

Rowellyn Park Primary School

Our Commitment to Child Safety



Rowellyn Park Primary is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Rowellyn Park Primary has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Rowellyn Park Primary is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in Rowellyn Park Primary has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision-making and operations Rowellyn Park Primary will

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

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

The Child Safe standards require schools to have strategies to embed a school culture of child safety, through effective leadership arrangements. Protecting children from abuse is everybody's business, and a school's leadership is essential to instilling a child safety culture.

Leadership in a child safe environment

Working with children can be very rewarding, and it brings additional responsibilities.

We must act to protect children from abuse and build an environment where children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. This requires a culture of child safety to be embedded throughout Rowellyn Park Primary School so that child safety is part of everyone's everyday thinking and practice. Such a culture is achieved through proactive leadership in demonstrating the appropriate values, attitudes and behaviours of an organisation.

A child safe environment is the product of a range of strategies and initiatives. Rowellyn Park Primary School fosters a culture of openness, inclusiveness and awareness. Children and adults know what to do if they observe or are subject to abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

All staff and volunteers consider the safety of all children, and recognise the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.¹

Governance in a child safe environment – School Council

Leadership takes preventative, proactive and participatory approaches to child safety issues. The safety and wellbeing of children at Rowellyn Park Primary School is paramount and given consideration when developing activities, policies and management practices.

The school has a zero tolerance of child abuse as seen in Student Engagement & Inclusion Policy

1. Child Safety is a standing item at School Council Meetings. The School Council President reports with communications after each School Council meeting via the school newsletter. The Annual Report also reports on Child Safety every year from 2017.
2. Environment – the school has Child Safety strategies in place for the physical school environment through :
 - Regular review to identify and reduce risks
 - Assessing new or changed environments for risks
 - Ensuring adequate staffing for yard duty supervision

3. Online environments where strategies are monitored so that :
 - There are clear boundaries between staff and children
 - Proactive strategies detect inappropriate behaviour
4. Visitors are screened and supervised through :
 - Signing in and out at the Office Kiosk
 - Supervision by a staff member (P / AP, Teacher, Es Staff member)

Leadership responsibilities

Leadership is responsible for embedding a culture of child safety at Rowellyn Park Primary School. Leadership takes the lead in protecting children from abuse, and is made aware of child abuse allegations and risks and takes responsibility for ensuring an appropriate response.

Rowellyn Park Primary School ensures that all allegations of child abuse and child safety concerns are treated very seriously. This includes complying with all legal requirements, including reporting suspicions of child abuse to police and/or child protection.

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

Identify and analyse risk of abuse

Rowellyn Park Primary School adopts an approach to prevent, detect and respond to child abuse risks. This includes a risk management strategy and policy that sets out how we identify, assess, and the steps taken to reduce or remove child abuse risks.

Develop a child safe policy

Rowellyn Park Primary School has developed a child safe policy which outlines our commitment to promoting children's wellbeing and protecting children from abuse – approved by School Council

Develop codes of conduct

Rowellyn Park Primary School has a code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct and care required when working and interacting with children.

We also refer to professional codes of conduct where appropriate ie. DET and VIT documents.

Choose suitable employees and volunteers

Rowellyn Park Primary School takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. This includes police record and identity checks, Working with Children Checks where required, face-to-face interviews and detailed reference checks from previous employers.

Support, train, supervise and enhance performance

Rowellyn Park Primary School ensures that volunteers and employees who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to help protect children from abuse. The Principal and Assistant Principal are persons in our school who have knowledge of child safety issues, and could be a point of contact for others who have questions or concerns or want to report an allegation of abuse.

With regard to school staff (including contractors and volunteers) we :

- a. ensure awareness of strategies and allocated roles and responsibilities
- b. pay due diligence to Reference checks, Working with Children checks and VIT registrations.
- c. Ensure staff are trained to detect and monitor inappropriate behaviour
- d. Appraise staff through PDP's
- e. Foster a culture of openness with approachable and supportive managers.

With regard to children we:

- a. make aware and encourage staff to report inappropriate behaviours (yard duty staff, class teachers, P / AP, Education Support staff, peer mentors, parents / carers.)
- b. provide support and access to staff (school leaders, teachers, welfare counsellor, DET staff, Guidance Officer) for Child Safety reporting.

Promote inclusion

Rowellyn Park Primary School is inclusive to all children and families. We have a culture that supports:

- cultural safety for indigenous children, for example by working in partnership with indigenous peoples and indigenous community controlled organisations
- cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, for example by using inclusive language and images in policy documents, and communications such as the website and newsletters
- the safety of children with a disability, for example by ensuring your organisation is accessible to everyone and ensuring appropriate training and supervision of staff and volunteers working with children with a disability.

Empower and promote the participation of children in decision-making

Rowellyn Park Primary School promotes the involvement and participation of children in developing and maintaining child safe environments. For example, we provide opportunities for children to express their views on our child safe policy and code of conduct, and then incorporate this feedback to improve our policies and practices. Ideas from children are sought through suggestion boxes, emails or feedback sessions.

We listen to children and take them seriously, particularly if they are disclosing abuse or concerns for their safety or the safety of other children.

Systems for Review

- Periodic review of effectiveness of strategies – annually to identify opportunities for improvement
- Review immediately after an incident
- Review presented to School Council for oversight
- Areas of improvement communicated to school community via newsletter, website, staff meetings, PFA meetings.

Key activities of the Child Safety Leader/s

The RPPS school leader for child safety has sufficient status and authority, including leadership support and the ability to direct other staff (where appropriate), to undertake the role effectively. This role sits with The Principal and the Assistant Principal for the School Strategic Plan 2014-2018
Broad areas of the role are to:

- Provide authoritative advice
- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.
- Liaise with the principal and school leaders to maintain the visibility of child safety.
- Lead the development of the school's child safety culture, including being a child safety champion and providing coordination in communicating, implementing, monitoring, enhancing and reporting on strategies to embed a culture of child safety.
- RAISE AWARENESS
- Ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately.
- Ensure the school's child safety policy is reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework.
- Ensure the mandatory reporting policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Encourage among all staff a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures to protect them.
- Being authoritative in providing advice by:
 - Keeping their skills up to date with appropriate training carried out every two years
 - Having a working knowledge of how the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Community Service Organisations conduct a child protection case conference to be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
 - Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
 - Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child safety policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Make sure staff is aware of training opportunities and the latest DHHS and DET policies and guidance.

Rowellyn Park Primary School recognises the importance of the partnership between schools and parents to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, ensuring inclusive, safe and orderly environments for children and young people.

Our **Statement of Values** sets out our behavioural expectations of all members in this school community, including the principal, all school staff, parents, students and visitors. It respects the diversity of individuals in our school community and addresses the shared responsibilities of all members in building safe and respectful school communities.

Discrimination, sexual and other forms of harassment, bullying, violence, aggression and threatening behaviour are unacceptable and will not be tolerated in this school.

Our Statement of Values acknowledges that parents and school staff are strongly motivated to do their best for every child. Everyone has the right to differing opinions and views and to raise concerns, as long as we do this respectfully as a community working together.

RESPONSIBILITIES

AS PRINCIPALS AND SCHOOL LEADERS, WE WILL:

- Work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful and safe conduct is expected of everyone.
- Behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide inclusive, safe and orderly environments.
- Plan, implement and monitor arrangements to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students in attendance at the school is protected.
- Identify and support students who are or may be at risk.
- Do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential.
- Work with parents to understand their child's needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly.
- Respond appropriately when inclusive, safe or orderly behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required.
- Make known to parents the school's communication and complaints procedures.
- Ask any person who is acting in an offensive or disorderly way to leave the school grounds.

AS TEACHERS AND ALL NON-TEACHING STAFF, WE WILL:

- Model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession.
- Proactively engage with parents about student outcomes.
- Work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly.

- Work collaboratively with parents to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs.
- Communicate with the principal and school leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents.
- Treat all members of the school community with respect.

AS PARENTS, WE WILL:

- Model positive behaviour to our child.
- Ensure our child attends school on time, every day the school is open for instruction.
- Take an interest in our child's school and learning.
- Work with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child.
- Communicate constructively with the school and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns.
- Support school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students.
- Follow the school's complaints processes if there are complaints.
- Treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

AS STUDENTS, WE WILL:

- Model positive behaviour to other students.
- Comply with and model school values.
- Behave in a safe and responsible manner.
- Respect ourselves, other members of the school community and the school environment.
- Actively participate in school.
- Not disrupt the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.

AS COMMUNITY MEMBERS, WE WILL:

- Model positive behaviour to the school community.
- Treat other members of the school community with respect.
- Support school staff to maintain a safe and orderly learning environment for all students.
- Utilise the school's communications policy to communicate with the school.

THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING WILL:

- Provide support and advice to principals to equip them to manage and respond to challenging behaviour of students, parents and staff.
- Provide practical guidance and resources to support schools to manage and respond to challenging behaviour of students, parents and staff.
- Provide practical guidance and resources to support schools respond to and prevent bullying and promote cyber-safety and wellbeing.

- Provide access to evidence based resources and strategies to increase student safety, wellbeing and engagement.
- Provide schools with practical and legal support as required.
- Provide parents with practical guidance and resources to resolve conflicts with the school.

CONSEQUENCES FOR FAILING TO UPHOLD THE STATEMENT OF VALUES

UNREASONABLE BEHAVIOURS

Behaviours that are considered inappropriate on and adjacent to school grounds or in relation to school business and that do not uphold the principles of this Statement of Values include when a person:

- is rude, aggressive or harasses others
- sends rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
- is manipulative or threatening
- speaks in an aggressive tone, either in person or over the telephone
- makes sexist, racist or derogatory comments
- inappropriately uses social media as a forum to raise concerns/make complaints against the school
- is physically intimidating, e.g. standing very close.

CONSEQUENCES

Principals are responsible for determining what constitutes reasonable and unreasonable behaviour.

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this Statement of Values may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences. This may include:

- utilising mediation and counselling services
- alternative communication strategies being applied
- formal notice preventing entry onto school premises or attendance at school activities. Written notice will follow any verbal notice given.
- an intervention order being sought
- informing the police which may result in a charge of trespass or assault

By agreeing to meet specified standards of positive behaviour, everyone in our school community can be assured that they will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, this will help to create a school that is safe and orderly, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

Rationale

The Child Safe Environments Policy outlines our approach to creating a child safe school where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people across a range of school forums (e.g. camps, online) and outside of school hours shall abide by this policy

Our commitment to child safety

Rowellyn Park Primary School is committed to child safety through the development of a Statement of Commitment which is displayed around the school, in newsletters and on the school's website.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Rowellyn Park Primary School is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Rowellyn Park Primary School has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Rowellyn Park Primary School is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the 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.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place 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.

Our children

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants at Rowellyn Park Primary School. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

Our staff and volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our organisation.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

Training and supervision

The school has clear expectations for staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. Immediate action should include reporting their concerns to the DHHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The school will take action to respond to a complaint.

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 Rowellyn Park 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 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.

Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Rowellyn Park Primary School understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

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. Please see the [Working with Children Check](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) website <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au> for further information

We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the recruitment process is complete. We do retain our own records (but not the actual criminal record) if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision making process.

If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

Fair procedures for personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.

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. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

School Council approved Privacy Policy available on school website.

Legislative responsibilities

Rowellyn Park Primary School takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- a. **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.

Further information about the failure to disclose offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence>.

- b. **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

Further information about the failure to protect offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence>.

- c. Any personnel who are **mandatory reporters** must comply with their duties.

See the Department of Health and Human Services website for information about [how to make a report to child protection](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first) <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first>.

School Council approved Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and Procedures on school's Website.

Risk management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in organisations on social media).

School Council approved Cyber Safety Policy on schools website.

Regular review

This Child Safety policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

Allegations, concerns and complaints

Rowellyn Park 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.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above).

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident.

Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- observing suspicious behaviour.

We have our Complaints and Grievances policy on the website.

Child Safe Standard 2 Incident Reporting

All incident reports are recorded on Compass as a chronicle. The information recorded includes information similar to the following.

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?

No Yes, Aboriginal Yes, Torres Strait Islander

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Please categorise the incident

Physical violence

Sexual offence

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious neglect

Please describe the incident

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

Parent/guardian/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

Date incident report received:	
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Staff member managing incident:	
Follow-up date:	
Incident ref. number:	

Has the incident been reported?

Child protection	
Police	
Another third party (please specify):	

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

Yes **No**

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Child Safe Standard 3

Child Safety – Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviours – Code of Conduct for Adults

Rowellyn Park Primary is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of Rowellyn Park Primary will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of Rowellyn Park Primary will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Acceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's child safe policy.
- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities.
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, 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 students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability

- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with permission granted by parents upon enrolment at Rowellyn Park Primary, or any written change in the permission status
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol except by school council consent

This Code of Conduct was endorsed/approved by Rowellyn Park Primary **School Council on 20/05/2019** and is up for review if legislative or other changes require in the interim or no later than December 2020

Additional Staff Code of Conduct

The staff code of conduct for Rowellyn Park Primary School applies to the professional behaviour of the school staff in the performance of their duties.

Staff are all expected to abide by the Teaching Service Acts and Teaching Orders and the current Agreement and VIT Professional Standards. Most staff will be employees of DET and as such are guided by the Teaching Service Order, the Victorian Government School Staffing

documents and the Professional Code of Conduct for employees of DET and the Victorian Institute of Teaching. It is expected that staff will use their common sense and professionalism at all times in interpreting the professional behaviour expected of staff in alignment with the school vision and values.

Link: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VICTORIAN PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/employcond/pages/conduct.aspx>

THE VICTORIAN TEACHING PROFESSION CODE OF CONDUCT

<http://www.vit.vic.edu.au/conduct/victorian-teaching-profession-code-of-conduct/Pages/ReadtheCode.aspx>

Rowellyn Park Primary School has a range of staff including teachers, education support staff and auxiliary personnel. The staff at Rowellyn Park Primary School will adhere to the following values and code of conduct, as agreed by all staff.

School Values

Rowellyn Park Primary School encourages personal achievement, creativity and teamwork skills and fostering respect for others. We aim to develop individual skills of leadership, independence, critical thinking and problems solving. Life and relationships at Rowellyn Park are characterised by our Rowellyn value, the 4 R's.

1. Respect

- Students who
 - are self-accepting and accepting of others
 - have respect for themselves and others
 - recognise their own achievements and the achievements of others
- Teachers who
 - encourage personal achievement, creativity and teamwork skills and fostering respect for others
 - develop positive relationships with students and their parents and solid partnerships between home and school
 - build relationships with our local community and across schools
 - build positive relationships and high level communication skills

2. Reflection

- Students who

- can reflect on their learning
- demonstrate skills of leadership
- demonstrate critical thinking and problem solving
- are organised, planned and have specific goals for their learning
- confidentially set goals for their learning
- Teachers who
 - engage in professional discussion about effective learning and teaching to ensure that our curriculum reflects the needs, skills and interests of our students
 - use data to drive their teaching and learning to effectively meet the student needs

3. Resilience

- Students who
 - persevere through challenges
 - can overcome confronting situations
 - can apply themselves to their learning
 - are risk takers
 - have an "I can do it" attitude
 - are able to organise and manage their time effectively
 - can work towards achieving their full potential
- Teachers who
 - encourage students in their learning
 - support students through difficulties
 - encourage interaction and social acceptance

4. Responsibility

- Students who
 - take responsibility for their own behaviour

- overcome confronting situations using positive strategies
- take responsibility for the environment, and accept diversity and difference.
- can apply themselves to their learning
- Teachers who
 - encourage students in their learning
 - have high standards of learning and teaching
 - support students through difficulties
 - encourage interaction and social acceptance
 - provide programs that are both challenging and motivating

Rowellyn Park Primary School values the development of positive and supportive relationships between all community members, staff, students and parents. To facilitate this, the following programs are used:

Staff Beliefs – ALL STAFF BEHAVE IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER

Respect for each other is paramount to:

- Create a positive environment where teachers are celebrated, valued and supported when working collaboratively
- Understand an appreciation of different teaching styles, viewpoints, needs and experiences
- Genuinely reflect contributions of others and encourage input from all in decision making processes
- Communicate using appropriate language
- Ensure privacy and confidentiality as required

Working collaboratively and cooperatively is the key to working effectively when we:

- Show a willingness to negotiate
- Share resources and knowledge
- Demonstrate the ability to see and own the big picture
- Use our flexibility
- Work as a team towards common goals

All children at RPPS are entitled to the best possible education with:

- Quality teachers
- Inspiring classrooms
- Happy people
- Quality facilities
- Awareness of individual learning styles and needs
- Celebration and recognition of achievement
- Teachers modelling a passion for life -long learning

Code of Conduct

The staff at Rowellyn Park Primary School will adhere to the following code of practice which will encompass the following dimensions of work.

RELATIONS WITH STUDENTS

Teachers are responsible for providing challenging, engaging programs to ensure success for all children. Teachers and Education Support staff will provide a caring, nurturing and secure learning environment based on mutual respect and trust.

RELATIONS BETWEEN STAFF

All staff will actively support the values, programs and strategies developed to achieve the goals and priorities of the school Strategic Plan. They will offer peer support and respect for colleagues.

RELATIONS WITH PARENTS

Staff will be welcoming and receptive to parents in order to form partnerships in student learning. All members of the school community will be treated with empathy and respect.

- **TEACHING PRACTICE**

Staff will understand and adhere to the Professional Code of Conduct for employees of DET and the VIT.

Staff will provide teaching strategies appropriate to student needs with an understanding of how students develop and learn.

- **PROFESSIONAL GROWTH**

Staff will keep up to date with contemporary teaching and learning practice and programs with ongoing learning through professional development as required by VIT.

- **INVOLVEMENT WITH THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY**

Staff will contribute to whole school activities and take an active role in the school community. They will promote a positive image of the school to students, parents and wider community.

School Council Code of Conduct

The following Code of Conduct is intended as a guide for Rowellyn Park Primary School. School Council members agree to observe the following principles:

- The primary considerations in making a decision are the School's values and what is in the best interests of students.
- School Council is accountable to and must report to, both its local School community and the Department of Education and Training.
- School Councillors will abide by all legal requirements, regulations, DET policies and guidelines.
- Conflict between School Council members' needs to be dealt with respectfully and fairly and in a manner that both reflects this and is seen to reflect this. That is, in accordance with the principles of natural justice.
- All Councillors are expected to represent all members of the School community. Members are not there to represent just one viewpoint, or the view of an individual. School Councillors will therefore regularly seek the views and opinions of the whole school community, especially when major policies are being developed.
- School Council is not an appropriate forum for the discussion of individual school staff, students, parents, or other individual members of the school community.
- A Council member who is approached by a parent with a concern relating to an individual is in a privileged position and must treat such discussion with discretion, protecting the confidentiality and privacy of the people involved. If the issue relates to an operational matter of the School, the parent should be encouraged to speak with the Principal or the classroom teacher. However, if the issue relates to a School policy or procedure, it should be put on the agenda for discussion at the next School Council meeting, where it will be dealt with in a generic sense to protect the privacy of individuals involved. Agenda items should be given to the principal a week prior to School Council meeting.
- Councillors should respect the need for confidentiality and privacy with regard to sensitive matters that might arise at School Council meetings especially where there are matters of a personal nature relating to staff, students or parents.
- Councillors should observe the need for orderly Council meetings and that Council needs to "speak as one voice" in the public arena, once a decision has been made.

Section 7 of the Public Administration Act 2004 requires public officials, including Directors and statutory office holders, to demonstrate the public sector values by behaving in a particular way.

Responsiveness – public officials should demonstrate responsiveness by:

- providing frank, impartial and timely advice to the Government; and
- providing high quality services to the Victorian community; and
- identifying and promoting best practice.

Integrity – public officials should demonstrate integrity by:

- being honest, open and transparent in their dealings; and
- using powers responsibly; and
- reporting improper conduct; and
- avoiding any real or apparent conflicts of interest; and
- striving to earn and sustain public trust of a high level.

Impartiality – public officials should demonstrate impartiality by:

- making decisions and providing advice on merit and without bias, caprice, favouritism or self-interest; and
- acting fairly by objectively considering all relevant facts and fair criteria; and
- implementing Government policies and programs equitably.

Accountability – public officials should demonstrate accountability by:

- working to clear objectives in a transparent manner; and
- accepting responsibility for their decisions and actions; and
- seeking to achieve best use of resources; and
- submitting themselves to appropriate scrutiny.

Respect – public officials should demonstrate respect for colleagues, other public officials and members of the Victorian community by:

- treating them fairly and objectively; and
- ensuring freedom from discrimination, harassment and bullying; and
- using their views to improve outcomes on an ongoing basis.

Leadership – public officials should demonstrate leadership by actively implementing, promoting and supporting these values.

Human Rights – public officials should respect and promote the human rights set out in the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities* by:

- making decisions and providing advice consistent with human rights; and
- actively implementing, promoting and supporting human rights.

School Values

School Councillors should abide by the agreed values of the school.

Child Safe Standard 4 Child Safety – Human Resource Practices

Overview

It is important for schools to have strong human resources practices to help protect children from abuse.

Rowellyn Park Primary School will foster a culture of openness and inclusiveness, as well as be aware that people who may wish to harm children could target specific schools. Robust human resources practices are a good way of reducing these risks. Human resources practices include the recruitment, training and supervision of all personnel.

To achieve this, Rowellyn Park Primary School will provide opportunities for employees and volunteers to develop and maintain skills to ensure child safety. This will support staff and volunteers to understand the importance of child safety and wellbeing, and enable them to consistently follow child safety policies and procedures.

Child safety officer

Employees and volunteers will be supported through the Principal and / or Assistant Principals and the Student Well-being Officer, who are the designated persons to hear or be informed about all allegations or concerns, and provide support to other personnel. This will assist Rowellyn Park Primary School in ensuring that child safety is prioritised, and that any allegations of abuse or safety concerns are recorded and responded to consistently and in line with legal requirements, school policies / statements and procedures.

The designated persons also provide contact for children, parents and employees /volunteers to seek advice and support regarding the safety and wellbeing of children associated with Rowellyn Park Primary School.

Training and induction

Training and education is an important tool to help people understand that child safety is everyone's responsibility. Employees and volunteers (in addition to parents/guardians and children) need to be supported to discuss child protection issues and to detect signs of potential child abuse.

Staff will receive induction and ongoing training. New staff will be supported and informed when they begin their new role, and existing staff might need to develop new skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of their positions and expand their career options.

Training and support also promotes an awareness of the appropriate standards of care required to be met by employees and volunteers to ensure that the school meets its duty of care when providing services to children.

It is essential that our staff commit to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children, for example by committing to our school's code of conduct. Training should enhance the skills and knowledge of our employees and volunteers, and reduce exposure to risks.

Employees and volunteers working with children will receive training in the following areas:

- identifying, assessing and reducing or removing child abuse risks
- understanding our policies and procedures (including the Code of Conduct and Child Safe policy)
- knowledge of legislative requirements, such as obligations to report child abuse², reduce and remove known risks of child abuse³, and to hold Working with Children Checks⁴ where required
- how to handle a disclosure or suspicion of abuse, including your organisation's reporting guidelines
- cultural awareness training.

Training can be formal such as:

- higher education training and accreditation
- training offered by external organisations
- training developed and delivered internally

² The failure to disclose criminal offence requires adults in Victoria to report to police a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed against a child (unless they have a reasonable excuse for not doing so). More information about [failure to disclose](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence) is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation website <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence>.

Failure to disclose does not change mandatory reporting obligations. Certain professionals are mandatory reporters, meaning they are required to report to the Department of Health and Human Services if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical and sexual abuse. More information about [mandatory reporting](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/intake/overview-of-intake-of-reports-under-the-children,-youth-and-families-act/1122-mandatory-and-other-required-reporting) is available in the *Child protection manual* <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/intake/overview-of-intake-of-reports-under-the-children,-youth-and-families-act/1122-mandatory-and-other-required-reporting>.

³ The failure to protect criminal offence applies to people within organisations who knew of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and had the authority to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so. More information about [failure to protect](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence) is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation website <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence>.

⁴ For more information about [Working with Children checks](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) visit the working with children website <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>.

- online 'Mandatory Reporting' unit

Training can also be informal such as:

- inviting other professionals to speak at meetings or functions
- inviting local Aboriginal Elders, Aboriginal community controlled organisations and community members to speak at meetings and events
- inviting local culturally and/or linguistically diverse community members to speak at meetings and events
- internal mentoring and coaching.

Supervision

Supervision of employees and volunteers will be managed in a way that protects children from abuse and improves accountability and performance, without being onerous or heavy-handed. For instance, where practical, two staff members should be present during activities with children. In particular, children with a disability may require additional supervision.

As a matter of good practice, new employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand their role and learn skills, as well as to check that their behaviour towards children is appropriate. Any warning signs should be reported through appropriate channels, including the school's internal reporting procedures (such as the Principal and / or Assistant Principal, the Department of Health and Human Services (child protection), or police if a child is believed to be at imminent risk.

Performance and development review

A proactive performance development strategy will be used to improve employees and volunteers skills and knowledge on child safety. This is also an opportunity to improve knowledge and skills in working with children, as well as recognising and responding to suspected abuse.

Performance will be measured against the school's standards of conduct and care to ensure that employees and volunteers meet expected outcomes. These standards will align with those of the code of conduct and child safe policy / statement, so everyone can be aware of the expectations of our school and appropriate behaviour.

Code of conduct and disciplinary procedures

Rowellyn Park Primary School has a Code of Conduct that outlines expected standards of appropriate behaviour with and in the company of children.

Disciplinary procedures will occur if an allegation of child abuse is made, or a breach of the code of conduct is known or suspected.

Disciplinary procedures will be accessible and transparent, and clearly demonstrate the consequences of breaches of the code of conduct.

Employees and volunteers should be aware of reporting and disciplinary procedures and how to communicate concerns regarding the improper behaviour of any person within the school.

Members of our school community will also be made aware (via the school weekly newsletter and website) of their duty to raise concerns about the behaviour of any person who may present a risk of child abuse, without fear of repercussions.

Rowellyn Park Primary School's Code of Conduct will be publicly available via our school website. Children and their families will be encouraged to raise any concerns about the behaviour of any person, and can expect to be listened to and supported.

Our disciplinary procedures will clearly outline what employees or volunteers should do if they are concerned that their actions or words have been misunderstood, or they believe their concerns are not investigated in a timely manner.

Child Safe Standard 5 Child Safety – Recruitment Practices

Robust recruitment processes help ensure the best applicants are employed. From advertising through to conducting interviews and checking the background of applicants, it is important that each step is done consistently and thoroughly.

Selection Criteria

Using DET approved criteria reduces the risk of appointing someone who poses a child safety risk. It also ensures that applicants have the specific knowledge and skills required for the position.

Our applicants will have the opportunity to indicate their understanding of, or any experience they have in working with children with diverse needs and/or backgrounds.

Advertising

Advertisement placement provides a good opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding children and deter would-be offenders.

Positions vacant are advertised on the DET Recruitment online to ensure suitable candidates apply.

The school summary in the advertisement includes a statement which shows our commitment to promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability ie.

'Rowellyn Park Primary School promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children, including those with a disability. Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with children with a disability.'

Rowellyn Park Primary School promotes the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children, and encourages applications from Aboriginal peoples. Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with Aboriginal children and/or communities.'

Rowellyn Park Primary School promotes the safety and wellbeing of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and encourages applications from people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse background. Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background.'

Interviews

The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right people for our school and in identifying any people who may pose a risk to children.

Sufficient time to plan and prepare for the interview process, and form an interview panel with the right mix of experience and skills to carry out the interview is required. Where possible / necessary, consideration of including Aboriginal peoples, people from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background and people with a disability on the interview panel.

We use open-ended style behavioural-based questions, which give us insight into the applicant's values, attitudes and understanding of professional boundaries and accountability ie.

- *'Tell us about why you want to work with children?'*
- *'Describe a time when you had to manage a child whose behaviour you found challenging?'*
- *'Tell us about a time when you had to comfort a distressed child?'*

Consideration of panel members' thoughts and feelings when interacting with the applicant are important. We ask for more information if the applicant does not provide sufficient information in his or her responses.

We need to take note in –

- Unexplained lengthy gaps in employment history
- The applicant says they do not value or 'need' supervision
- The applicant is evasive or inconsistent in his or her answers

Pre-employment screening

Applicants are screened (including for paid and volunteer positions) as per DET Guidelines and VIT expectations.

Checks may take the form of -

- Police checks
- Working with Children Check
- Referee checks

When speaking with the referees, we seek to establish the referee's relationship with the applicant, including:

- how long the applicant and referee worked together
- the specifics of the position
- the applicant's perceived strengths and weaknesses
- whether the referee would hire the person again, particularly in a role working with children, and whether they have any concerns about the applicant working with children.

Ask behaviour-based questions like:

- 'What did the applicant do when [for example, they had to comfort a distressed child]?'
- 'Do you have any concerns about the applicant's attitude towards Aboriginal peoples / people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds / people with a disability?'
- 'Do you have any concerns about the applicant working with children?'
- 'Would you employ this person again?'

Probation periods

Probation periods can help you assess a new staff member's performance and suitability for the job before confirming their permanent employment. If there are any concerns about the person working with children, the school should seriously consider whether we want them to remain in the job and the school.

The probation period of 3 months is in line with DET regulations.

Consideration should be given as to whether the person should receive closer supervision and additional training throughout the probation period. A probation period can offer an opportunity to set goals with new staff members and identify training, supervision and other support needs.

Child Safe Standard 6 Procedures when a disclosure is made

If a child discloses an incident of abuse to you

- 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 with others, such as with their parent/carer, specific people in your organisation, DHHS, 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 report 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 your manager or your organisation's child safety officer/champion,⁵ 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 our school or raises a concern

- Explain that we have 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 Principal and / or Assistant Principal, 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.

⁵ A child safety officer/champion is a person in your organisation who has knowledge of child safety issues, and could be a point of contact for others who have questions or concerns or want to report an allegation of child abuse. You could consider including child safety officer/champion duties in the person's job description.

- 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.

Some children with a disability may experience barriers disclosing an incident. For example, children with hearing or cognitive impairments may need support to help them explain the incident, including through sign language interpreters. Advice on [communicating with people with a disability](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/people-with-a-disability-in-the-community/communicate-and-consult-with-people-with-a-disability/communication-with-people-with-disabilities) can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/people-with-a-disability-in-the-community/communicate-and-consult-with-people-with-a-disability/communication-with-people-with-disabilities>.

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

Legal responsibilities

While the child safe standards focus on organisations, every adult who reasonably believes that a child has been abused, whether in their organisation or not, has an obligation to report that belief to authorities.

The **failure to disclose** criminal offence requires all adults (aged 18 and over) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 to disclose that information to police (unless they have a reasonable excuse not to, for example because they fear for their safety or the safety of another).

More information about [failure to disclose](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence) is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation website <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence>

While failure to disclose only covers child sexual abuse, all adults should report other forms of child abuse to authorities. Failure to disclose does not change mandatory reporting responsibilities.

More information about [mandatory reporting](http://www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/advice-and-protocols/advice/intake/mandatory-reporting) is available in the *Child protection manual* www.cpmanual.vic.gov.au/advice-and-protocols/advice/intake/mandatory-reporting

Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), principals and police) must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

School Council approved Mandatory Reporting on schools website.

See the Department of Health and Human Services website for information about [how to make a report to child protection](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first)

www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first

The **failure to protect** criminal offence (commenced on 1 July 2015) applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so.

Further information about [failure to protect](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence) can be found on the Department of Justice and Regulation website www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence,

Child Safe Standard 6 Risk Management Approach

Description

Rowellyn Park Primary School has adopted a risk management approach which will identify and consider our student's safety risk(s) based on a range of factors including the nature of our activities with children, physical and online environments and the characteristics of children to whom we provide services. This covers both 'business as usual' risks and risks posed by specific activities such as excursions and overnight trips. Where risks are identified, Rowellyn Park Primary School will employ measures to reduce or remove them.

Rationale

Rowellyn Park Primary School has an active approach to our duty of care in protecting children and have a risk management approach and a commitment to continuous improvement. Additionally, the implementation of our risk management approach is recognition of Rowellyn Park Primary School's legal responsibilities to ensure the safety of children.

How will Rowellyn Park Primary School implement the 'Risk Management' approach?

- Ensure clear and accessible processes for evaluating risks posed by situations and activities appropriate to the school, its size and resources, physical and online environments, and the characteristics of the children to whom it provides services.
- Develop, record and communicate clear processes for removing risks to children (for example, rules on online communications that are included in the code of conduct or child safe policy, as well as removing staff or volunteers who may pose a risk).
- Provide relevant staff and volunteers with training in identifying child abuse risks, for example blocked-off/out-of-sight spaces (especially rooms with doors that can be locked), overnight stays, and opportunities for physical contact, such as sports coaching and personal care.
- Engage methods for continual improvement in how risks are managed by learning from past lessons, including policy review and staff training.
- Ensure supervision requirements for staff and volunteers who work with children.
- Institute processes for periodic review of risk management approaches and/or processes and following any incidents.
- Recognise and adapt to the needs of particular children and communities, including Aboriginal children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and children with a disability. For example, acknowledgement that greater staff or volunteer to child ratios may be needed for some children with a disability.
- Recognise and address risks to Aboriginal children which might exist because of their experiences, for example if a child does not feel safe identifying as Aboriginal, or if there is an inadequate response to self-identification.
- Recognise and address risks to children with a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, which might exist because of their experiences, for example increased communication with families may be necessary to build trust and understanding of organisational activities.

- Recognise and address risks for children with a disability, for example communication barriers when telling an adult they feel unsafe.
- Have a central reporting and advisory contact for staff to raise concerns and get advice about what to do if they need to report suspected abuse, the Principal and / or the Assistant Principal.
- Include statements about shared responsibility for management of risks in all position descriptions.
- Have a consistent risk management approach across all areas of the school ie. classrooms, offices etc.
- Include discussion about apparent risks or 'near misses' in staff and team meetings and areas for improvement.
- Roster staff with appropriate experience and qualifications to manage high risk environments.

Successfully implementing this approach should result in Rowellyn Park Primary School being a place where:

- situational risks are considered and understood by all staff
- steps are put in place to reduce risks where possible
- risk management approaches are regularly reflected on and improved
- specific risks to Aboriginal children are identified, assessed and mitigated
- specific risks to children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background are identified, assessed and mitigated
- specific risks to children with a disability are identified, assessed and mitigated.

ROWELLYN PARK Primary School risk Assessment Child Safe Standard 6

A key part of a risk management strategy is a risk assessment. Risk assessments can take many forms. An example is provided below. Risk assessment resources form part of the [School Policy & Advisory Guide: Risk Management Policy](#). An example is provided below to assist schools in their risk assessment. The risk assessment is based on the matrix below the example table.

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
No organisational culture of child safety – lack of leadership, public commitment and frequent messaging	Child safety code of conduct Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety:	Possible	Severe	Very High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to embed organisational culture of child safety are reviewed Statement of commitment to child safety is publicly available Statement of Values Policy (inclusive of Commitment to Child Safety Statement) 	Child Safety Officer/s	Low
Inappropriate behaviour is not reported and addressed	Child safety code of conduct Clear child safety reporting procedures Performance management procedures	Unlikely	Severe	Low	<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 	Child Safety Officer/s	Low
Unquestioning trust of long term employees	Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety	Possible	Major	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresher training for staff – see eLearning mandatory reporting module 	Child Safety Officer/s	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
and contractors or norms	Clear child safety reporting procedures						
Recruitment of an inappropriate person	WWCC or Victorian Institute of Teaching registration	Unlikely	Major	Low	Processes updated to require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal history search • Pre-employment reference check includes asking about child safety 	Child Safety Officer/s	Low
Engagement with children online	Child safety 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 and ESmart Program 	Child Safety Officer/s	Low
Unknown people and environments at excursions and camps	Child safety 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 in all school contexts 	Child Safety Officer/s	Low
Ad-hoc contractors on the premises (eg maintenance)	Child safe environments Information and awareness for visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors. Adequate monitoring	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresher training for frequent contractors • Where possible contractors work after school hours 	Child Safety Officer/s	Low

Child Safe Standard 7

Promote participation and empowerment of children

Description

Rowellyn Park Primary School ensures children feel safe and comfortable in reporting concerns or allegations of abuse. Rowellyn Park Primary School has simple and accessible processes that help children understand what to do if they want to report abuse, inappropriate behaviour or concerns for their safety.

All staff have an awareness of children's rights and adults' responsibilities regarding child abuse.

How Rowellyn Park Primary School promotes participation and empowerment of children:

- We provide children with child-appropriate and accessible information about what child abuse is, their rights to make decisions about their body and their privacy, that no one has a right to injure them, and how they can raise concerns about abuse. Information is included in welcome packs, information sessions and posters, as well as on websites and social media. 'Family Life' are employed to present sessions to students which includes their body and their rights. We have 'Life Education' van visit the school, their programs include safety for students' issues.
- We implement the Respectful Relationships curriculum.
- We ensure information and processes for reporting concerns are accessible to all children.
- We have access to professionals to translate information (including information about children's rights, child safe policies, statements of commitment and reporting and response procedures) into relevant community languages, including relevant Aboriginal languages.
- We gather feedback from children, for example SATS survey, Resilience Project survey, focus groups, circle time and social media, about whether they would feel safe and taken seriously if they were to raise concerns, and we then implement improvements based on this feedback.
- We enable children to express their views and make suggestions on what child safety means to them, and on child safe policies, reporting and response procedures, and acknowledge and act upon these where possible. For example, views are gathered through suggestion boxes, feedback sessions, emails or online.
- We ensure services are accessible for people with a disability, for example provide appropriate communication aids such as hearing loops, provide access to our school counsellor, DET psych / Speech specialists, outsource specific cases to agencies – DHHS, Family Life, Emerge Support, Bayciss, Alfred CHYMS
- We would ensure Aboriginal children were accepted when identifying as Aboriginal, and that staff and volunteers would understand appropriate responses to children identifying as Aboriginal.

- Encourage participation and empowerment of children in other organisational activities, such as organisational planning and decision making. For example – Student Leadership positions, Assembly presentations, Student Leadership Conferences, student forums.
- We raise awareness in the school community about children's rights, through staff conversations with families and communications such as websites, newsletters, Information Evenings, Parent Teacher meetings, School Council, Parents & Friends etc.

By successfully implementing these strategies Rowellyn Park Primary School ensures:

- reporting procedures for when a child feels unsafe are accessible for all children
- children understand what child abuse is, and their rights (age appropriate)
- children understand how to report an allegation of abuse or concern for their safety to the organisation, a trusted adult and external bodies (for example, the police)
- children feel safe, empowered and taken seriously if they raise concerns
- children feel empowered to contribute to the organisation's understanding and treatment of child safety
- children's reports of concern are responded to appropriately
- staff understand how to empower children and encourage their participation.