



## **Leadership in a child safe environment.**

### **Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety.**

Working with children can be very rewarding, and it brings additional responsibilities.

All staff must act to protect children from abuse in our organisation, and build an environment where children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. This requires a culture of child safety to be embedded throughout our organisation so that child safety is part of everyone's everyday thinking and practice. Such a culture is achieved through proactive leadership in demonstrating the appropriate values, attitudes and behaviours of an organisation.

Our school fosters a culture of openness, inclusiveness and awareness. Children and adults should know what to do if they observe or are subject to abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

All staff and volunteers must consider the safety of all children, and recognise the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

### **Governance in a child safe environment**

Leadership will take preventative, proactive and participatory approaches to child safety issues. The safety and wellbeing of children in our school should be a paramount consideration when developing activities, policies and management practices.

### **Leadership responsibilities**

Leadership is responsible for embedding a culture of child safety in our school, including using the below tools. Leadership will lead in protecting children from abuse, and must be made aware of child abuse allegations and risks and take responsibility for ensuring an appropriate response.

All allegations of child abuse and child safety concerns are treated very seriously by our school. This includes complying with all legal requirements, including reporting suspicions of child abuse to police and/or child protection. If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

### **Identify and analyse risk of abuse**

Our school will seek to prevent, detect and respond to child abuse risks. This includes a risk management strategy that sets out how our school identifies, assess, and takes steps to reduce or remove child abuse risks.

## Risk Management for Child Abuse

### Strengths

What are the strengths of our school?

What actions do we do well?

### Weaknesses

What are the weaknesses of our school?

What don't we do well?

### Opportunities

What are the opportunities our school can leverage?

What is going on around us that may be useful?

### Threats

What are the threats facing our school?

Who and what might cause us problems in the future and how?

## 1. Identify Risks

Brainstorm macro list of possible risks to our children.

What can or could happen?

## 2. Analyse Risks

Choose 1 risk from the list and explore using the A3 template.

- Give the risk a title
- Write a brief description of the risk, with a % indicator (risk level)
- List the possible causes of the risk
- List the possible consequences of the risk
- List the existing controls in place for the risk
- Establish a 'risk rating' using the charts ([consequence criteria](#), [likelihood criteria](#))

**Example Risk Management:**

**Short Title:** Physical Abuse

**Description (event):** Child is coming to school with multiple signs of physical abuse in foster care.

**Causes (list):**

- Family situation- abuse by foster parents or other children/adult
- Child is accident prone
- Participates in high risk activities

**Consequences:**

- Put downs by other students
- Low self esteem
- Disengagement in school
- Lack of trust in adults/people
- Behaviour issues

**Existing Controls:**

- School policies (we could list all of the policies and procedures in place)

**3. Evaluate Risk**

- Using the '**Risk Rating Matrix**' compare the risk rating with the DET acceptability chart

## DET Risk Management Framework - Assessment Tools

**Consequence Criteria:** This guide provides indicative terms against which the significance of risk is evaluated.

Descriptor	Educational Outcomes	Wellbeing and Safety	Operational	Finance	Reputation	Strategic
Insignificant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educational outcomes can be met with workarounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor injury requiring no first aid or peer support for stress / trauma event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives can be met with workarounds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small loss that can be absorbed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Internal impact (no external impact)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Impact can be managed through normal process</li> </ul>
Minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Learning outcomes / pathways achieved but below target</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Injury / ill health requiring first aid</li> <li>Peer support for stress / trauma event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives met with some resource impact</li> <li>Compliance incident(s) which are not systematic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of 'consumable' assets, &lt; 2% deviation from budget</li> <li>Minor fraud possible</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adverse comments local community media</li> <li>Short term stakeholder dissatisfaction / comment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimal impact on critical DET objectives</li> </ul>
Moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student's overall levels of Literacy and Numeracy static</li> <li>Partial achievement of targeted learning outcomes</li> <li>Increasing truancy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Injury / ill health requiring medical attention</li> <li>Stress / trauma event requiring professional support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives cannot be met without significant internal reprioritisation</li> <li>Regulatory breaches resulting in adverse inspections / reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of assets</li> <li>2% - 5% deviation from budget</li> <li>External audit management letter</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External scrutiny e.g. VAGO</li> <li>Adverse state media comment</li> <li>Stakeholder relationship impacted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significant adjustment to resource allocation and service delivery required to manage impact on corporate priority</li> </ul>
Major	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National targeted improvements not achieved</li> <li>Student dissatisfaction with access to pathways / transitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Injury / ill health requiring hospital admission</li> <li>Stress / trauma event requiring ongoing clinical support for multiple individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Objectives can only be met with additional resources</li> <li>Significant staff shortage impacting service delivery</li> <li>Serious failure to comply with regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of significant assets</li> <li>6% - 15% deviation from budget</li> <li>External audit qualification on accounts</li> <li>High end fraud committed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External investigation</li> <li>Adverse comments national media</li> <li>Stakeholder relationship tenuous</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to deliver core program / Govt priority</li> </ul>
Severe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literacy and Numeracy decline</li> <li>Reduction in access to quality pathways and transitions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fatality or permanent disability</li> <li>Stress / trauma event requiring extensive clinical support for multiple individuals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple objectives cannot be met</li> <li>Sustained non-compliance to legislation</li> <li>Adverse Court Ruling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of key assets</li> <li>&gt;15 % deviation from budget</li> <li>Systemic and high value fraud</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission of inquiry</li> <li>National front page headlines</li> <li>Stakeholder relationship irretrievably damaged</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to deliver several core programs / Govt priorities</li> </ul>

**Likelihood Criteria:** This guide provides the indicative terms against which the probability of a risk event occurrence is evaluated.

Descriptor	Description	Indicative %	Indicative Frequency
Almost Certain	Expected to occur	>95%	Multiple times in the next year
Likely	Probably will occur (no surprise)	66-95%	At least once in the next year
Possible	May occur at some stage	26-65%	Once in the next 3 years
Unlikely	Would be surprising if it occurred	5-25%	Once in the next 5 years
Rare	May never occur	<5%	Once in the next 10 years

**Note:**

- The **Likelihood Criteria** refers to the likelihood of the consequence descriptor you have selected i.e. the likelihood of a 'major' consequence.
- The **Indicative Frequency** may not be relevant when assessing risks related to repeated activities, or when objectives are to be delivered over discrete periods of time. It should not be the sole basis for assessment.

Risk Rating Matrix		Consequence				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Likelihood	Almost Certain	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Plot the risk on the 'current assessment chart' using a sticky note

#### **4. Treat Risks**

Identify and implement treatment options

##### **Code of Conduct**

Our school has a code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct and care required when working and interacting with children.

##### **Suitable employees and volunteers**

Our school will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. This includes police record and identity checks, Working with Children Checks where required, face-to-face interviews and detailed reference checks from previous employers, including from the applicant's most recent line manager.

##### **Support, train, supervise and enhance performance**

Our school will ensure that volunteers and employees who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to help protect children from abuse. Leadership will be a point of contact for others who have questions or concerns or want to report an allegation of abuse.

##### **Promote inclusion**

Our school will be inclusive to all children and families. In particular, our school will establish a culture that supports:

cultural safety for Aboriginal children, for example by working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal community controlled organisations

cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, for example by using inclusive language and images in policy documents, and communications such as the website and newsletters

the safety of children with a disability, for example by ensuring our school is accessible to everyone and ensuring appropriate training and supervision of staff and volunteers working with children with a disability.

##### **Empower and promote the participation of children in decision-making.**

Our school will promote the involvement and participation of children in developing and maintaining child safe environments. Opportunities for children to express their views on our child safe policy or code of conduct, may be sought as appropriate.

We must listen to children and take them seriously, particularly if they are disclosing abuse or concerns for their safety or the safety of other children.

prepare. The Department of Education and Training and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority will provide information and materials specifically for schools to assist with capacity building and compliance.



## **Our Policy Commitment to Child Safety**

### **Woody Yaloak Primary School is committed to child safety.**

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Woody Yaloak Primary School is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

We have robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Woody Yaloak Primary School is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

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

### **Our children**

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in our organisation. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our school, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

## **Our staff and volunteers**

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our organisation.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

## **Training and supervision**

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Woody Yaloak Primary School aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. Inappropriate behaviour will be reported including to the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

## **Recruitment**

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, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check

We carry out reference checks and police record checks 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. 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.

## **Fair procedures for personnel**

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.

## **Privacy**

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

## **Legislative responsibilities**

Our organisation takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

**Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.

**Failure to protect:** People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

Any personnel who are mandatory reporters must comply with their duties.

## **Risk management**

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in organisations on social media).

## **Regular review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years 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.

## **Allegations, concerns and complaints**

Our organisation takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above).

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)

behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed

someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it

observing suspicious behaviour.



## **Code of Conduct**

All staff, volunteers and School Councillors of Woody Yaloak Primary School are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of Woody Yaloak Primary School are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

adhering to Woody Yaloak Primary School child safe policy at all times and upholding our statement of commitment to child safety at all time

taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse

treating everyone with respect

listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another

promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children by never questioning an Aboriginal child's self-identification

promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds

promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability

ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child

reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Principal or a member of the leadership team, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection

reporting any child safety concerns to the Principal or a member of the leadership team

if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe

Staff and volunteers must not:

develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)

exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical

put children at risk of abuse

do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes

engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children

use inappropriate language in the presence of children

express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children

discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability

have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our Principal's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate

have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters)

ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the principal of Woody Yaloak Primary School.

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

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....



## **Child Safe Recruitment Checklist for Woody Yaloak Primary School.**

Robust recruitment processes help ensure the best applicants are employed. From advertising through to conducting interviews and checking the background of applicants, it is important that each step is done consistently and thoroughly.

### **Selection criteria**

We will develop appropriate selection criteria for any advertised position to reduce the risk of appointing someone who poses a child safety risk. We will also ensure that applicants have the specific knowledge and skills required for the position.

Examples of appropriate selection criteria may include:

*'Must have experience working with children.'*

*'Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with children.'*

Applicants should have the opportunity to indicate their understanding of, or any experience they have in working with children with diverse needs and/or backgrounds.

### **Advertising**

Woody Yaloak Primary School promotes the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability. When advertising positions we will ensure advertisements include statements that promote safety. Such statements could be similar to those below:

*'Woody Yaloak Primary School promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children, including those with a disability. Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with children with a disability.'*

*'This organisation promotes the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children, and encourages applications from Aboriginal peoples.'*

*'Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with Aboriginal children and/or communities.'*

*'This organisation promotes the safety and wellbeing of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and encourages applications from people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse background.'*

## Interviews

The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right people to work at Woody Yaloak Primary School and in identifying any people who may pose a risk to children. Sufficient time will be allowed to plan and prepare for the interview process, and form an interview panel with the right mix of experience and skills to carry out the interview, ensuring that all panel members are clear on what the position requires.

Interviews may include open-ended style of behavioural-based questions which will give the panel insight into the applicant's values, attitudes and understanding of professional boundaries and accountability. Some useful questions may include:

*'Tell us about why you want to work with children?'*

*'Describe a time when you had to manage a child whose behaviour you found challenging?'*

*'Tell us about a time when you had to comfort a distressed child?'*

## Pre-employment screening

Woody Yaloak Primary School will screen applicants (including paid and volunteer positions) in an effort to help prevent people who may abuse children from entering our school.

Interview panels will check if applicants have any criminal convictions, formal disciplinary action taken against them, or any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct.

A police record check will be conducted.

## Working with Children Check

Under the *Working with Children Act 2005*, people who are doing child-related work, and who are not exempt, need a Working with Children Check. This applies to both paid and volunteer workers. Applicants will provide evidence of their Working with Children Check, or evidence of their application for a Working with Children Check.

## Referee checks

Interview panels will always speak to at least two referees to help assess an applicant's character and skills. When speaking with the referees, panels should seek to establish the referee's relationship with the applicant, including:

how long the applicant and referee worked together

the specifics of the position

the applicant's perceived strengths and weaknesses

whether the referee would hire the person again, particularly in a role working with children, and whether they have any concerns about the applicant working with children.

# Child Abuse Incident Report.

The child safe standards require organisations that provide services for children to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. Woody Yaloak Primary School may provide this resource to a child or their family if they disclose an allegation of abuse or safety concern in our school. Staff may also use this resource to record disclosures.

All incident reports must be stored securely.

## Incident details

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

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

## Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

*(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)*

No  Yes, Aboriginal  Yes, Torres Strait Islander

## Please categorise the incident

Physical violence

Sexual offence

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious neglect

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

## Please describe the incident

When did it take place?	
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<b>Who was involved?</b>	
<b>What did you see?</b>	
<b>Other information</b>	

### Parent/carer/child use

<b>Date of incident:</b>	
<b>Time of incident:</b>	
<b>Location of incident:</b>	
<b>Name(s) of child/children involved:</b>	
<b>Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:</b>	

### Office use:

<b>Date incident report received:</b>	
<b>Staff member managing incident:</b>	
<b>Follow-up date:</b>	
<b>Incident ref. number:</b>	

### Has the incident been reported?

<b>Child protection</b>	
<b>Police</b>	
<b>Another third party (please specify):</b>	

### Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

*(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)*

Yes  No



### **If a child discloses an incident of abuse to you**

- Try and separate them from the other children discreetly and listen to them carefully
- Let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred
- Reassure the child that you take what they are saying seriously, and it is not their fault and that they are doing the right thing
- Explain to them that this information may need to be shared with others, such as with their parent/carer, specific people in your organisation, or the police
- Do not make promises to the child such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe
- Do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them
- Provide them with an incident report form to complete, or complete it together, if you think the child is unable to do this
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, record the information using the child's words and report the disclosure to your manager or your organisation's child safety officer/champion,<sup>1</sup> police or child protection
- Ensure the disclosure is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely

### **If a parent/carer says their child has been abused in your organisation or raises a concern**

Explain that your organisation has processes to ensure all abuse allegations are taken very seriously.

Ask about the wellbeing of the child.

Allow the parent/carer to talk through the incident in their own words.

Advise the parent/carer that you will take notes during the discussion to capture all details.

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<sup>1</sup>

Explain to them the information may need to be repeated to authorities or others, such as the Principal, the police or child protection.

Do not make promises at this early stage, except that you will do your best to keep the child safe.

Provide them with an incident report form to complete, or complete it together.

Ask them what action they would like to take and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be.

Ensure the report is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely.

We need to be aware that some people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers in reporting allegations of abuse. We will be sensitive to these issues and meet people's needs where possible.

If an allegation of abuse involves an Aboriginal child, we will ensure a culturally appropriate response by seeking local Aboriginal communities or an Aboriginal community controlled organisation to review policies and procedures.

Some children with a disability may experience barriers disclosing an incident. Children with hearing or cognitive impairments may need support to help them explain the incident. If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

## Legal responsibilities

Every adult who reasonably believes that a child has been abused has an obligation to report that belief to authorities.

The **failure to disclose** criminal offence requires all adults (aged 18 and over) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 to disclose that information to police (unless they have a reasonable excuse not to, for example because they fear for their safety or the safety of another).

**Mandatory reporters** (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), principals and police) must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

The **failure to protect** criminal offence (commenced on 1 July 2015) applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so.



## Strategies to Embed a Culture of Child Safety at Woody Yaloak Primary School.

Woody Yaloak Primary School is committed to embedding a child safe culture by implementing the following strategies.

<b>School Council</b>		
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
The school governing authority (School Council) communicates that it has <b>zero tolerance of child abuse</b> .	Statement of commitment to appear on the school website.	Principal & School Council President
	Statement made at the beginning of each year in the school newsletter.	Principal & School Council President
Child safety is a standing item for discussion at meetings of the school governing authority.	Child safety to be a standing agenda item on at least 4 occasions in a given year.	Principal & School Council President
Child safety strategies are developed and enhanced through ongoing review of the effectiveness of practice.	This statement to be reviewed annually by School Council.	Principal & School Council President
An appropriate reporting process is in place for child abuse that includes overseeing outcomes.	This statement that outlines the reporting process is developed and reviewed annually by School Council.	Principal
The school governing authority oversees the implementation and improvement of child safety strategies.	Achieved through actions listed above.	All members of School Council
The school governing authority communicates with the school community about the school's child	Statement of commitment to child safety appears on the school website.	Principal & School Council President

safety strategies and their implementation.	Statement made at the beginning of each year in the school newsletter.	Principal & School Council President
The school reports on child safety in its annual report.	Mention of child safety made in the 'wellbeing section' of the Annual Report.	Principal

<b>School staff (includes contractors and volunteers)</b>		
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Ensuring awareness of the child safety strategies in place at our school and the allocated roles and responsibilities assigned to staff.	<p>Induction in child safety for all staff (including contractors &amp; volunteers)</p> <p>Student Wellbeing Team to agenda student safety at least once each term.</p> <p>Leadership Team to agenda child safety as a standing item at each meeting.</p> <p>Child safety is a standing item for discussion at whole staff meetings at least once each term. In a calendar year this will include training with regards to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Communicating our whole school approach to child safety and the responsibilities of all staff in acting accordingly</li> <li>● Detecting inappropriate behaviour</li> <li>● Encouragement to report and the process for reporting inappropriate behaviour.</li> </ul>	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing
Pre-employment reference checks that include checking for child safety through:	<p>Pre-employment checks to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Checking of identification for staff as part of recruitment.</li> <li>● Criminal history checks and confirming currency of Working with Children Check/Victorian Institute of Teaching registration.</li> <li>● Obtaining verified academic transcripts for staff as part of recruitment.</li> </ul>	Principal

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Query gaps in employment history.</li> <li>• Reference checks with previous employers and other relevant contacts.</li> </ul>	
Foster a culture of openness with approachable and supportive managers.	Leadership to always role model a willingness to listen and respond appropriately to all situations without favour or bias.	All principal class officers

<b>Children</b>		
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Children are made aware of how to detect and report inappropriate behaviour. Children are encouraged to report inappropriate behaviour.	A protective behaviours program (or equivalent) is to be delivered across the school each year. The program will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping children identify situations that 'don't feel right'</li> <li>• Informing children as to how they can report inappropriate behaviour</li> <li>• Encouragement for children to report inappropriate behaviour</li> </ul>	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing
The school has nominated contact persons that children can approach in relation to child safety.	Nominated contact people to be the principal or assistant principal in charge of student wellbeing	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing
The school has child safety reporting procedures.	A document outlining child safety reporting procedures to be developed and shared with staff and parents. This	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing

	document to appear on the school website.	
The school provides counselling and other resources to support children.	Considered response is implemented in all cases where child safety concerns have been raised, including counselling for effected students.	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing

<b>Environment</b>		
<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
The school has child safety strategies in place for all physical school environments,	<p>The school has a Child Safe policy that includes strategies for managing physical environments. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ regularly reviewing the physical environment to ensure all risks are identified and managed</li> <li>○ assessing new or changed physical environments for child safety risks</li> <li>○ supervising or monitoring activities.</li> </ul>	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing
The school has child safety strategies for its online environments (eg intranets, online learning systems, social media)	<p>The school has a Child Safe policy that includes strategies for managing online learning environments. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ clear boundaries of roles between staff and children</li> <li>○ proactive strategies to detect inappropriate behaviour such as online searches (Google, Facebook etc).</li> </ul>	Principal, Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing and IT Leader
Visitors are appropriately screened and supervised.	The school has a Child Safe policy that includes strategies to minimise the chances of visitors posing a risk to students	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing



## **Strategies to Promote Child Empowerment and Participation.**

At Woody Yaloak Primary School children will feel safe and comfortable in reporting concerns or allegations of abuse. Woody Yaloak Primary School has a simple and accessible process that helps children understand what to do if they want to report abuse, inappropriate behaviour or concerns for their safety. All personnel working or visiting our school need to have an awareness of children's rights and adults' responsibilities regarding child abuse.

### **Rationale**

Children often do not report abuse because they feel uncomfortable or they do not know how to raise their concerns or allegations of abuse. We will provide children with child-appropriate and accessible information about what child abuse is, their rights to make decisions about their body and their privacy, that no one has a right to injure them, and how they can raise concerns about abuse.

Information will be included in Woody Yaloak Primary School Information Packs.

We will ensure information and processes for reporting concerns are accessible to all children, and all children are informed about this.

At Woody Yaloak Primary School we will:

Consider access and culturally appropriate language, photographs and artwork for Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability when drafting communications materials.

Translate organisational information (including information about children's rights, child safe policies, and statements of commitment and reporting and response procedures) into relevant community languages.

Gather feedback from children, for example through surveys, focus groups, story time and social media, about whether they would feel safe and taken seriously if they were to raise concerns, and implement improvements based on this feedback.

Enable children to express their views and make suggestions on what child safety means to them, and on child safe policies, reporting and response procedures, and acknowledge and act upon these where possible. For example, views could be gathered through suggestion boxes, feedback sessions, emails etc.

Ensure services are accessible for people with a disability.

Train relevant staff and volunteers on methods of empowering children and encouraging children's participation.

Ensure Aboriginal children are accepted when identifying as Aboriginal, and that staff and volunteers understand appropriate responses to children identifying as Aboriginal.

Encourage participation and empowerment of children in other organisational activities, such as organisational planning and decision making.

Raise awareness in the community about children's rights, for example through staff conversations with families and communications such as websites and newsletters.

Through successfully implementing the above strategies we expect all children at Woody Yaloak Primary School will feel confident in being able to:

Use reporting procedures when they feel unsafe and have access to all relevant support and materials.

Understand what child abuse is, and their rights (age appropriate)

Understand how to report an allegation of abuse or concern for their safety to the organisation, a trusted adult and external bodies (for example, the police)

Feel safe, empowered and taken seriously if they raise concerns

Feel empowered to contribute to the organisation's understanding and treatment of child safety

Know and understand that their reports of concern are responded to appropriately

Staff understand how to empower children and encourage their participation.