



Child Safe Standards Policy

Background

Huntingdale Primary School as part of the Victorian Government state school system is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, regardless of their age, culture, beliefs, socio-economic circumstances, disability, family living situation, child rearing practices or educational level. There is a culture of 'no tolerance' for child abuse.

Child abuse can be defined as an act by parents or caregivers which endangers a child or young person's physical or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident, but usually takes place over time. In Victoria, under the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 a child or young person is a person under eighteen years of age. Child abuse can occur in the following ways:

- **Physical abuse** occurs when a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from an injury inflicted by a child's parent or caregiver. The injury may be inflicted intentionally or may be the inadvertent consequence of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment of a child. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.
- **Sexual abuse** occurs when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve the child in sexual activity and the child's parent or caregiver has not protected the child. Physical force is sometimes involved. Child sexual abuse involves a wide range of sexual activity. It includes fondling of the child's genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or other object, or exposure of the child to pornography.
- **Emotional Abuse** occurs when a child's parent or caregiver repeatedly rejects the child or uses threats to frighten the child. This may involve name calling, put downs or continual coldness from the parent or caregiver, to the extent that it significantly damages the child's physical, social, intellectual or emotional development.
- **Neglect** is the failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, medical attention or supervision, to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed. (Source: Department of Health and Human Services)

In response to the recommendations in 'Betrayal of Trust' Report, there are new regulations surrounding child safety, which are underpinned by the Child Safe Standards.

Huntingdale Primary School firmly believes that it is everyone's responsibility- School Council, the Principal, staff, parents, volunteers, students, visitors, and service providers to ensure children are safe.

Huntingdale Primary School has created a Child Safety Standards Policy outlining how we will create and maintain a child safe school environment (this includes on school premises, camps, excursions, online and other school events) and are prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect.

Engaging Minds Together



Purpose

To ensure that Huntingdale Primary School:

- Has a Child Safe Standards Policy demonstrating commitment to child safety in the seven standards.
- Are compliant with Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) policies and procedures, the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 and Ministerial Order No. 870.
- Develops the values and principles that will guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe school environment.
- Details the actions it will take to promote child safety.
- Supports, encourages and enables School Council, the Principal, school staff, parents and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters.
- Support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.
- Inform the school community about the Child Safe Standards.

Implementation

- The Principal has the overall responsibility of implementing this policy, but may delegate certain roles to suitably qualified staff.
- The school understands it has a shared responsibility for implementing the Child Safe Standards. Several external services providers engage with the school (e.g. OHSC, Junior Rockers). The school understands that these organisations have their own regulatory body to ensure they meet the Child Safe Standards. The school will ensure that they have suitable qualifications and meet these standards.
- The Child Safe Standards and this policy will be communicated to the school community at least once a year in the following ways:
 - **School Council**- brief/review of Child Safe Standards once a year and review of the policy as per school schedule
 - **Staff**- Briefing at the start of each school year and refresher at a staff meeting mid-year. New staff will have the Child Safe Standards included as part of their induction
 - **Parents**- information will be included in the newsletter at the beginning of the year and reminders throughout the year. All information regarding the Child Safe Standards will be on the school website.
 - **Students**- As part of the Creating Our Learning Community (COLC) unit of work at the beginning of the year, the Assistant Principal will brief students on child safety and complete the 'Helping Hand' activity with the classroom teacher.
- The school will complete the Memorandum of Understanding for the Child Safe Standards, have this approved by School Council and submit it to the VRQA (Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority).
- The school must implement the following minimum child safety standards as per Ministerial Order No. 870 and will do so in the following ways:



Standard 1- Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including thorough effective leadership arrangements

Huntingdale Primary School will:

- Have goals/strategies in its Strategic Plan and Annual Implementation Plan (AIP) related to 'Positive Climate for Learning'.
- Create, maintain and monitor a school action plan related to student wellbeing in the school. This is regularly reviewed as part of Leadership Team and Leadership Forum Meetings.
- Assign the overall Student Wellbeing and Management role to the Assistant Principal.
- Ensure there is provision in the school budgets to fund child safety and student welfare.
- Assign student wellbeing and e-Smart as a core role of staff in the school and this will be reflected in the school role statement document. Student wellbeing and safety may form part of teacher and education support staff PDP's (Performance and Development Plan).
- Have a Student Wellbeing Team that meets at least 3 times per term.
- Have an e-Smart Team that meets at least once a term and a commitment to safe online learning for students.
- Schedule meetings with DET SSSO Staff (Social Worker, Psychologist and Speech Pathologist) at least once a term to discuss student wellbeing, safety and educational needs.
- Have provision for Student Wellbeing support sessions in the school timetable.
- Supporting all students' safety and wellbeing through the PSD (Program for Students with a Disability) and JLA (Japanese Language Assistants) Programs.
- Assign Student Support yard duty time to teachers to monitor the welfare and safety of students.
- Assign meeting dates in the school calendar to allow for professional development related to child safety and staff training (e.g. Mandatory Reporting Training, Play is the Way).
- As part of the induction and mentoring of new staff share and discuss this policy.
- Provision in the school calendar and timetable for COLC (Creating Our Learning Community) and ICU (Intercultural Understandings) which help to promote a culturally sensitive, safe and inclusive environment for children and where children can discuss child safety issues.
- Use of GradeXpert throughout the school to keep a record of student safety issues. Highly confidential issues will be kept in a file in the Principal's Office. Reports from SSSO professionals will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the Assistant Principal's Office.
- Keep a Communications Matrix and Parents as Partners document which is reviewed by the Leadership Team so families can know how they can participate in school activities.
- Provide opportunities for parents to have education of child wellbeing and safety issues e.g. e-Smart, Play is the Way.
- 'Welcome to Country' and 'Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians' at each assembly.
- Endeavour to make partnerships with community organisations related to child safety and student wellbeing.
- Review child safety practices each year.
- Review child safety as part of the annual report as per DET guidelines.

Standard 2- A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

- Huntingdale Primary School has created a Child Safe Policy (this one) which will be approved by School Council and reviewed as part of the three year policy renewal list.
- The following school policies support the Child Safe Standards Policy:
 - Behaviour Management
 - Custody Restrictions
 - Community Involvement
 - Duty of Care



- Equal Opportunity
 - Excursion Policy
 - External Providers
 - Induction & Mentoring Policy
 - In School Visits Policy
 - International Students Program
 - Japan Trip
 - Mandatory Reporting
 - Multicultural Policy
 - Student Engagement
 - Student Support
 - Visitors
- These policies will be available on the school website to view.

Standard 3- A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

- Huntingdale Primary School has devised a Code of Conduct for all community members (See Appendix 1).
- This is reviewed and discussed yearly.
- This will be placed in prominent places throughout the school and on the school website.

Standard 4- Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

At Huntingdale Primary School we:

- Follow recruiting processes outlined by DET which will adhere to the Child Safe Standards.
- During the application process assess the applicant's:
 - Motivation to work with children
 - Relevant and verifiable child-related work experience
 - Understanding of professional boundaries
 - Communication Skills
- Panels should check the following:
 - Two forms of identification e.g. driver's licence, passport etc.
 - Academic transcripts/qualifications
 - Work history and previous employment details are accurate
 - Background searches using Facebook, LinkedIn and Google
 - Gaps in the applicant's employment history and are there valid reasons for this e.g. travel, study, family leave
- In regards to referees panels should check the following:
 - The applicant has provided the most current employer and/or manager
 - There is not a personal relationship between the applicant's supervisor or manager that may affect the objectivity of the reference
 - Has the referee directly supervised the applicant working with children?
 - Would the person employ them again?
 - Has the referee any concerns with the applicant working with children?
 - Did the referee have any concerns about the applicant adhering to the organisations Code of Conduct?
 - Have the referees observed the applicant managing the behaviour of a child and what did they notice?



- That any written referee statements are authentic.
- Check that the applicant has any relevant experience working with children outside employment e.g. volunteering, tutoring or coaching?
- Ensure all teachers have a current VIT (Victorian Institute of Teaching) card. Through the VIT process teachers will undertake a police check (timing deemed by VIT).
- Keep a record of volunteers and have a copy of their Working with Children Check (WWCC).
- Sight WWCC of contractors and other visitors who enter the school.
- Have visitors sign into the school system at the office.
- Ensure all new staff are aware of child safe standards and their obligations for mandatory reporting as part of the induction and mentoring process.
- Provision in the school meeting calendar so that staff can update their Mandatory Reporting Training each year (DET requirement). Provisions will be made in the school calendar of any other professional development sessions we need to undertake related to child safety.
- Include child safety aspects as part of the Parent Induction Program.

Standard 5- Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

- Huntingdale Primary School has a Mandatory Reporting Policy outlining the school's response to suspected child abuse.
- All staff are trained yearly in this area.
- Staff should consult the Step by Step Guide to Making a Report to Child Protection or Child FIRST: http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/Flowchart_Mandatory_Report_ing_Sep_2010.pdf to assist them with making a report.
- As per the school policy :
 - All members of the Teaching Service who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse, must report their concerns to Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection.
 - All other school staff who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection or therapeutic treatment or have significant concerns, are encouraged to report their concerns to DHS Child Protection, Victoria Police or Child FIRST.
 - **All adults** will be required to report to police if they know or reasonably believe that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16. It will be a criminal offence to fail to comply with this obligation.
 - Staff are encouraged to keep their own notes and discuss this with the Principal so they can update their files.

Standard 6- Strategies to identify and reduce or remove the risk of abuse

At Huntingdale Primary School we:

- Monitor sick bay attendances and student absences each month as part of Leadership Team Meetings. Specific incidences, trends and child of concern are discussed and an action plan put in place.
- Have a Duty of Care Policy outlining supervision requirements for students at school activities in and out of the school and online.
- Ask for parent permission to use photographs or video of students for public forums e.g. newspapers, online, newsletters
- Keep photos and videos of students on a secure network.
- Provision for 3 yard duty staff to be rostered on each recess and lunch and a first aid officer in the Health Centre.
- Ensure planned excursions are camps adhere to the Child Safe Standards.
- Keep risk register as part of OHS requirements.



- Include Child Safe Standards in our risk registers for Camps and Excursions.
- Risks are reviewed after any incidences and adjustments made.
- Ensure provisions are made for staff training and professional development around child safety.
- Ensure our school grounds are safe for children. For example, all external doors and most storerooms have locks on the outside but can be opened from the inside so children cannot be trapped, all internal doors do not have locks so children can easily get out

Standard 7- Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

At Huntingdale Primary School we:

- Display the school values- Kindness, Courage, Creativity and Personal Best throughout the school and weave these throughout learning in the school.
- Teach the 'Play is the Way' philosophy throughout the school with reference to the following virtues:
 - It takes great strength to be sensible
 - Be brave- participate to progress
 - Pursue your personal best no matter who you work with
 - Have reasons for the things you say and do
 - Treat others as you would like them to treat you
- Teach a dedicated SWB session each week (as a minimum) based on 'Play is the Way'.
- The Assistant Principal, conjunction with the classroom teachers will teach as part of our 'Creating Our Learning Community' (COLC) the Helping Hand Activity. On each finger students write someone they can talk to if they have a problem or are upset. The thumb is the Principal. Child safety and understanding child abuse will be discussed during this session, appropriate to the year level of the child.
- Teach as part of the curriculum healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality), resilience and child abuse awareness and prevention.
- Run targeted SWB Programs such as 'Revved Up' and 'Empowering Girls' to help empower vulnerable children in our school.
- Have feedback boxes in the classroom where students can privately write concerns that can be followed up by school staff.

Resources

The following resources can be accessed to support this policy:

www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes

www.education.vic.gov.au/protect

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's 3 year cycle or as needed to comply with DET policy changes.

Certification

This policy was endorsed by School Council at the meeting held on July 19, 2016.

Signed.....

Principal

Signed.....

School Council President



Huntingdale Primary School Code of Conduct

Huntingdale Primary School is a part of the Victorian Government state school system. We have a diverse range of children and cultures at the school. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people, regardless of their age, culture, beliefs, socio-economic circumstances, disability, family living situation, child rearing practices or educational level.

We have a zero tolerance approach to child abuse. Child abuse can be physical, emotional, sexual or occur through neglect.

It is the right of all members of the school community to experience a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment- whether on school premises, on camps and excursions, online or at other school events. School Council, the Principal, staff, students, parents/ carers, external provider groups and visitors have a right to be treated with respect, and enjoy an environment that is safe, free from bullying (including cyber bullying), harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation. The school has four core values and we expect all people who enter our school to exhibit these.

Creativity Kindness Courage Personal Best

The following virtues from 'Play is the Way' are the cornerstone of our school norms:

- It takes great strength to be sensible
- Be brave- participate to progress
- Pursue your personal best no matter who you work with
- Have reasons for the things you say and do
- Treat others as you would like them to treat you

Additionally School Council, the Principal, students, staff, parents/carers and visitors have obligations.

School Council and the Principal have the obligation to:

- Provide a safe learning community to all people who enter our school and provide educational services to our children.
- Communicate to the school community about Huntingdale Primary School's zero tolerance of child abuse.
- Create, pass, implement and review policies and procedures that promote the Child Safe Standards.
- Follow DET and VRQA policies in regards to the Child Safe Standards.
- Be role models of child safety in our school
- Ensure the school communicates the Child Safe Standards each year to the school community

Students have the obligation to:

- Contribute positively to their educational experience and participate fully in the educational program.
- Follow teachers' instructions and the school norms.
- Respect the rights and property of themselves, other students, school staff, community members, visitors and the school itself.
- Act in a safe and honest manner.
- Be responsible and report any incidences of unsafe behaviour to others or themselves to school staff.
- Understand that there will be consequences for their actions- either positive or negative.
- Understand that in conflict situations they will be given time to reflect on their behaviour, given time/strategies to repair relationships and implement acts of restitution to the other party involved.



Parents/carers have an obligation to:

- Take an active interest in their child's education.
- Encourage their child to contribute positively to their educational experience and participate fully in the educational program at Huntingdale.
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment.
- Support the school values and norms.
- Assist children in developing an understanding of safety and respect.
- Model and reinforce positive behaviours
- Ensure their child regularly attends school
- Engage with the school to encourage the partnership between home and school in the education and safety of children.
- Inform the school of any medical, social/emotional, educational or family situations that may impact their child at school.

Staff have the obligation to:

- Meet the standards of the Victorian Institute of Teaching and adhere to the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct and Ethics
- Teach students an engaging educational program, targeted to their needs and set appropriate and achievable goals.
- Be informed, within privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that may impact on the teaching and learning for that student.
- Teach a strong Student Wellbeing Program including 'Play is the Way', our school values and understanding safe/unsafe situations.
- Role model positive and appropriate behaviours.
- Encourage the partnership between home and school in the education and safety of children.
- Provide adequate supervision in the school grounds.
- Report instances of unsafe situations/behaviours including child abuse as per DET policies.
- Record and communicate serious and continuous breaches of school rules.
- Fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the school norms and behaviour management policy.
- Engage with students in appropriate online forums e.g. School Network, Edmodo and not engage with students in inappropriate forums such as Facebook.

Visitors and volunteers have an obligation to:

- Sign in and out of the school each time they visit.
- Act in a safe, respectful and appropriate manner in the school.
- Report any unsafe situations and behaviours to school staff.
- Ensure all of their documentation (e.g. Working With Children Check, Insurance) is up to date and a copy given to the school.

Service providers have the obligation to:

- Sign in and out of the school each time they visit
- Act in a safe, respectful and appropriate manner in the school
- Report any unsafe situations and behaviours to school staff.
- Ensure that they comply with the Child Safe Standards through their regulatory body and show evidence of this to the school.

All people in our school community must ensure that they behave in a professional way with children whether they are in school or not.



Acceptable & Unacceptable Behaviours

Acceptable Behaviours

- Adhering to the school's Child Safe Policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- Treating everyone in the school community with respect
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, 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 children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership (or child safety officer if the school has appointed someone to this role)
- Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*
- Reporting any child safety concerns to the school's leadership (or child safety officer if the school has appointed someone to this role)
- If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- Reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.



Unacceptable Behaviours

- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- Develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- Exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- Put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- Discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- Have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school's leadership or child safety officer's (if the school has appointed someone to this role) knowledge and/or consent or the school governing authority's approval (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate
- Have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary eg by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work)
- Use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- Work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.



