



CHILD SAFE POLICY

Rationale:

On 26 November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015 to introduce child safe standards into law. The standards will commence from 1 January 2016 for most organisations working with children, with the aim of promoting cultural change in the way organisations manage the risk of child abuse and neglect.

The child safe standards aim to drive cultural change in organisations that provide services for children so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in everyday thinking and practice.

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

Every person involved in Karingal 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

Aims:

Karingal Primary School is committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of children involved in its programs.

All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

Everyone working at Karingal Primary School is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse.

Child protection is a shared responsibility between Karingal Primary School, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the Karingal Primary School community.

Karingal Primary School will consider the opinions of children and use their opinions to develop child protection policies.

Karingal Primary School supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers. Karingal Primary School is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

Implementation:

Karingal Primary School will implement the Child Safe Standards to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students at the School and promote an organisational culture that manages the risk of child abuse and neglect.

Our School has developed policies and procedures that aim to keep children safe.

“In its planning, decision-making and operations Karingal 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 and provide opportunities for discussions, forums and relevant surveys.
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.”

The following standards will provide a framework to identify gaps and improve policy and practices around child safety.

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements (See Appendix 1: School Child Safe Definitions)

Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety (See Appendix 2: Statement of Commitment to Child Safety)

Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children (See Appendix 3: Child Safe Code of Conduct)

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel (See Working with Children Check Policy)

Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse (DET Mandatory Reporting policy which can be found at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/childprotection.aspx> and Mandatory Reporting Policy)

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse (See Appendix 4: Child Safety Risk Management Plan)

Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children (See Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy)

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in **July 2016**