



## Mackellar Primary School Strategies to identify and Reduce or Remove the Risk of Child Abuse

### Child Safe Standard 6

#### Rationale

Mackellar Primary School has an active risk management approach to the duty of care in protecting our children from any possible safety risk. We have a commitment to continuous improvement and a legal responsibility to ensure the safety of all children. Ensuring our children are safe is a shared responsibility for the management of risks for all staff.

MPS has implemented a formal and structured approach to managing risks associated with child safety. The strategy outlines how risk is managed, including who is responsible for the process (the school governing authority), and a description of the process itself. The process includes risk assessment, implementation of controls, and a monitoring and review process to ensure the currency of the risk management approach.

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

#### ***Process for identifying and reducing or removing risks of child abuse***

Managing risk at Mackellar Primary School will involve the following steps and considerations:

- Identify the school's child safety risks across the range of school environments (including excursions, camps, online). See MPS Child Safety Register
- Identify any existing risk reducing measures or internal controls
- Assess and rate the school's child safety risks given the existing controls in place, taking into account the likelihood of risk, and the likely consequence of the risk
- If the risk rating is more than the 'acceptable level', identify further risk management strategies through additional controls or other prevention or detection and removal strategies and then re-assess the risk

The risk management process will be documented, recorded and reviewed periodically. Effective risk management strategies are dynamic and change over time as new risks arise and others may no longer be relevant.

Effective risk management strategies will be transparent, well understood and diverse, to take account of the increased level of risk associated with the specific nature of some activities and the vulnerability of particular groups.

MPS will be implementing this standard by including the following Risk Management strategies:

- ensuring 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

- developing, recording and communicating clear processes for removing risks to children (e.g. cyberbullying)
- providing staff with training in identifying child abuse risks
- engaging methods for continual improvement in how risks are managed by learning from past experiences, including policy review and staff training
- reinforcing/reviewing supervision of children requirements for staff
- establishing processes for periodic review of risk management approaches and/or processes following any incidents
- recognising and adapting to the needs of 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
- recognising and addressing risks to Aboriginal children which might exist if a child does not feel safe identifying themselves as Aboriginal, or if there is an inadequate response to self-identification
- recognising and addressing risks to children with a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, which might exist because of their experiences, by increasing communication with families to build trust and understanding of school activities
- recognising and addressing risks for children with a disability, such as communication barriers when telling an adult they feel unsafe
- having a Child Safety Officer as a central reporting and advisory contact for staff to raise concerns with, and regarding concerns about a children safety.

## Resources and References

- [A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST](#) [hyperlink]
- Commission for Children and Young People (2015) *A Guide for Creating A Child Safe Organisation*, Version 2.0.
- Department of Education and Training (2016) *School Policy Advisory Guide: Risk Management Policy* and associated tools:
  - School risk register which can be edited and has automatic tools embedded is available, see: [Risk Management in Schools – Risk Register](#).
  - Subordinate risk registers for specific activities such as overseas travel/excursions or projects, see: [Risk Management in Outdoor Education – Education Outdoor tools](#).
  - Online risk management module: [Risk Management - Online Risk Module](#)
- [Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people](#)
- [Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations](#) - eLearning module (log-in required)
- State of Victoria (2010) *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people: A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection*, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools.
- Victorian Government, Education & Reform Act 2006, Gazette No. S2, January 2016, *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools*, Ministerial Order No. 870.
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (2016) *Child Safety Standard 6: Child safety risk management strategies*

## Evaluation

*This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle, following a significant incident if it occurs or if guidelines change. 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 policy was ratified by School Council on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016



