

Child Safety Policy

Purpose:

To set out the policies included within school's Child Safety framework which comply with Child Safe Standards in Ministerial Order 870.

Scope:

School Board, Principal, Mentors, support staff, students and their families

Implemented by:

Principal

Approved by:

KVS Board

Reviewed:

As regulatory changes arise or improvements are identified.

Communicated via:

KVS Website, Staff Handbook, Parent Handbook, Policies and Procedures Manual

Ministerial Order 870

Ministerial Order No. 870 is one element 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.

The Inquiry's *Betrayal of Trust* report recommended that implementation of minimum standards for maintaining 'child-safe environments' for all organisations with direct and regular contact with children be standardised in all registered Victorian schools.

Overview

Koonwarra Village School is committed to being a Child Safe organisation and embedding a child safe culture into our practices and processes to ensure that students who attend the School are safe at all times and to fully comply with the Child Safe Standards of Ministerial Order 870.

Koonwarra Village School has zero tolerance for child abuse and all staff employed by Koonwarra Village School are responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and to report information about suspected child abuse

This Policy defines the framework of policies, processes and supporting documentation which acknowledge Koonwarra Village School's duty of care to take reasonable precautions to prevent the abuse of a child by an individual associated with the school while the child is under the care, supervision or authority of the school. The School Principal holds final responsibility for ensuring these policies are implemented.

Diversity and Inclusion

KVS recognizes the broad range of diversity amongst children and has put in place strategies to provide a safe and inclusive environment for all children in the school's care, regardless of age, culture, ethnicity, linguistic capabilities, vulnerability or mental or physical disability. This policy acknowledges the particular vulnerability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Potential Risks to Children

The following is a summarised list of potential risks to children. The identification of the risk assists with the development of appropriate strategies to mitigate the risks.

Potential Risks to Children

Unintentional/accident harm

- Poor physical environment leading to injury
- Poor supervision
- High-risk activity
- Lack of risk mitigation strategies in place

Psychological abuse

- Bullying
- Threatening language
- Shaming
- Intentional ignoring and isolating (either face-to-face, online or via other technology)

Neglect

- Lack of supervision
- Not providing adequate nourishment
- Not providing adequate clothing or shelter
- Not meeting the specific physical or cognitive needs of children

Physical abuse

- Physical punishment
- Pushing, shoving
- Punching, slapping, biting, kicking

Cultural abuse

- Lack of cultural respect
- Racial or cultural vilification or discrimination
- Lack of support to enable a child to be aware of and express their cultural identity

Sexual abuse

- Sexual abuse, assault and exploitation
- Grooming
- Inappropriate touching
- Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature (either face-to-face, online or via other technology)
- Crossing professional boundaries

Strategies to mitigate risk to Children

Koonwarra Village School has the following strategies to mitigate the identified risks:

- The development and publishing of this Child Safety Policy.
- A framework of policies that have been designed, informed and will be reviewed annually based on the Child Safe Risk Assessment.
- A Child Safe Risk Assessment is conducted annually and any associated policy revisions communicated to all stakeholders.
- A staff Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children signed as part of the induction process with all new employees.
- A student Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour and is signed prior to the commencement of enrolment.
- A parent Code of Conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children and within the school community signed as part of the enrolment process.
- A Working With Children policy that clarifies who is required to have a working with children check. All staff are required to have a WWC or current VIT registration. The policy includes procedures for gathering, verifying and recording employment information in relation to child safety.
- Job descriptions that include child safe responsibilities and the need to comply with the standards of Ministerial Order 870
- Mandatory training provided to staff and our Board in relation to child abuse including the completion of the DET Child Safe eLearning Module during their induction.
- A clear process for reporting on disclosures and concerns about Child Safety is detailed in the Mandatory Reporting Policy and Concerns & Complaints Policy.
- A template for reporting Child Safety Incidents and referenced in the Mandatory Reporting Policy and Concerns and Complaints Policy
- Child friendly processes are in place to ensure children know who to talk to if they feel unsafe or have a concern as well as specific health curriculum e.g. protective behaviours
- Behaviour Management Policy that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour of students.
- Digital Technologies Policy and Digital Technology Code of Practice Agreement
- Concerns & Complaints Policy clearly outlining how to raise concerns of any nature including Code of Conduct breaches or any Child Safety concerns.
- Supervision policies that cover school-based and off-site activities

Related Resources

