

CHILD SAFETY POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Approving authority	Executive Management Team
Purpose	This policy and procedure has been developed to meet the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order 870 – Child Safe Standards - Managing the risk of child abuse in schools. Where all registered schools are required to create, promote and maintain child safety in all school environments.
Responsible Officer	Head of Student Services & Administration
Associated documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Safety Policy and Procedures • Child Safe Risk Management Policy and Procedures • Younger Students Policy and Procedures • Mandatory Reporting Policy • Responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse policy and procedures • Student Support & Services Policy & Procedures • Complaints & Appeals Policy and Procedure • Homestay Policy and Procedures • Critical Incident Policy and Procedures • Building Supervision Policy and Procedures • Excursion Policy and Procedures • Anti-Discrimination Policy and Procedure • Anti—Bullying & Harassment Policy and Procedure • Human Resources Policy

1. RATIONALE

Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from all forms of child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

All Ozford staff, contractors and volunteers involved in child connected work must comply with this policy and code of conduct. Child connected work means work authorised by the governing school authority (the Executive Management team) and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

2. SCOPE

This policy and procedures applies to all Ozford staff, contractors, volunteers, parents/ guardians/ care giver/homestay, students and the wider community that interact with Ozford's students in Ozford school environments.

This policy applies to all Ozford school environments. School environments means any physical or virtual place made available or authorized by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- A campus of the school;
- Online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- Other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events) and Homestay/carer environments

3. POLICY

- 3.1 Ozford has zero tolerance to child abuse and is committed to the protection and wellbeing of all children in its school environment.
- 3.2 Ozford is committed to provide 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.
- 3.3 The Ozford governing authority is the Executive Management team who have the responsibility for ensuring that Ozford develops, implements, promotes and periodically reviews the effectiveness of strategies to embed a culture of child safety.
- 3.4 The Ozford governing authority, the Executive Management team, are committed to:
 - 3.4.1 Embedding a culture of child safety, taking into account the diversity and making reasonable efforts to accommodate the needs of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds which include international students, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable
 - 3.4.2 Upholding the values and principles to create and maintain a child safe school environment
 - 3.4.3 Implementing strategies and practices that promote and manage a culture of child safety including inform the school community about the strategies, and allocated roles and responsibilities
 - 3.4.4 Managing all child safety concerns in a sensitive, confidential, honest, responsible and timely manners
 - 3.4.5 Supporting, enabling and encouraging school staff, parents and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
 - 3.4.6 Supporting children in the school who disclose or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse
 - 3.4.7 Monitoring compliance to this policy and effectiveness of the child safe strategies put in practice and if considered appropriate and revise the strategies.
- 3.5 All Ozford staff, contractors, volunteers, care giver/homestay providers and students over the age of 18 years must comply with the Ozford Child safe policy and be aware of their reporting obligations.

4. PROCEDURES

- 4.1 The Executive Management team has responsibility for the review and approval of the Ozford Child safe policies and procedures.
- 4.2 The Executive Management team receives a report on the effectiveness of Ozford's child safety practices through a report on its child safe framework annually. Where any areas for improvement are identified, Ozford revises its strategies.
- 4.3 Ozford promotes its child safe policy and procedures by:
 - 4.3.1 Providing the Ozford child safe policies on the Ozford website
 - 4.3.2 Promoting Ozford's commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse in marketing and other pre-enrolment materials supplied to students and their families.
 - 4.3.3 Promoting Ozford's commitment to zero tolerance of child abuse in Ozford's annual report.
- 4.4 Ozford has practices in place including child safe screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel as detailed in the Human Resource policy.
- 4.5 The Executive management team ensures that Ozford develops and implements risk management strategies regarding child safety in school environments as detailed in the Child Safe Risk Management policy.
- 4.6 It is expected that all staff, volunteers, contractors, parents/ guardians/ care giver/homestay, students over the age of 18 years and any other member of the school community interacting with Ozford students in school environments (including after hours) to adhere to this policy and the Child Safe code of conduct below takes into account the interests of school staff (including professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular school staff), and the needs of all children.

4.7 All staff, volunteers, contractors, parents/ guardians/ care giver/homestay and any other member of the school community must:

- Observe child safety principles and manage child safety concerns in a sensitive, confidential, honest, responsible and timely manner
- Maintain professional relationships with students.
- As far as practical, ensure adults are not left alone with a child. Where left with the responsibility of a single child, staff should ensure they are in an open space in view of others.
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds including international students
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- As far as practical, not take students personal items (eg mobile phones, wallet etc) directly. If required, always request students to hand the items to you. Only take items directly from students in circumstances where there are safety concerns.
- Exercise caution when physical contact with a student is a necessary. All contact must be appropriate and acceptable (i.e. when assessing a student who is injured or ill may necessitate touching the student). As far as practical, staff are required to advise the child of what you intend doing and seek their consent.
- Report any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the principal or a member of the school leadership team
- If child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

4.8 All staff, volunteers, contractors, parents/ guardians/ care giver/homestay and any other member of the school community must not:

- Develop a relationship with any child that is, or that can be interpreted as having a personal rather than professional interest in a child
- Ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- Communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter

4.9 The Executive team ensure that Oxford has policies and procedures for reporting and responding to a child abuse incident including CCYP reportable conduct requirements as detailed in the Mandatory Reporting and Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Suspected Child Abuse policies. The policy also outlines the consequences for breaching these requirements.

4.10 The Executive team ensures that Oxford has strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children. These strategies include weekly mentor session and regular group forum with students to discuss safety issues.

5. FEEDBACK

Feedback or comments on this policy and procedure is welcomed by the listed responsible officer.