RED ROCK

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Child Safe Strategy Document

I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. Psalm 139:14

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Feedback
Red Rock Christian College values your feedback on our Child Safe Strategy Document. Please provided feedback to: The principal, enquiries@redrock.vic.edu.au

Public Availability
Copies of this report are available on the College website. Please contact the college administrator for an emailed copy.

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Call 000 if you have immediate concerns for a child's safety

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Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

At the heart of what we believe is that all children are 'fearfully and wonderfully made' by our loving God. This is reflected in our culture, in our teaching practices and pastoral care. We actively seek to create a culture of wellbeing: a culture of wellbeing is one in which students feel they belong; have a strong and positive identity and are connected in healthy relationships with peers and staff. It is a culture in which students flourish. A culture of wellbeing creates a safe environment in which students are more likely to demonstrate help seeking behaviours and identify trusted adults they can talk to about concerns or harmful situations they or their friends are facing.

Red Rock Christian College is committed to a learning and working environment for its students and staff that is safe, supportive and caring; free from wrongful discrimination and sexual harassment. The College has zero tolerance for child abuse. The College promotes safety of all children including those with disabilities and those from culturally diverse and or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

We want our students to learn and grow in an environment in which they know people care about them and honour who they are. The school requires that staff, students and other members of the community treat each other with respect and love. Staff are expected to display Christian love and appropriate professional behaviour in their dealings with each other and the students in their care.

We are committed to:

- treating all allegations and safety concerns seriously and consistently in accordance with our robust policies and procedures;
- rigorously follow legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we have concerns about a child's safety;
- preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks;
- applying robust recruitment practices for all staff;
- regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

Vision, Mission and Values

Our Vision

To provide Christian Education that prepares as many students as possible to influence their world with integrity

Our Mission

Red Rock Christian College will provide Christian Education, leading students to excel in attitude and academics, to develop their relationship with Jesus Christ and to contribute purposefully to their community.

Our Values

We value:

- *A strong partnership between staff, parents, students and the community*
- *Excellence in teaching and curriculum*
- *A safe and nurturing environment*
- *An environment that fosters learning for everyone*
- *Equality and respect for all people*
- *Relationship with God*
- *Each other as a unique creation of a loving God*
- *Christian character: love, peace, patience, goodness, faithfulness, integrity*
- *Service*
- *Community*

Our Goals

Red Rock Christian College is committed to:

- the highest personal academic outcomes
- personal, social, emotional, spiritual, academic, and physical growth
- developing skills in communication, problem-solving, critical thinking, inquiry, investigation and analysis
- identifying and responding to individual learning styles and needs of students
- maximising learning by applying knowledge of curriculum, and a variety of teaching methods within a safe and nurturing environment.
- develop, document and present curriculum that unfolds an understanding of God's perspective on the world and initiates a positive response to God, others and the created world.
- supporting professional learning and reflection
- promoting wise stewardship of time and resources
- developing service attitude in the use of gifts and talents
- creating an environment that emulates love, forgiveness, compassion, and grace
- attracting, developing and retaining quality Christian staff

Philosophy of Education

Red Rock Christian College seeks to promote relationship with Jesus Christ as the source of all knowledge, wisdom and wellbeing. We foster learning and wellbeing by establishing student identity in being 'fearfully and wonderfully made' and by creating an environment of growth and secure safe relationships. Students are encouraged to become lifelong learners within an educational environment that is safe, relationship centred, inclusive of gender, and mindful of individual needs, age, interests and potential.

We believe that all are created equal and uniquely by a loving God and that respect should be shown to the beliefs and opinions of others. It is important that students develop an ability to communicate effectively, nurture and support others, value community and be resilient. We aim to do this by 'Giving Due Honour' to all people, in doing so celebrate their strengths, cultural/ linguistic diversity and the multiplicity of their contribution to our learning community.

We believe the culture of the school embodies the beliefs; teaching and learning, wellbeing and discipline philosophies of the school. None of these can operate effectively in isolation of the others and each should equally and consistently reflect our core beliefs.

We believe that authentic, meaningful learning is demonstrated in transferable understanding and can best be established in a learning environment that truly allows for flexibility based on learning readiness not age, when students genuinely own their learning, and through constructed programs that reflect student interest and 'real life'. Learning should lead to the development of each student's potential and in doing so prepare them to engage with and contribute to their local and global communities with integrity.

Red Rock Christian College supports and promotes the principles and practices of Australian Democracy in accordance with Australian law, which includes respect for the authority of the elected government, the rule of law, equal rights for all, freedom of religion, freedom of speech and association.

Introduction to the child safe standards

Background to the standards

The *Betrayal of Trust* report was tabled on 13 November 2013. It found that while the majority of children are safe in organisations, there are inadequate and inconsistent approaches to child safety in organisations across Victoria. It provided 15 recommendations, including the introduction of child safe standards in Victoria to ensure child safe environments in organisations that work with children.

The Victorian Government has committed to implementing all of the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry. The Department of Health and Human Services (the department) is leading the development and implementation of the child safe standards, and has held consultations with organisations in Victoria likely to be subject to the new standards

The Victorian Government introduced child safe standards to improve the way organisations that provide services for children prevent and respond to child abuse that may occur within their organisation or to members of their organisation.

The standards are compulsory for all organisations providing services to children, and aim to drive cultural change in organisations so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of leaders, staff and volunteers. This will assist organisations to:

- prevent child abuse
- encourage reporting of any abuse that does occur
- improve responses to any allegations of child abuse.

The child safe standards are a central feature of the Victorian Government's response to the Family and Community Development Committee of the Victorian Parliament's *Betrayal of Trust: Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations* (Betrayal of Trust Inquiry).

Ministerial Order No 870—Child Safe Standards– Managing the risk of child abuse in schools is a key part of the Government's response to the recommendations of the Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and other Non Government Organisations.

In September 2015 the Government released new minimum child safe standards which aim to create child safe cultures and organisations that work with children.

As a minimum standard for school registration under the Education and Training Act 2006, schools must take action, in accordance with Ministerial Order 870, to manage and reduce the risk of child abuse.

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (the VRQA) will monitor and enforce compliance with the new standards. The new standards come into force on 1 August 2016.

The Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards are as follows:

In complying with the Child Safe Standards an applicable entity to which the standards apply must include the following principles as part of their response to each standard:

- Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- Promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Promoting the safety of children with a disability
- Take account of the diversity of all children

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an applicable entity to which the standards apply must have:

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

Standard 2: A child safe policy of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

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

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

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

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

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

Principle of Inclusion

At Red Rock Christian College we respect the cultural differences and variations in child rearing practices due to a family's cultural, personal or religious beliefs. We endeavour to establish a culture in which all children, regardless of gender, ethnicity, culture, age, socio-economic status, language, disability, religion or views are shown due honour, given every opportunity to develop their full potential and are safe from harm or unlawful discrimination.

The commission for Children and Young People (2015, p 12) states "...a child safe organisation recognises that these differences do not reduce a child's right to be safe or the organisation's responsibility to protect the child from harm." Furthermore " The Royal commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Interim Report noted that some children are more vulnerable to abuse based on various factors including age, gender, ethnicity, disability and prior abuse or neglect."(p.12) Hence the requirement for schools to ensure their policies and practices minimise the risk to vulnerable children.

The child safe standards require schools to consider factors that may make some members of their community more vulnerable.
For Aboriginal children it has been reported that some contributing factors may be:

- past government policies like the forced removal of children from their homes and communities
- Lower socio-economic status
- Difference in child rearing practices
- Intergenerational trauma
- May not feel culturally safe enough to report abuse

For students who are culturally and or linguistically diverse factors may include:

- Distrust of social service providers
- Prior trauma or displacement and loss
- Communication barriers

For students with disabilities the following may be some of the contributing factors:

- Impaired communication
- Prior abuse
- Less sexual education than peers

Standard 1
Strategies to Embed an Organisational Culture of Child Safety

Child safety standard one (clause seven of Ministerial Order No. 870) has five specific requirements. They are that the school governing authority must:

a. develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school

b. allocate roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies

c. inform the school community about the strategies, and allocated roles and responsibilities

d. put the strategies into practice, and inform the school community about these practices; and

e. periodically review the effectiveness of the strategies put into practice and, if considered appropriate, revise those strategies.

Strategies to meet the requirements of Ministerial Order 870:

It is the role of Red Rock Christian College's Board of Governance to oversee all aspects of the school's governance including appointing the principal, complying with all legal obligations, developing a strategic approach to the growth and maintenance of the college by setting major objectives and developing policies that meet minimum standards and the vision of the college.

The Board has approved a Child Safe Policy (Policy No 8.4). This policy is a comprehensive document that provides an overview of the key elements of Red Rock's approach to being a child safe organisation. In addition, the Board has reviewed and ratified changes to the following policies and documents in preparation for meeting the requirements of the Ministerial Order.

Policies and documents

- Students at Risk Policy incorporating Mandatory Reporting (policy 8.4.1)
- Protective Behaviour Education (policy 8.4.2)
- Working with Children Check (policy 8.4.4)
- Employment of Staff (policy 4.0)
- Education outside the Classroom (policy 7.4)
- Risk Management (policy 8.6.10
- Excursion and Camp Planning & Parent Volunteer Documents
- Code of Conduct
- Wellbeing Statement
- Casual Relief Teachers Manual

Achieving the Strategies

Creating a Child Safe school is the responsibility of the whole community, however the Board of Red Rock Christian College is ultimately responsible for the prevention and detection of child abuse in its organisation but delegates the day to day oversight to the principal.

It is the role of the principal to:

- Investigate reports of child abuse;
- Ensure that all staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of relevant laws, College policies and procedures and the College's Child Safety Code of Conduct;
- Ensure all adults within the school community are aware of their obligation to report suspected abuse of a child in accordance with the College's policies and procedures;
- Support staff, volunteers and contractors by ensuring they are properly informed of signs of abuse, their role in maintaining a safe school environment, and their lawful obligations to report abuse.

It is the role of staff to:

- Promote child safety at all times and create an environment that supports the physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing of all students;
- Follow the College's Child Safe Code of Conduct;
- Keep appropriate records and report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reports;
- Complete risk assessments for any incursions or excursions/camps and follow an complete excursion planning documentation.

It is the role of volunteers and contractors to:

- Share in responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse;
- Promote child safety at all times and create an environment that supports the physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing of all students;
- Accept and adhere to the College's Child Safe Code of Conduct;
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their supervisor.

Informing the community

The College's Child Safe Strategies document and Child Safe policy will be emailed to all families and will be made available on the College website. Matters pertaining to the education of families with regard to Child Safe matters will also feature periodically in the College newsletter.

Standard 2
A Child Safe Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Ministerial Order requirements:

Child safety standard two (clause eight of Ministerial Order No. 870) has two specific requirements. The school governing authority must ensure that the school has a child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety that details:

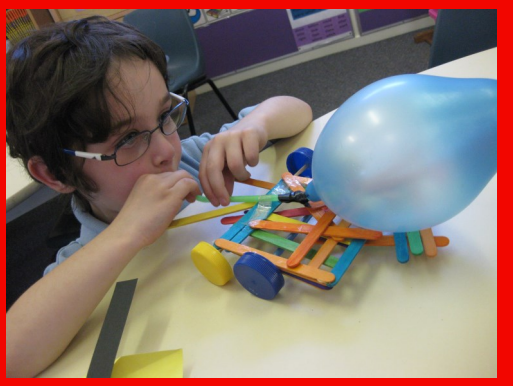
(a) the values and principles that will guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe school environment; and
(b) the actions the school proposes to take to:
- (i) demonstrate its commitment to child safety and monitor the school's adherence to its child safety policy or statement of commitment;
- (ii) support, encourage and enable school staff, parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters; and
- (iii) support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.

The school governing authority must inform the school community about the policy or statement, and make the policy or statement publicly available.

Meeting the requirements of Ministerial Order 870:

Red Rock Christian College has developed a Child Safe Policy along with this Child Safe Strategy Document which includes a statement of commitment to child safety. It has also created easy to access Child Safe Steps documents, (separate documents for children and adults), outlining what to do if they or someone else is at risk. These documents are publically available on the College website.

Standard 3 Child Safety Code of Conduct



Ministerial Requirement

The school governing authority is required to develop and endorse a child safety code of conduct as part of child safety standard three (clause nine of Ministerial Order No. 870).

Child safety standard three has four specific requirements. They are that the code of conduct:

a. has the objective of promoting child safety in the school environment;

b. sets standards about the ways in which school staff are expected to behave with children;

c. takes into account the interests of school staff (including other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular school staff), and the needs of all children; and

d. is consistent with the school's child safety strategies, policies and procedures as revised from time to time.

Meeting the requirements of Ministerial Order 870:

The Board and staff of Red Rock Christian College have developed and approved a Child Safety Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is part of the Child Safety Policy. It has also been embedded in any new employment contracts and has been made part of the induction process of volunteers and contractors.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct incorporates the four specific requirements of the Ministerial order as outlined above.

Standard 4
School staff Selection and Management Practices of a Child Safe Enviroment

Ministerial Requirement

All registered schools are required to meet child safety requirements for staff selection, supervision and management (clause 10 of Ministerial Order No. 870).

Child safety standard four has seven specific requirements.

1. Subject to the requirements of the ETR Act, the school governing authority must ensure that the school implements practices for a child-safe environment in accordance with this clause
2. Each job or category of jobs for school staff that involves child connected work must have a clear statement that sets out:
   - the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety; and
   - the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.
3. All applicants for jobs that involve child connected work for the school must be informed about the school's child safety practices (including the code of conduct).
4. In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:
   a. Working with Children Check status, or similar check;
   b. proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
   c. the person's history of work involving children; and
   d. references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
5. The school need not comply with the requirements in step (4) above if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information set out in steps (4)(a) to (4)(d), above about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.
6. The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:
   - the induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child connected work; and
   - monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for child connected work.
7. The school must implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

Meeting the requirements of Ministerial Order 870:

The following policies and documents have been reviewed and updated where necessary and approved by the College Board of Governance to meet the Ministerial Order.

- Working with Children Check Policy
- Employment Policy
- Position Description Documents
- Interview and Reference Check Documents

The Employment Policy has been updated to ensure Red Rock Christian College undertakes a comprehensive screening process for the recruitment of all staff including:

- Working with Children Check
- Face-to-Face interviews where possible
- Interview questions to assess people's motives for working with children
- Over the phone referee checks to access the suitability of the applicant to work with children
- Probation periods

All employment applicants are informed about the school's child safety practices. The following statement is now published on the employment page of Red Rock Christian College's website:

Red Rock Christian College is committed to being a Child Safe learning community and therefore has zero tolerance for child abuse. To ensure we employ the right people our recruitment process includes vetting prospective staff: carrying out working with children, police records and reference checks . All staff are required to demonstrate a commitment to the safety and wellbeing of all students.

In accordance with the College's employment policy, the college makes reasonable effort to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage in work:

- Working with Children Check
- Proof of Personal identity and professional qualifications
- The person's history of work
- References that address the person's suitability to work with children
- VIT registration (teaching staff)

Red Rock Christian College may require applicants to provide a police check in accordance with law before they commence work or during their time of employment with Red Rock.

Induction and Support and Supervision

Red Rock Christian College is aware of the importance of a comprehensive induction process for new staff. The process of induction is essential to new staff quickly adopting the culture and practices of the College and effectively engaging in contributing to the success of its vision. The Induction process provides opportunity for new staff to be introduced to the school's policies, code of conduct for child safety, vision, values and unique learning environment.

All new casual staff are inducted and are given information in an accessible folder each time they work at the school. This folder includes important reminders of our processes including our Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Ongoing support and training is provided to staff through our Avenues to Excellent Teaching Professional Development program and in weekly staff meeting.

The College is committed to monitoring and assessing employees' continuing suitability for child connected work.

Standard 5

Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Suspected Chld Abuse

Ministerial Requirement

Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse

1. The school governing authority must have a clear procedure or set of procedures for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse in accordance with this clause and other legal obligations.

2. The school governing authority must ensure that the procedure is:
   (a) sensitive to the diversity characteristics of the school community;
   (b) made publicly available; and
   (c) accessible to children, school staff, and the wider community.

3. The procedure must:
   (a) cover all forms of 'child abuse' as defined in the ETR Act;
   (b) apply to allegations or disclosures of child abuse made by or in relation to a child, school staff, visitors, or other persons while connected to a school environment;
   (c) identify the positions of the person or people who are responsible for:
      (i) promptly managing the school's response to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, and ensuring that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously;
      (ii) responding appropriately to a child who makes or is affected by an allegation of child abuse;
      (iii) monitoring overall school compliance with this procedure; and
      (iv) managing an alternative procedure for responding to an allegation or disclosure if the person allocated responsibility under clause 11(3)(c)(i) cannot perform his or her role;
   (d) include a statement that fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in the procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse;
   (e) clearly describe the actions the school will take to respond to an allegation of child abuse, including actions to:
      (i) inform appropriate authorities about the allegation (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);
      (ii) protect any child connected to the alleged child abuse until the allegation is re-solved;
      and
      (iii) make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of child abuse and the school's response to it.

4. The procedure must not:
   (a) prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school;
   (b) state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation;
   (c) require staff to make a judgment about the truth of the allegation of child abuse; or
   (d) prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse.

Meeting the requirements of Ministerial Order 870:

The Red Rock Christian College's Child Safe Policy, and Protective Behaviour Policy state a clear procedure for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse in accordance with the Ministerial Order and other legal obligations.

The Red Rock Christian College's Mandatory Reporting Policy state clear procedures for those subject to mandatory reporting obligations.

All staff at Red Rock are subject to these policies.

Reviewing these procedures is part of our ongoing staff support and training processes.

Standard 6
Strategies to Identify and Reduce the Risk of Abuse

Ministerial Requirement

Child safety standard six (clause 12 of the Ministerial Order) requires the school governing authority to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate risk management strategies to ensure child safety in school environments.
There are five specific requirements of child safety standard six:

1. The school governing authority must develop and implement risk management strategies regarding child safety in school environments.

2. The school's risk management strategies regarding child safety must identify and mitigate the risk(s) of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of each school environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.

3. If the school governing authority identifies risks of child abuse occurring in one or more school environments the authority must make a record of those risks and specify the action(s) the school will take to reduce or remove the risks (risk controls).

Explanatory note: Different risk controls may be necessary for particular groups of children depending on the nature of the risk and the diversity characteristics of children affected by the risk.

4. As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school governing authority must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.

5. At least annually, the school governing authority must ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to the individual members of the school governing authority and school staff about:
(a) individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse;
(b) child abuse risks in the school environment; and
(c) the school's current child safety standards.

Meeting the requirements of Ministerial Order 870:

Risk Management for Incursions, Excursions and Camps

The curriculum is enhanced at Red Rock Christian College with a range of exciting incursions and excursions. Where-ever possible enduring understandings are reinforced with real-life application which often takes children out of the classroom or brings specialist and guest visitors to the classroom. This provides a depth of experience and a variety of ways to reinforce learning that couldn't otherwise be achieved.
One of the most exciting and memorable aspects of school is the fun and challenge of going on a camp. Camps are an integral part of the learning program from year three and add a depth to classroom learning, providing a wonderful opportunity to strengthen friendships and explore new places. Each camp provides opportunities to think, inquire and reflect upon our personal development, the world we live in and where we want to head into the future.

These programs heighten the need for diligence for assessing risk and minimising the possibility of harm to any student. Our robust excursion procedures include the completion of a risk assessment for each excursion or incursion which is completed by the staff coordinating the event and authorised by the principal.

Other Strategies to Minimise Risk of Harm

- Supervision— appropriate supervision is planned and implemented both at school and when away from school
- Emergencies—the College has a comprehensive Emergency Management Plan
- Online Safety—the College has comprehensive policies and procedures in place to maximise online safety
- Visitors - appropriate procedures are in place for the management of visitors to the school

Action to be completed

Child Safe Risk Management Policy and comprehensive system of risk management for child safety to be developed and implemented by the College Board by the end of 2016.

Standard 7
Strategies to Promote the Participation and Empowerment of Children

Child safety standard seven (clause 13 of the Ministerial Order) requires the school governing authority to develop and implement, strategies to promote confidence in communicating concerns to appropriate persons and participation in the life of the school.
There are two specific requirements of child safety standard seven:

1. The school governing authority must develop strategies to deliver appropriate education about:
    (a) standards of behaviour for students attending the school;
    (b) healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality);
    (c) resilience; and
    (d) child abuse awareness and prevention.

2. The school governing authority must promote the child safety standards required by this Order in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user friendly to children.

Meeting the requirements of Ministerial Order 870:

We believe the culture of the school embodies the beliefs, teaching and learning, wellbeing and discipline philosophies of the College. None of these can operate effectively in isolation of the others and each should equally and consistently reflect our core beliefs.

In order to maximise student learning, it is necessary for students to feel safe and it is essential the wellbeing of the whole school community is developed. We aim to be a school in which its members flourish not just survive.

We are proactive in the establishment of our desired culture. This is discussed in more depth in our wellbeing and pastoral care statements. The following is an overview of how we develop a culture where students and staff respect and honour all members of the community.

At the core is our commitment to relationships and the understanding that all are fearfully and wonderfully made; Jesus demonstrated the essential nature of this in the exhortation to 'Love one another as I have loved you.'

- Positive, affirming and honouring relationships are established between staff and students, this includes across year levels;
- Regardless of which year level a student is in, values are frankly and sincerely explored in order to be fluently expressed; this occurs in the classroom and in weekly assemblies;
- Habits of Mind, including Growth Mind Set and Mindfulness strategies are taught and practised in all classrooms to enable students to develop confident, resilient and life giving habits of thinking;
- Character strengths are identified, taught and utilised to promote learning and positive interaction between students;
- Restorative practices are applied to build community: students are taught to own when they are wrong or have hurt someone, to seek forgiveness and take appropriate action to mend the broken relationship and rebuild trust. The offended is taught to forgive and participate in the restorative process;
- Students participate in establishing behaviour expectations based on valuing one another and supporting our community;
- Students' opinions and ideas are sought and considered by staff on matters concerning them;
- House teams operate to build unity and connectedness amongst students;
- Student leaders are appointed to support students and represent them;
- The school psychologist works with staff, students and parents to build a culture of whole school wellbeing and when necessary provides additional support or intervention;

In order to promote the safety and wellbeing of all students, clear guidelines are established and these include measures that may need to be implemented to protect students.

The following policies inform the steps to be taken at such times as student behaviour affects the safety and wellbeing of others.

- Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination (Policy 8.2)
- Cyber Bullying (Policy 8.1.1)
- Acceptable Use (Policy 8.1.2)
- Cybersafe Agreement (Policy 1.3)
- Social Networking – Student (Policy 8.2.2)
- Discipline and Behaviour and Student Grievances (Policy 8.4.8 – 8.4.14)

What is Child Abuse?

What is child abuse?

The child safe standards aim to protect children from abuse in organisations. Under the Act, child abuse includes four categories of abuse as outlined below. Child abuse also includes Grooming under section 49B (2) of the Crimes Act 1958.

While the standards apply specifically to child abuse, organisations should look to promote children's health and wellbeing in a broader sense.

Physical Violence

Physical violence occurs when a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from a non-accidental injury or injuries inflicted by another person. Physical violence can be inflicted in many ways, including beating, shaking, burning or use of weapons (such as, belts and paddles).

Possible physical indicators are:

- Unexplained bruises;
- Burns and/or fractured bones.

Possible behavioural indicators are;

- Showing wariness or distrust of adults;
- Wearing long sleeved clothes on hot days (to hide bruising or other injury);
- Fear of specific people;
- Unexplained absences;
- Academic problems.

Sexual offences

Sexual offences occur when a person involves the child in sexual activity, or deliberately puts the child in the presence of sexual behaviours that are exploitative or inappropriate to his/her age and development. Child sexual abuse can involve a range of sexual activity including fondling, masturbation, penetration, voyeurism and exhibitionism. It can also include exposure to or exploitation through pornography or prostitution, as well as grooming behaviour.

Possible physical indicators are:

- Presence of sexually transmitted diseases;
- Pregnancy.

- Vaginal or anal bleeding or discharge;

Possible behavioural indicators are;

- Displaying sexual behaviour or knowledge that is unusual for the child's age;
- Difficulty sleeping;
- Being withdrawn;
- Complaining of headaches or stomach pains;
- Fear of specific people;
- Showing wariness or distrust of adults;
- Displaying aggressive behaviour.

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious emotional or psychological abuse occurs when harm is inflicted on a child through repeated rejection, isolation, or by threats of violence. It can include derogatory name-calling and put-downs, or persistent and deliberate coldness from a person, to the extent where the behaviour of the child is disturbed or their emotional development is at serious risk of being impaired. Serious emotional or psychological abuse could also result from conduct that exploits a child without necessarily being criminal, such as encouraging a child to engage in inappropriate or risky behaviours.

Possible physical indicators are:

- Delays in emotional, mental, or even physical development;
- Physical signs of self-harming.

Possible behavioural indicators are;

- Exhibiting low self-esteem;
- Exhibiting high anxiety;
- Displaying aggressive or demanding behaviour;
- Being withdrawn, passive and/or tearful;
- Self-harming.

Serious neglect

Serious neglect is the continued failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention or adequate supervision, to the extent that the child's health, safety and/or development is, or is likely to be, jeopardised. Serious neglect can also occur if an adult fails to adequately ensure the safety of a child where the child is exposed to extremely dangerous or life threatening situations.

Possible physical indicators are:

- Frequent hunger ;
- Malnutrition;
- Poor hygiene;
- Inappropriate clothing.

Possible behavioural indicators are:

- Stealing food;
- Staying at school outside of school hours;
- Aggressive behaviour;
- Misusing alcohol or drugs;
- Academic issues.[1]

Grooming

The Crimes Amendment Act 2014, which commenced in Victoria on 9 April 2014 introduces the offence of Grooming for Sexual Conduct with a child under the age of 16.

What is grooming?

- The offence of grooming concerns predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time.
- The offence applies where an adult communicates, by words or conduct, with a child under the age of 16 years or with a person who has care, supervision or authority for the

child with the intention of facilitating the child's involvement in sexual conduct, either with the groomer or another adult.

- Grooming does not necessarily involve any sexual activity or even discussion of sexual activity – for example, it may only involve establishing a relationship with the child, parent or carer for the purpose of facilitating sexual activity at a later time.
- The sexual conduct must constitute an indictable sexual offence. This includes offences such as sexual penetration of a child, indecent assault and indecent act in the presence of a child. It does not include summary offences, such as 'upskirting' and indecent behaviour in public.

Who can commit the offence?

The offence can be committed by any person aged 18 years or over. It does not apply to communication between people who are both under 18 years of age. [2]

[1]These definitions are based on the Victorian *Child Protection Practice Manual*: <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/practice-context/child-protection-program-overview/1008-abuse-and-harm-legal-and-practice-definitions>

[2]The Betrayal of Trust Fact Sheet http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/grooming+offence

Other Resources and Links

- An overview of the Child Safe Standards, www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards

- Commission for Children and Young People, 2015 *A Guide to Creating a Child Safe Organisation*,

- Information about child protection services can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/crisis-and-emergency/reporting-child-abuse>

- A new 'grooming offence' commenced in Victoria on 9 April 2014. Further information is available on the Department of Justice website <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/grooming+offence>

- For more information on who requires a Working With Children Check, visit the Working With Children website <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>

- Australian Institute of Family Studies '*Child Protection and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children'* CFCA Resource Sheet September 2015,< *aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/child-protection-and-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children*>

- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *Bringing Them Home: The 'Stolen Generation' Report* (1997): https://www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice/publications/bringing-them-home-stolen

- Betrayal of Trust Implementation: Child safe standards and capacity building Consultation report 2015 on the Department of Health and Human Services website <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards>