



## Child Safety Policy

### **RATIONALE – Our commitment to Child Safety**

Narre Warren North Primary School is committed to child safety and establishing and maintaining child safe and child friendly environments where all children are valued and feel safe.

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

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 culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability and in out of home care.

Our school has specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

### **PURPOSE OF THE POLICY**

This policy reflects our commitment to provide a safe environment where every person has the right to be treated with respect and is safe and protected from harm. This includes all school environments - onsite, online activities and offsite for excursions, camps, etc. and outside of school activities.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure students are safe in all school environments and outside school hours and that they have involvement in making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. Students' views are listened to and opinions are respected and valued. We listen to and act upon any concerns that our students, or their families raise with us. We teach students what they can do if they feel unsafe.

It is important to 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; and ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally in school life.

### **GUIDELINES FOR ACTION**

1. This policy applies to all people involved in our school, including:

- employees (permanent and casual)
- volunteers
- contractors
- work experience students
- service providers
- any other visitors.

2. Staff, volunteers and visitors must abide by our Code of Conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.
3. At the beginning of each year staff will revisit relevant Child Safety policies and procedures. Throughout the year staff will participate in professional learning to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse; mandatory reporting, child protection and other matters that affect children and young people (annually).
4. School Council will be made aware of relevant Child Safety policies and procedures annually. The school community will be informed about child safety practices via the newsletter and school website.
5. The Child Safety Policy will be distributed to families at the beginning of each year.
6. All people engaged in work at Narre Warren North PS, including volunteers, are required to carry and wear a lanyard containing their Working with Children Check. Teachers/ESS are to wear their 'school identification badge' at all times. Staff are to approach anyone not wearing their lanyard and direct them to the office.
7. Advertisements for positions to include reference to child safety duties and responsibilities.
8. Reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that Narre Warren North PS engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. Interview and referee checks (at least 2) are to be conducted on new employees. VIT registration is a requirement of all teaching staff.
9. All new employees and contractors will undergo induction and receive a copy of our Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct.
10. 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 (refer to Privacy Policy).
11. Risk management strategies are to be put 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 at the school on social media).
12. Strategies will be put in place to promote participation and empowerment of children, e.g. through Circle Time.
13. Students will participate in the following school programs: Protective Behaviours facilitated externally (e.g. by SECASA) biennially and facilitated by classroom teachers at the beginning of each school year, Anti-Bullying programs (e.g. Cool Calm Kids) annually, Cyber Safety programs at the start of each year, Family Life, Life Education (P-2), drug education programs through the curriculum and regular Circle Time in classrooms.
14. 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. It is the school's responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (refer to Mandatory Reporting Policy). 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.

Concerns are to be raised with the Principal, Child Safe Officer (Assistant Principal) or nominee in the first instance.

15. Advice to be sought from external agencies, e.g. chaplain, psychologist, to support students/staff.

16. This policy is to be read in conjunction with DET guidelines at

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/childsafestandard.s.aspx>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/Pages/childsafe.aspx>

and school policies related to students, visitors, volunteers and staff.

17. This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur.

Developed: June 2016

Ratified by School Council: 19<sup>th</sup> July 2016