT A CHILD HAS BEEN, OR IS AT RISK OF BEING ABUSED.

ANY PHYSICAL INDICATORS OF ABUSE:

PORTLAND

ANY BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS OF ABUSE:

ANY PATTERNS OF BEHAVIOUR OR PRIOR CONCERNS LEADING UP TO AN INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION:

**Critical action 2: reporting**

See Action 2 of Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

**DETAILS OF PERSONS ALLEGED TO HAVE COMMITTED THE ABUSE (IF KNOWN)**

NAME:

GENDER

DATE OF BIRTH:

RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD:

NOTHING IF THEY ARE WITHIN THE SCHOOL OR WITHIN THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY (THIS WILL IMPACT ON WHO YOU REPORT TO)

**REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES**

TICK THE AUTHORITIES YOU HAVE REPORTED TO:

- VICTORIA POLICE
- DHHS CHILD PROTECTION
- CHILD FIRST
- DECISION NOT TO REPORT

CONTACT DETAILS:

IF YOU'VE DECIDED NOT TO REPORT, LIST YOUR REASONS HERE. ALSO INCLUDE ANY FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS UNDERTAKEN BY YOU BELOW:

PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS TO EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING:

**GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STAFF** MUST REPORT TO SECURITY SERVICES UNIT AND ALSO TO THE EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH IF THE INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION INVOLVES A STAFF MEMBER, CONTRACTOR OR VOLUNTEER.

**CATHOLIC SCHOOL STAFF** MUST REPORT TO THEIR CATHOLIC DIOCESAN EDUCATION OFFICE

DATE:

TIME:

AUTHORITY:

OUTCOMES FROM THE REPORT:

### REPORTING INTERNALLY

#### PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR DISCUSSION WITH SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

TIME:

DATE:

NAMES:

DISCUSSION OUTCOMES:

PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR INTERNAL DISCUSSIONS TO EITHER OF THE FOLLOWING:

**GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STAFF** MUST REPORT TO SECURITY SERVICES UNIT AND ALSO TO THE EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH IF THE INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION INVOLVES A STAFF MEMBER, CONTRACTOR OR VOLUNTEER

**CATHOLIC SCHOOL STAFF** MUST REPORT TO THEIR CATHOLIC DIOCESAN EDUCATION OFFICE

TIME:

DATE:

NAMES:

DISCUSSION OUTCOMES:

**Critical  
action 3:**

### Contacting parents/carers

See Action 3 of Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

### ACTIONS TAKEN

**PROVIDE DETAILS OF YOUR DISCUSSION WITH PARENTS/CARERS (IF APPROPRIATE):**

SCHOOL STAFF MUST CONSULT WITH VICTORIA POLICE AND/OR DHHS CHILD PROTECTION TO DETERMINE IF IT IS APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT PARENTS, IF IT IS, PARENTS MUST BE CONTACTED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE (PREFERABLY ON THE SAME DAY OF THE INCIDENT, DISCLOSURE OR SUSPICION).

HAVE YOU SOUGHT ADVICE FROM DHHS CHILD PROTECTION OR VICTORIA POLICE?

- NO
- YES

IS IT APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT PARENT/CARER

- NO
- YES

LIST REASONS IF IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE TO CONTACT PARENT/CARER:

IF CONTACTING PARENT/CARER, PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING DETAILS:

NAME OF STAFF MEMBER MAKING THE CALL:

NAME OF PARENT/CARER RECEIVING THE CALL:

DISCUSSION OUTCOMES:

**CRITICAL ACTION 4: PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT**

See Action 4 of Four Critical Actions For Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures

and Suspicions of Child Abuse

**PLANNED ACTIONS**

INCLUDE DETAIL ON WHAT FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS HAVE OCCURRED TO SUPPORT THE STUDENT (FOR EXAMPLE, REFERRAL TO WELLBEING PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER SPECIALISED SERVICES, THE CONVENING OF A STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP AND DEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORT PLANS):

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

SUPPORT:

REFERRALS(S):



# PORTLAND

## PROCESS OF REVIEW

COMPLETE THIS SECTION BETWEEN 4-6 WEEKS AFTER AN INCIDENT, SUSPICION OR DISCLOSURE OF ABUSE IN CONJUNCTION WITH YOUR SCHOOL LEADERSHIP TEAM.  
THIS WILL SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR SCHOOL TO CONTINUE TO PROTECT CHILDREN IN YOUR CARE AND TO REFLECT ON YOUR PROCESSES AND THE NEED FOR ANY FOLLOW-UP ACTION.

### CURRENT SAFETY AND WELLBEING OF THE CHILD

IS THE CHILD SAFE FROM ABUSE AND HARM?

- NO
- YES

*IF NOT CONSIDER THE NEED TO MAKE A FURTHER REPORT*

DOES THE CHILD HAVE ANY WELLBEING ISSUES THAT ARE NOT CURRENTLY BEING ADDRESSED?

- NO
- YES

*IF SO, CONSIDER HOW THESE CAN BE ADDRESSED AND CAPTURED WITHIN A STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN*

### CURRENT WELLBEING OF OTHER CHILDREN WHO MAY BE IMPACTED BY THE ABUSE

ARE THERE ANY OTHER CHILDREN WHO MAY BE IMPACTED BY THE ABUSE?

- NO
- YES

IF SO HAVE THEIR WELLBEING NEEDS BEEN MET

- NO
- YES

*IF SO, CONSIDER HOW THESE CAN BE ADDRESSED AND CAPTURED WITHIN A STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN*

### CURRENT WELLBEING OF IMPACTED STAFF MEMBERS

DOES THE STAFF MEMBER WHO MADE THE REPORT/ WITNESSED THE INCIDENT, FORMED A SUSPICION OR RECEIVED A DISCLOSURE REQUIRE ANY SUPPORT?

- NO
- YES

IF SO HAS THIS BEEN RECEIVED?

- NO
- YES

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PRIMARY SCHOOL

## REVIEW OF ACTIONS TAKEN

### HAVE SCHOOL STAFF FOLLOWED THE FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS: RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS, DISCLOSURES OR SUSPICIONS OF CHILD ABUSE?

WAS AN APPROPRIATE DECISION MADE IN RELATION TO WHEN TO ACT?

- NO
- YES

COULD THE SUSPECTED ABUSE HAVE BEEN DETECTED EARLIER?

- NO
- YES

#### **ACTION 1**

DID THE SCHOOL TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION IN AN EMERGENCY?

- NO
- YES

#### **ACTION 2**

WAS A REPORT MADE TO THE APPROPRIATE AUTHORITIES AND INTERNALLY?

- NO
- YES

WERE SUBSEQUENT REPORTS MADE IF NECESSARY?

- NO
- YES

#### **ACTION 3**

DID THE SCHOOL CONTACT THE PARENTS/CARERS ASAP?

- NO
- YES

HAVE THE PARENTS CONTINUED TO BE ENGAGED IF APPROPRIATE?

- NO
- YES

#### **ACTION 4**

HAS THE SCHOOL PROVIDED ADEQUATE SUPPORT FOR THE STUDENT?

- NO
- YES

HAS A STUDENT SUPPORT PLAN BEEN ESTABLISHED, IMPLEMENTED AND REVIEWED?

- NO
- YES

HAS A STUDENT SUPPORT GROUP BEEN ESTABLISHED?

- NO
- YES

WAS THE STUDENT APPROPRIATELY SUPPORTED IN ANY INTERVIEWS?

- NO
- YES

HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS BEEN RECEIVED?

- NO
- YES

HAVE THE COMPLAINTS BEEN RESOLVED?

- NO
- YES

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PRIMARY SCHOOL



## **Standard Six- Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.**



Provide staff with a copy of the 'Child Safe Standard 6: Risk Assessment Template. (Appendix K)

Display chart and/ or make chart available for all staff at the school.

All staff to be made aware of and provided with a link to or copy of the template to be used for reporting.

### **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 6:

*"(1) The school governing authority must develop and implement risk management strategies regarding child safety in school environments.*

*(2) The school's risk management strategies regarding child safety must identify and mitigate the risk(s) of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of each school environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.*

*(3) If the school governing authority 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.*

*(4) As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school governing authority must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.*

*(5) At least annually, the school governing authority must 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."*

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

While risk management assessments and strategies will vary for each school, managing risk typically involves the following steps and considerations.

1. Identify the school's child safety risks across the range of school environments (including excursions, camps, online).
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 should 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.

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.



# Standard Seven- Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children



## Overview of existing resources available to schools

Child Safe Standard 7 (Standard 7) requires schools to 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.

Ministerial Order 870 also requires schools to promote the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.

Our Student Engagement/ Welfare Policy, which was developed in consultation with the wider community, provides the basis on which we develop and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment.

At Portland Primary School we use the 'Bully Stoppers' whole-school bullying prevention program. The program is aligned with both the Australian curriculum and the National Safe Schools Framework.

In 2017 staff participated in the 'Child-Wise- Personal Safety Program' Professional Development. Following the training, Portland Primary School will utilise this program as a component of the curriculum. We also utilise the DET Respectful Relationships curriculum & associated resources.

The aim of the Personal Safety education program is to teach children and young people how to be more assertive and resilient to risks. It teaches children and young people about their own feelings relating to safety and how to build safety networks. Most importantly it educates children about how to tell someone if anyone is harming them. This educational and empowering program is especially effective when teaching children and young people how to deal with abuse, bullying, and keeping safe.

Topics covered include:

- Child rights.
- 'Safe' and 'unsafe' touch.
- Feelings and early warning signs.
- Secrets vs surprises
- Assertiveness
- Safety networks
- Respectful relationships (secondary students only)

Learning Outcomes include:

- Identify what is right and wrong behaviour, and what to do if they have concerns.
- Respond safely to feelings and people who make them feel uncomfortable.
- Develop good observation and problem solving skills to stay safe.
- Be strong and confident in the knowledge that they have the right to be safe at all times.
- Have the resources and networks to call on if they have concerns or are in danger.