



# CHILD SAFETY ACTION PLAN

## 1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety

- Creating an organisational culture that protects children from abuse:

Principal to lead the Child Safety culture.

Appoint a Child Safety Officer (Assistant Principal)

Allocate Child Safety Roles (e.g. Principal and Child Safety Officer to lead responses to allegations/concerns.

Provide induction and training in how to recognise and respond to child abuse including what to do if an allegation is made.

Build responsibility for embedding an organisational culture of safety into performance reviews

Regularly include CHILD SAFETY strategies into staff meetings/team meetings/information sessions/volunteer meetings.

Ensure Child Safety is included in other school documents (e.g. Staff Handbook/Induction documents)

Display Child Safety messages throughout the school.

Display and publish the school's Child Safety expectations in prominent locations.

Provide a physical environment that is inclusive of all children

Consider how best to make sure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children as well as children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have a supported and culturally safe environment at this school.

Consider how best to ensure the safety and participation of children with a disability at this school.

Regularly update the School Council on Child Safety.

Report on Child Safety in the Annual Report.

## 2. A Child Safe Policy

Have the Child Safe Policy ratified by School Council.

Publish the Child Safety Policy (school's website/newsletters/ Annual Reports/recruitment advertisements/welcome packs/pre-school information packs)

Include improvements to child safety policies and procedures as an agenda item at leadership, staff, volunteer meetings and school assemblies.

## 3. A Child Safety Code of Conduct

Ensure the Child Safety Code of Conduct is highlighted as part of the recruitment process

Ensure that all school staff, contractors and volunteers understand the Child Safety Code of Conducts and that they will comply with it.

Establish a procedure for handling any breaches of the code and consequences for people who breach the code. These procedures should include documenting any breaches using:

Child Safety Incident Report and/or DHHS Child Protection/Police/Child First report depending upon the severity of the breach.

#### 4. School staff selection, supervision and management practices for a child-safe environment

Use the Child Safety Staff Selection Checklist to help focus on Child Safety during the recruitment process

Regularly assess organisational child safety training needs (through questionnaires or as part of the regular performance review processes)

Provide ongoing training, support, supervision and performance management for all staff.

Use culturally inclusive recruitment practices.

#### 5. Procedures for responding to and reporting to allegations of suspected child abuse

Provide a supportive environment for children, personnel or families who report allegations of abuse or safety concerns.

Ensure staff, volunteers, families and children know how to report allegations of abuse or child safety concerns and feel safe and comfortable doing so.

Ensure that children are safe and that procedures for responding to alleged abuse are fair and focus on child safety.

Provide support and comfort to a child reporting abuse.

Follow the school's clear procedures for notifying authorities, including the police, of suspected child abuse that comply with all legal requirements:

- (i) Use DHHS Child Protection/Police/Child FIRST Report to report child abuse or other serious concerns
- (ii) Follow the procedures in Child Abuse 4 Critical Actions when responding to allegations of child abuse.
- (iii) Follow suggestions in Child Safety – How to respond to children and parents, - which suggest what to say in situations where allegations of abuse have been made

Make aware Child Safety procedures with staff (similar to other safety drills) to ensure staff clearly understand what they must do.

Review Child Safety responses following any incidents/disclosures

Provide counselling and other resources to support children.

#### 6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Review the school environment ranging from health and safety risks, to child abuse and accidents. Look for “hot spots” in all school environments where children may be at risk because they are not clearly visible.

Ensure there are clear supervision requirements for staff and volunteers who work with children.

Roster staff with appropriate experience and qualifications to manage high risk environments (e.g. camp)

Consider potential risks to Aboriginal children, children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with disabilities are identified, assessed and mitigated.

Develop protocols for meeting with children (for example in offices/individualised music lessons) to minimise risk (e.g. leave doors open /have children nearest the door so that they can leave easily if they feel unsafe /clear windows and doors to enable visibility of occupants)

Review how to monitor visitors including ad-hoc visitors to the school.

Review cyber, on-line, mobile phone, risks to children.

Provide staff and volunteers with training in identifying child abuse risks (e.g. blocked-off/out of sight spaces/opportunities for personal touch such as sports, coaching and personal care).

Include discussion about risks or 'near misses' in team meetings and areas for improvement.

## **7. Strategies to promote child empowerment**

- enabling and promoting the participation of children in the school

Have programs in place to build resilience and healthy and respectful relationships for all.

Encourage child participation across the school.

Continue to build the communication and leadership skills of children.

Inform children of the Child Safe Policy – asking them what makes children at this school feel safe.

They contribute valuable insight and ideas towards the creation of a meaningful child safe organisation - identifying strengths, weaknesses, risks, and dangers in activities that may not be identified by other methods.

Teach children how to raise concerns, make complaints or let someone know if they feel unsafe and who to approach.

Listen to what you are being told by children – acknowledge, value and take seriously the views put forward by children. Ensure adults involved are skilful in facilitating the participation of children.

Ensure there are child friendly processes in place to provide support to any child who may be distressed as a result of their involvement in discussions or disclosure of concerns.

Teach children to be aware of their right to safety and being cared for.

Develop procedures that are easily understood and accessible for all children

Ensure that children feel safe and empowered and that they are taken seriously if they raise concerns.

Promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, children from culturally or linguistically diverse children and the safety of children with a disability.

Oct 20<sup>th</sup> 2016

Review Date: Oct 2018