

CAMPBELLFIELD HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

SUCCESS – SAFETY – RESPECT - RESPONSIBILITY

CHILD SAFETY POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the office on 9359 5502

“At CHPS we are committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment that empowers all students to have agency and success in their learning and to contribute positively as active citizens within their community”

Our commitment to Child Safety

At Campbellfield Heights Primary School we are committed to Child Safety & Well-Being. We want all our students to be safe, happy, resilient, empowered and to feel as though they have a voice when it comes to decisions about their lives. At CHPS we support and respect all individuals, including students, staff and volunteers.

We have a zero tolerance for Child Abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are concerned about a child’s safety, which we follow rigorously. We are committed to preventing child abuse by identifying risk factors early and removing and reducing these risks for children. Our school has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers. Our school is also committed to regularly training and educating staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We promote Positive and Respectful Relationships between all students and adults and between all students and their peers and we value building strong, trusting relationships with our entire school community.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of our most vulnerable students including our Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+ and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and well-being and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child’s safety. We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies

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

Purpose

Our Child Safety Policy sets out the school’s commitment and approach to creating and maintaining a child safe organization where children and young people are safe and feel safe, it provides the policy framework for the school’s approach to the Child Safe Standards.

Scope

This policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school council members where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by for a student’s use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

Definitions

The following terms in this policy have specific definitions: (<https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions>)

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school boarding environment
- school staff
- school boarding premises staff
- school governing authority
- school boarding premises governing authority
- student
- volunteer

Child safety is everyone's responsibility

Roles and Responsibilities

All Campbellfield Heights Primary School staff and volunteers are required to:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education and Training, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our - [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our - [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures](#) including the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.
- sign and agreed that they have read the above documents
- undertake annual guidance and training on child safety
- act in accordance with their legal obligations
- complete the [Protecting Children – Mandatory reporting and other obligations](#) online module every year (All DET employed staff)

School Leadership Team (comprising of Principal Class, Student Well Being & Engagement Leader & Leading Teacher) will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.
- along with Child Safe Champion (Principal Class) is the first point of contact for staff for matters pertaining to Child Safety and Well-being

School Council members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings
- undertake annual training on child safety
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members
- when hiring school council employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe. At CHPS this is done under the delegation to the principal who is bound by this policy

- consider the diversity of all children, particularly the most vulnerable cohorts when making decisions regarding the Child Safe Standards

Child Safe Champion (in consultation with leadership/staff/students/school council):

- Principal Class has nominated a **Child Safe Champion (Student Engagement & Well-Being Leader) – Ms Maritsa Rousalis** to coordinate and monitor the implementation our child safety policies, practices and compliance
- is responsible for reviewing and updating the all Child Safe policies
- is responsible for ensuring all child safe policies and documents are made publicly available
- providing training to new staff/existing staff on schools Child Safe protocols
- along with the Principal class is the first point of contact for staff for matters pertaining to Student Child Safety and Well-being
- supports staff with student disclosures and reporting to DFFH (Child Protection)

The responsibilities of the child safety champion are outlined at [Guidance for child safety champions](https://www.vic.gov.au/guidance-child-safety-champions) - <https://www.vic.gov.au/guidance-child-safety-champions>

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour and can be found here - http://m1077846-4195.westnethosting.com.au/?page_id=67

Risk management

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage these risks. Our school leadership team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register, at least annually.

Establishing a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children

At CHPS we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community:

- begin events and meetings with a Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country as a standing agenda item
- fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags throughout the school
- display plaques and signs to Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners
- acknowledge, provide education around and celebrate special historical days such as NAIDOC week & National Sorry Day
- acknowledge and draw on the existing knowledge of Aboriginal students and their families.
- ask for feedback from Aboriginal students and their families about what the school does well, and what can be improved.
- provide opportunities for students to access cultural education resources and learn about our Aboriginal History and significance.
- liaise regularly with Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs)
- create opportunities to partner with Aboriginal Communities
- ensure all our Aboriginal students have an Individualised Education Plan
- address racism and discrimination immediately
- train staff and volunteers to understand the importance of Aboriginal culture to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal students through CUST training and regular professional learning

Listening to, communicating with and empowering children

To support child safety and well-being at CHPS we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities. Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging. We inform students of their rights and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We involve students when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say. We encourage student voice and agency and empower students to contribute to school life.

We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time.

Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns on our school's website - <http://www.chps5034.vic.edu.au/> or by attending the front office and asking to meet with a member of leadership or our school Child Safety Champion. When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress. More information about sharing of information can be found here - <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/information-sharing-schemes/policy>

The school will promote the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children, including:

- all of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for the students and parents
- child Safety posters will be displayed across the school
- school newsletters/social media/communication tools will inform students and the school community about the school's commitment to child safety, and strategies or initiatives that the school is taking to ensure student safety
- our school promotes the Child Safe Standards, by engaging in age-appropriate discussions of child safety with students, students making and displaying their own child safety network, child safety policies and procedures used and displayed are written in child-friendly language or a language other than English that is relevant to the school, the Child Safe Standards are addressed and explained at parent information sessions and throughout the year

The school will use its health and wellbeing programs to deliver appropriate education to its students about:

- standards of behaviour for students attending the school (SWPBS, Student Well-Being & Engagement Policy, Online policies)
- healthy and respectful relationships (First 20 days, RRRR weekly timetabled lessons, Anti-Bullying curriculum, NAIDOC, EID, Harmony Day, Are you ok day? SEL programs)
- resilience (Bright Futures, Breakthru, RRRR, Well-Being Week)
- child abuse awareness and prevention (Child Protection Week, Daniel Morecombe Safety lessons)

Communications

The school is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- Ensuring that the Child Safety Policy (this document), Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure are available on the school website http://m1077846-4195.westnethosting.com.au/?page_id=67
- Regular reminders to school community of our school's commitment to child safety
- Ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school meetings
- Parent information sessions and volunteer/visitor's induction processes
- School communication tools (newsletters, apps, social media) and noticeboards

Family Engagement

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any wonderings, and ideas for improvement.

We do this by:

- making information publicly available on Compass, ClassDojo, school's website <http://www.chps5034.vic.edu.au/>, newsletter, bulletin boards
- making Child Safety a regular school council agenda item
- newsletters, Compass and ClassDojo post will be used to inform families and the school community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety.
- encourage family and community contributions to child safety through school council, annual surveys and focus groups.
- PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed across the school in all buildings.

Diversity and Equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and success for all. We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on. We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

Our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy provides more information about the measures we have in place to support diversity and equity and can be found here - http://m1077846-4195.westnethosting.com.au/?page_id=67

At CHPS some ways we support diversity and equality is:

- explicitly teach Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships curriculum
- expose students to text, and resources that reflect diverse views and perspectives
- recognise, acknowledge or celebrate special dates that connect with the school community, culture, diversity, well-being and safety
- Individual Education Plans, Cultural Plans, Student Support Groups
- build capacity of staff and volunteers and provide opportunities for regular professional learning
- ensure mandates for PSD, OOHC and Koori students are monitored and complied with
- communicate that discrimination and bullying are not tolerated
- ensure vulnerable groups can be supported
- review policies regularly

Suitable Staff and Volunteers

At CHPS we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children. 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. Our organisation 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 and some contractors, including volunteers, are required to hold a VIT/Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check.

We carry out reference checks and police record checks on all staff 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.

Staff Recruitment

When recruiting staff, we follow the Department of Education and Training's recruitment policies and guidelines, available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at: <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal>

- Recruitment in Schools

- Suitability for Employment Checks
- School Council Employment
- Contractor OHS Management.

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian Teaching registration
- collect and record proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
- collect and record the person's history of working with children
- collect and record references that address suitability for the job and working with children.
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Staff Induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures and
- any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done through regular Child Safety training and Annual Performance Review. Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed promptly and in accordance with our school and department policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and Well-Being will be paramount.

Suitability of volunteers

All volunteers are required to comply with our Volunteers Policy, http://m1077846-4195.westnethosting.com.au/?page_id=67 which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

Child Safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone at our school understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility. Our school aims for all **staff, school council members, and volunteers** (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegation of child abuse or child safety concerns.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered in addition to induction at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completing the [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#) online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and well-being risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

Complaints and reporting processes

CHPS fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's Complaint Policy. The Complaints Policy can be found at http://m1077846-4195.westnethosting.com.au/?page_id=67.

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including school council employees) must follow our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures http://m1077846-4195.westnethosting.com.au/?page_id=67.

Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- the [Four Critical Actions](#) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Our Student Engagement, Wellbeing & Engagement (Bullying) Policy covers complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours. This can be found here http://m1077846-4195.westnethosting.com.au/?page_id=67

Support for staff

All staff can also contact the following services if they have heard or seen something of concern and need support

Speak Up – DET anonymous reporting line – 1800 633 462

EAP – Counselling Support for DET staff – 1300 361 008

All adults must advise our School Child Safe Champion (Maritsa Rousalis – Student Well-Being) of any reports/allegations/incidents of suspected child abuse. In her absence a member of the leadership team should be advised.

Privacy information sharing and Records Management

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether it 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.

CHPS collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to our school's Privacy Policy here http://m1077846-4195.westnethosting.com.au/?page_id=67.

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the Department of Education and Training's policy: [Records Management – School Records](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/records-management/policy) <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/records-management/policy>.

Regular review of Child Safety Practices and Policies

The CHPS Child Safety policies and procedures will be reviewed at a minimum every two years by the Child Safe Champion and approved by the Principal/School Council 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.

This document to be read in conjunction with the following CHPS/DET Policies & Documents

- CHPS Code of Conduct
- CHPS Student Child Safe Code of Conduct
- CHPS Visitors & Volunteers Policies
- CHPS Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy
- The Identifying & Responding to All forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools guide (DET website) <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/default.aspx>
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Digital Learning Policy
- Student Engagement, Wellbeing & Inclusion Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy

This document has been reviewed by Child Safe Champion Maritsa Rousalis in consultation with staff, students, school community and school council throughout Term 2, 2022. It has been endorsed by Acting Principal Susie Bellizia and School Council on the 14/06/2022. Next review date - 14/06/2024