

Child Safe Standards:

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, organisations must have:

- **Standard 1** - strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
- **Standard 2** - a child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
- **Standard 3** - a Child Safe Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- **Standard 4** - screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- **Standard 5** - processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- **Standard 6** - strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- **Standard 7** - strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

Child Safe Principles:

In complying with the child safe standards organisations must include the following principles as part of each standard:

- promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety of children with a disability.

Introduction

- This policy is underlying the broad Lara Lake School Vision and Values Statement which is the cornerstone of all of our work at the school.
- The protection of children and young persons is the responsibility of everyone who works at Lara Lake Primary School, including its staff, contractors, parents, volunteers and work experience students. We all share responsibility for promoting the wellbeing and safety of children.
- Lara Lake Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to acting in the best interests of children and to keeping them safe at all times.

Commitment to Child Safety (Standard 2)

Lara Lake Primary School and its School Council are committed to:

- our children being safe, happy and empowered
- supporting and respecting all children, as well as our staff and volunteers
- a zero tolerance to child abuse
- our legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously
- the safety, participation and empowerment of all children
- preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks
- promoting and empowering child safety in its school environment via the established school-wide prosocial program which is actively taught to all students and teachers as professional development
- ensuring the safety and best interests of the children in its care, taking into account children of cultural and linguistic diversity and those with disabilities
- implementing and continuously improving procedures and systems that promote and influence an organisational culture of child safety and that provides a safe environment for our students
- ensuring child safety is about balancing expectations and complying with legal obligations. It is not about creating an atmosphere of suspicion.
- robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers
- regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks
- cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability

- specific policies, procedures and training that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments
- If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000

Roles and Responsibilities (Standard 1)

- The Principal, Assistant Principals and the School Council are responsible for developing strategies that embed an organisational culture of child safety at Lara Lake Primary School. These strategies will give the highest priority to the promotion and protection of a child's safety, health, development, education and wellbeing.
- Everyone involved in Lara Lake Primary School has a role to play and is responsible for protecting children and upholding the duty of care that Lara Lake Primary School owes to all of its students.
- The school leadership structure embodies the Child Safety Team and includes the key role of a School Welfare Officer whose work is overseen by the Assistant Principal. In this role, the Principal and Assistant Principal are responsible for the coordination of Child Safe Standards.

Values and Principles

The following values and principles will guide Lara Lake Primary School in implementing consistent policies and influence an organisational culture of child safety:

- Child safety policies and procedures will support ongoing assessment and identification and minimisation of the risk of child abuse in the School environment.
- Our culture will foster openness so that all persons, and particularly children, may feel safe to disclose concerns or risks of harm to children.
- Appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children will be expected at all times as set out in this organisation's Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Policies will support the processes that assist the School to engage the most appropriate personnel to work with children.
- Regular staff training will occur to ensure there is a full awareness and understanding of policies and processes.
- Suspected or actual abuse of children will be reported promptly to the appropriate authorities.
- Support and assistance will be provided to children who have suffered abuse and to their families.

Recruitment (Standard 4)

Lara Lake Primary School will implement recruitment processes that will assist in the effective selection of suitable personnel, including staff, volunteers and contractors.

These processes will ensure:

- Lara Lake's School Vision and Values Statement is presented to all new staff upon commencement of employment and potential staff via the recruitment process
- new and existing staff, volunteers and contractors understand the importance of child safety and are aware of Lara Lake Primary School's policies and procedures through an Induction process
- each job or category of job for School staff that involves child-connected work has a role and responsibility statement
- the school complies with DET recruitment and selection policy and procedures
- All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check.

Training and supervision (Standard 4)

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

- Our organisational culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

- We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.
- New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand Lara Lake Primary School's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to this organisation's Child Safe Code of Conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety.

Lara Lake Primary School collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the School Privacy Policy.

Legislative responsibilities

Lara Lake Primary School's Child Safety Standards policy and practices are developed to reflect legislative requirements.

Allegations, concerns and complaints (Standard 5)

Lara Lake Primary School takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations through DET mandatory online training modules.

Procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse (Standard 5)

Lara Lake Primary School will implement and continually improve its procedures for responding to and reporting suspected abuse of a child currently in its care or that occurred years before. Lara Lake Primary School will also implement practices and prosocial programmes, such as 'Play is the Way', that will support, encourage and enable School staff, parents and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters.

Our procedures will be based on the following:

- compliance with mandatory reporting laws and obligations imposed by the criminal law to report a belief that child abuse may have occurred
- ensuring any situation is handled appropriately
- concerns of child abuse are reported to the relevant authorities
- Lara Lake Primary School provides support to the person/s making allegations of child abuse
- all parties involved in an allegation of child abuse are treated fairly and consistently
- ensuring that reviewing and improving our processes is continuous
- they will be easily accessible for all persons within Lara Lake Primary School and they will be simple and easy to understand for children.

Lara Lake Primary School will support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse, by:

- ensuring they have access to School support personnel, such as counsellors and Network psychologists
- ensuring their situation is treated confidentially and with sensitivity
- ensuring they have all the necessary staff support around them and are given due consideration for and necessary adjustments in the curriculum and co-curriculum programmes
- providing such other support or assistance as may be reasonable.

Reducing or removing risks of child abuse (Standard 6)

Lara Lake Primary School will implement appropriate policies and practices for the early identification and response to risks of abuse in its physical and online environment. Such policies and practices will:

- promote understanding by all Lara Lake Primary School personnel of its expectations in relation to behaviour and conduct when interacting with children and the consequences of failing to abide by those expectations
- seek to achieve ongoing risk assessment to identify and mitigate risk in the School's physical and online environment, taking into account the age and needs of the students, the nature of the activities undertaken at Lara Lake Primary School and the particular risks they might present
- provide for ongoing training, education and support for all Lara Lake Primary School staff in relation to understanding child abuse, identifying risks and areas for improvement, the School's policies and practices for reporting concerns of child abuse and how to respond

Promoting child empowerment and participation (Standard 7)

The Principal and the School Council are responsible for developing strategies to deliver appropriate education about:

- standards of behaviour for students attending Lara Lake Primary School
- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality)
- resilience
- child abuse awareness and prevention.

Lara Lake Primary School will ensure that the prevention approaches it adopts for its students will be focused on initiatives that build their awareness and encourage them to disclose behaviour that makes them feel unsafe.

Communication and Recurring Actions

The School community will be informed about this policy. It will be publicly available. It will be available on the School's website and communicated in the School's newsletters, staff induction programmes and during recruitment and enrolment processes for staff, contractors, parents, volunteers and work placement students.

All School Council members, staff, volunteers and contractors of Lara Lake Primary School will be made aware of this policy and Lara Lake Primary School's commitment to child safety.

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the School Council Management Sub-Committee as part of its regular policy review cycle.

Review Date:

This policy has a two year life and will be reviewed in 2021

Related Documents

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|--|--|
| Vision and Values Statement | Website |
| Students Engagement and Wellbeing Policy | All staff access and PD, User Drive |
| Code of Conduct | All staff access and PD, Attached to this document. Accessible to Contractors, Volunteers (including parents), and Visitors in print, and electronic/email from relevant school OHS Handbooks. |
| Mandatory Reporting | All staff complete mandatory DET online module |
| Lara Lake Primary School Ipad Program | Distributed to parents |
| Responsible Use of Technology Policy | LLPS Operations Manual |
| Staff Handbook | |

[Copy of Child Safe Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers.](#)

Rationale

The Child Safe Standards require organisations that provide services for children to have a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behavior with children. A code of conduct can help you enforce appropriate behavior with children in your organization to help protect children from abuse.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct is to be adhered to in conjunction with:

- the Victorian Institute of Teaching Professional Code of Conduct
- relevant Ministerial Orders under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006

Aim

This code of conduct outlines expected standards for appropriate behavior by Lara Lake PS staff members, community members including volunteers, with and in the company of children, including online communication and conduct.

Implementation

All staff, volunteers and school council members of Lara Lake PS are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behavior towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of Lara Lake PS are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- Adhering to the Lara Lake PS Child Safe Standard Policy at all times and upholding the School statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- Treating everyone 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 and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of all children in our school and be supportive of children from diverse backgrounds including Aboriginal children, students with disabilities and different cultural backgrounds
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the School's Principal Class and/or Student Welfare Officer.
- Reporting any child safety concerns of child abuse to the School's Principal Class and/or Student Welfare Officer.
- If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child/ren are safe
- Engaging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them
- Access to School Nurse or Doctor

All personnel of Lara Lake PS must not:

- 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 constructed as unnecessary physical interaction



- Put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors or blocking doorways or failing to report allegations of abuse)
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do independently, 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 culture, race ethnicity or disability
- Have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our child safety team's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.
- Have any online contact with a child or their family including social media unless necessary for example providing families with e-newsletters, school Facebook pages, learning progress or access to the curriculum
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse

Further to the above expectations, all teaching staff must also abide by the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct including Principle 1.5: *Teachers are always on a professional relationship with student in their school, whether at school or not.* Teachers hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students. Examples of a professional relationship being violated would include a teacher:

- Having a sexual relationship with a student
- Using sexual innuendo or inappropriate language and/or material with students
- Touches a student without a valid reason
- Holds conversations of a personal nature or has contact with a student via written or electronic means including email, letters, telephone, text message or chat lines, without valid context
- Accepts gifts, which could be reasonably perceived as being used to influence them, from students or their parents

A professional relationship may be compromised if a teacher:

- Attends parties or socialises with students
- Invites a student or students back to their home, particularly if no-one else is present

By observing these standards and expectations you acknowledge your responsibility to abide by this Code of Conduct and immediately report any breach of this Code of Conduct to a representative of the Lara Lake PS Child Safety Team.

If you believe a child to be in immediate risk of abuse phone '000'



Risk Management Matrix

| Risk Event or Environment | Existing Management strategies or internal controls | Likelihood | Consequence | Current risk assessment | New risk management controls or internal controls | Who is responsible? | Residual risk |
|---|--|------------|-------------|-------------------------|--|---------------------------|---------------|
| Inappropriate behaviour is not reported and addressed | Child Safe Code of Conduct Clear child safety reporting procedures Performance management procedures | Unlikely | Severe | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to embed organisational culture of child safety are reviewed Refresher training for staff – see eLearning mandatory reporting module | Principal, School Council | Low |
| Unquestioning trust of long term employees and contractors or norms | Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety Clear child safety reporting procedures Child Safe Code of Conduct | Possible | Major | High | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresher training for staff – see eLearning mandatory reporting module | Principal, School Council | Low |
| Recruitment of an inappropriate person | Working with Children Check (WWCC) or Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration | Unlikely | Major | Medium | Processes updated to require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Criminal history search Pre-employment reference check includes asking about child safety | Principal, School Council | Low |
| Engagement with children online | Child Safe Code of Conduct Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety | Possible | Moderate | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train students and staff to detect inappropriate behaviour Ensure appropriate settings on all student technologies | Principal, School Council | Low |
| Unknown people and environments at excursions and camps | Child Safe Code of Conduct Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety Clear child safety reporting procedures | Unlikely | Moderate | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment of new or changed environments for child safety risks Ensure Code and strategies apply | Principal, School Council | Low |



| Risk Event or Environment | Existing Management strategies or internal controls | Likelihood | Consequence | Current risk assessment | New risk management controls or internal controls | Who is responsible? | Residual risk |
|---|--|------------|-------------|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|---------------|
| | | | | | in all school contexts | | |
| Ad-hoc contractors on the premises (eg maintenance) | Child safe environments Information and awareness for visitors, work experience students, staff, volunteers and contractors Adequate monitoring Working with Children Check (WWCC) registration | Unlikely | Moderate | Medium | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refresher training for frequent contractors | Principal, School Council | Low |



Child Safe Standards Incident Report

All incident reports must be stored securely.

Incident details

| | |
|---|--|
| Date of incident: | |
| Time of incident: | |
| Location of incident: | |
| Name(s) of child/children involved: | |
| Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved: | |

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000

Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

No

Yes, Aboriginal

Yes, Torres Strait Islander

Please categorise the incident

| Issue | ✓ or X | Issue | ✓ or X |
|--|--------|-----------------|--------|
| Physical violence | | Sexual offence | |
| Serious emotional or psychological abuse | | Serious neglect | |
| Other – Please describe | | | |

Please describe the incident

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| When did it take place? | |
| Who was involved? | |
| What did you see? | |
| Other information | |



Child Safe Standards Incident Report

Parent/Carer/Child use

| | |
|---|--|
| Date of incident: | |
| Time of incident: | |
| Location of incident: | |
| Name(s) of child/children involved: | |
| Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved: | |

Office use:

| | |
|---|--|
| Name of person completing this form: | |
| Date incident report received: | |
| Staff member managing incident: | |
| Follow-up date: | |

Has the incident been reported?

| | |
|--|--|
| Child protection | |
| Police | |
| Another third party (please specify): | |

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Yes No

If no:

| | |
|---|--|
| Name of Incident reporter: | |
| May wish to provide contact details: | |

Appendix: What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made

If a child discloses an incident of abuse to you:

- If you believe a child is at **immediate** risk of abuse, phone 000.
- Try and separate them from the other children discreetly and listen to them carefully
- Let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred
- Reassure the child that you take what they are saying seriously, and it is not their fault and that they are doing the right thing
- Explain to them that this information may need to be shared others, such as with their parent/carer, specific people in your organisation, or the police
- Do not make promises to the child such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe
- Do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them
- Provide them with an incident form to complete, or complete it together, if you think the child is able to do this
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, record the information using the child's words and report the disclosure to the Principal or a member of the leadership team, police or child protection
- Ensure the disclosure is recorded accurately and that the record is stored securely.

If a parent/carer says their child has been abused in your organization, or raises a concern:

- Explain that your organisation has processes to ensure all abuse allegations are taken very seriously
- Ask about the wellbeing of the child
- Allow the parent/carer to talk through the incident in their own words
- Advise the parent/carer that you will take notes during the discussion to capture all details
- Explain to them the information may need to be repeated to authorities or others, such as the organisation's management or Child Safety Officer, the police or child protection
- Do not make promises at this early stage, except that you will do your best to keep the child safe
- Provide them with an incident report form to complete, or complete it together
- Ask them what action they would like to take and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be
- Ensure the report is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely.

Other Considerations

- You need to be aware that some people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers in reporting allegations of abuse. For example, people from some cultures may experience anxiety when talking with police, and communicating in English may be a barrier for some. You need to be sensitive to these issues and meet people's needs where possible, such as having an interpreter present (who could be a friend or family member).
- If an allegation of abuse involves an Aboriginal child, you will need to ensure a culturally appropriate response. A way to help ensure this could include engaging with parents of Aboriginal children, local Aboriginal communities or an Aboriginal community controlled organisations to review policies and procedures.