



Child Safety Policy

RATIONALE:

In accordance with Ministerial Order no 870, all Victorian schools are required to have a child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety that details:

- a) the principles that will guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe school environment; and
- b) 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.

This policy does not replace any legislative or regulatory obligations or other professional or occupational codes of conduct regulating staff at the school. The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) provides clarity regarding professional behaviour expected of teachers and is a useful guide to appropriate behaviour for all school staff.

AIMS:

- To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within Dandenong Valley SDS and to provide a clear statement to staff/volunteers/contractors forbidding any such abuse.
- To ensure an organisational culture of child safety.
- To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
- To provide guidance to staff/volunteers/contractors as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation.
- To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- We acknowledge the following principles which will guide all adults' behaviour when working with students at DVSDS:

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 continue 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.

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.

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

- provide opportunities for all students to learn
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- treat their students with courtesy and dignity
- work within the limits of their professional expertise
- maintain objectivity in their relationships with students and avoid developing any "special" relationships that could be seen as favouritism.
- maintain a professional relationship with the students in their school whether at school or not and should not initiate or seek contact with students outside school hours.
- avoid unnecessary physical contact with students or perform tasks of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves.
- report any child safety concerns to the school leadership team.

- Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse will be clearly communicated to all staff. At least annually, the school will 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.
- Procedures and policies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse will be developed and maintained. Current guidelines include:

- *Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures Policy 2014*
- *Student Welfare Policy*
- *Student Engagement Policy 2014*
- *Duty of Care Policy 2014*
- *Employment procedure*
- *Manual Handling Policy 2014*
- *On site supervision of students Policy*
- *Visitors Policy*
- As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.
- The school will develop programs to promote child empowerment and participation. Current initiatives include:
 - Personal safety program
 - SWPBS framework
- The school will promote the child safety standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to the school community.

EVALUATION

The program and policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle to ensure that:

- the aims of the policy are appropriate to the needs of the school population
- appropriate and sufficient resources are available
- the policy reflects the School Strategic Plan
- program goals are consistent with policy.

References:

www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafef/Pages/standards.html

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/dutyofcare.aspx

Ratified by School Council: 20/07/16

Last Reviewed: October 2016