

Child Safety Policy and Procedures

1. Rationale

This policy 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.

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 and volunteers must comply with this policy and code of conduct.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to any Ozford staff, contractors, volunteers, parents, students and the wider community.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all Ozford school environments. School environments means any physical or virtual place made available by Ozford for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:
- A campus of the school;
 - Online learning 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).

2.2 See also:

Younger Student Policy and Procedures
Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures
Equal Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination Policy
Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures
Responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse Policy and Procedures
Code of Conduct Policy and Procedures

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 Ozford is committed to:
- 3.3.1 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, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable
- 3.3.2 Uphold the values and principles to create and maintain a child safe school environment
 - 3.3.3 Implement strategies and practices that promote and manage a culture of child safety
 - 3.3.4 Manage all child safety concerns in a sensitive, confidential, honest, responsible and timely manners
 - 3.3.5 Support, enable and encourage school staff, parents and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
 - 3.3.6 Support children in the school who disclose or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse
 - 3.3.7 Monitoring compliance to this policy

4. Guidelines and Code of Conduct

- 4.1 The objective of this Code of Conduct is to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur.
- 4.2 Staff members have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in the school environment.
- 4.3 All staff are required to obtain a Working with Children check before commencing employment at the school.
- 4.4 All staff, volunteers, contractors 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
 - Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
 - As far as practical, not to 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. (ie 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.

4.5 All staff, volunteers, contractors 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

4.6 The consequences for breaching this Code of Conduct will be commensurate with the severity of the breach.

4.7 The consequences may range from internal school actions to the involvement of the Victoria Police and/or DHHS Child Protection.

5. Procedures

Refer to Responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse Policy and Procedures for responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.