



## STRATHAIRD PRIMARY SCHOOL Child Safety Policy 2016

### **Guiding Principles:**

Strathaird Primary School is committed to child safety.

While education is our core business, children in our care should feel safe, happy, respected and empowered. We will not tolerate child abuse and any allegations or safety concerns will be treated seriously as is our legal and moral obligation.

We are committed to child safety and minimising risk to students.

Our organisation has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Our organisation respects cultural differences and variations in child rearing practices due to a family's personal, cultural or religious beliefs. However, we recognise that these differences do not reduce a child's right to be safe or our responsibility to protect the child from harm.

### **A Child Safety Code of Conduct :**

To promote child safety in the school environment we acknowledge the following:

#### **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.

**School staff adheres to the following standards about the ways in which school staff are expected to behave with children:**

- School staff provide opportunities for all students to learn
- School staff treat their students with courtesy and dignity
- School staff work within the limits of their professional expertise
- School staff maintain objectivity in their relationships with students
- School staff are always in a professional relationship with the students in their school whether at school or not

**Implementation:**

**Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse**

**Forming a belief on reasonable grounds**

A person may form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection after becoming aware that a child or young person's health, safety or wellbeing is at risk.

**Reporting a belief**

Mandated staff members (*Teachers and Principals*) must make a report to Child Protection as soon as practicable after forming a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection.

Staff members, **whether or not mandated**, need to report to the principal or assistant principal their belief when the belief is formed in the course of undertaking their professional duties. A report must be made as soon as practicable after forming the belief and on each occasion on which they become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.

If one staff member has a different view from another staff member about making a report and the staff member continues to hold the belief that a child is in need of protection, that person is obliged to make a report.

*Please refer to the Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures Policy 2014 for procedures in response to allegations of child abuse.*

**These procedures do not:**

- prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school;
- state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation;
- require staff to make a judgment about the truth of the allegation of child abuse; or
- prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse.
- Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in the procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

**Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse**

- Risk management strategies have been developed within the following school policies:
  - *Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures Policy 2014*

- *Student Engagement Policy 2014*
- *Duty of Care Policy 2014*
- **References:**  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx>

- If the school 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.*

- As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.
- At least annually, the school must 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.

#### **Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation**

- The school authority must 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.
- The school must promote the child safety standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.

**This policy was passed at School Council on: 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2016**