



Falls Creek Primary School

Child Safe Policy

Purpose

The child safe policy sets out the school's approach to creating a child safe organisation 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.

Scope

This policy will apply to all staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people. It will apply across a range of school forums (e.g. at school, on camps, online) and outside of school hours.

Our Commitment to Child Safety

Falls Creek Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

Falls Creek Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Falls Creek Primary School 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 Falls Creek Primary School 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.

Policy and procedures

Policies and procedures outlining our school's approach to the Child Safe Standards are outlined below.

Any queries can be directed to the Principal, Miss Helen Whittaker, on 03 5758 3311.

A child-safe culture

The school's culture encourages staff to raise, discuss and scrutinise concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.

Personnel understand their roles and responsibilities / Code of Conduct

School leaders and managers will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school's Child Safe Code of Conduct.

The school's Code of Conduct sets out clear awareness of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. The school's Child Safe Code of Conduct and the Child Safe Process for Responding to and Reporting Incidents can be found on the school website.

Human resources practices and training

Falls Creek Primary School applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children.

We will ensure that staff induction, education and training programs are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect. All prospective staff and volunteers are required to have either a National Criminal Records Check or a valid Working with Children Check as appropriate.

Our school 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 our 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. 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.

Further information regarding human resources practices that ensure child safety can be found in the school's Staff Information Registers Policy, Volunteers Policy and Working with Children Check Policy and Procedures.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

Falls Creek Primary 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 of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The school will take action to respond to a complaint.

The school's Policy and procedures for reporting a child safety concern or complaint can be found in the following school policies on the [school website](#):

- Child Safe Process for Responding to and Reporting Incidents
- Child Protection Reporting Policy

Risk reduction and management

The school believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes. The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures.

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).

Listening to children and parents/carers

The school has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and

parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parent/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with, or abuse of, a child the school will listen to the complainant's account of things and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (or their parents/carers) informed about progress.

Confidentiality and privacy

The 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](#).

Further information and resources

- Department of Education and Training guidelines:
 - [Child Safe Standards: Creating a child safe environment](#)
 - [Preparing a Child Safe Environment Policy](#)
 - [Schools Privacy Policy](#)
- [Falls Creek Primary School policies](#):
 - Child Safe Code of Conduct
 - Child Safe Process for Responding to and Reporting Incidents
 - Child Protection Reporting Policy
 - Volunteers Policy
 - Staff Information Registers Policy (available on request)
 - Working with Children Check Policy and Procedures (available on request)

Evaluation and review

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

This policy was last updated and approved by School Council in September 2018 and is due for review in July 2020.