**CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY**

 **Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Hastings Primary School: (03) 5979 1517

**Purpose**

The Hastings Primary School Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our school’s commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This policy provides an overview of our school’s approach to implementing [Ministerial Order 1359](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/Ministerial_Order.pdf) (PDF, 363KB) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school community of everyone’s obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

**The Child Safe Standards**

The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian schools to ensure they are well prepared to keep children and young people safe and protect them from abuse.

**Additional Standards have been added** to create and maintain a child safe organisation, an entity to which the standards apply must have:

* [Standard 1: Culturally safe environments](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-culturally-safe-environments-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2DRylmfB7v1Tf4gVLxcOXXMmzEDTki%2FUQs%2FjkyNQGkw%3D&reserved=0) – Establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
* [Standard 2: Leadership, governance and culture](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-embed-child-safety-standards-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ettCeH%2BiNAUY%2BFiQvXymJP4KSJCeIEJAjavX%2FiT2nw8%3D&reserved=0) – Ensure that child safety and wellbeing are embedded in school leadership, governance and culture.
* [Standard 3: Child and student empowerment](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-child-student-empowerment-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=6cOFx7YzaY%2BIcIRIuggwaIWpFT4U4TvzmG5spwfRgag%3D&reserved=0) – Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
* [Standard 4: Family engagement](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-family-engagement-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=HDKfFeJ2n1la5JZSNch9Mg5JR6wBqHMZTYfiZ1DvhkQ%3D&reserved=0) – Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
* [Standard 5: Diversity and equity](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-diversity-equity-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=KzLzfZ8GjPKDFL%2BXKb%2Fr%2Fr1%2BPphIJGExQj6Yr74zJvw%3D&reserved=0) – Equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice.
* [Standard 6: Suitable staff and volunteers](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-suitable-staff-volunteers-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=ZSwYY39NUbnKpqMiLCMHpN6SkDy41kYtXVMJeFeJP9g%3D&reserved=0) – People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
* [Standard 7: Child-focused complaints processes](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-complaints-process-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=XxiuwPpDZsUE0qKHJLwiEaV%2BjXGIgRIz%2FGyaOSmWK9c%3D&reserved=0) – Ensure that processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.
* [Standard 8: Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-knowledge-skills-awareness-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=4bzqAeYO63%2BUYm8m4ekns1aa9eF1C0%2BJSxLAti2%2F68A%3D&reserved=0) – Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
* [Standard 9: Physical and online environments](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-physical-and-online-environments-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=dcCLZctbr2sJJgJd3JGise6LKGZJxUkknLia75EnBEQ%3D&reserved=0) – Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
* [Standard 10: Review of child safety practices](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-review-child-safety-practices-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=jzHw5pa%2B1DCdmr2tIorVKaQ%2FIjhbBhlA3JLEUT%2FTTx0%3D&reserved=0) - Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
* [Standard 11: Implementation of child safety practices](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.vic.gov.au%2Fschools-implementation-child-safety-practices-guidance&data=05%7C01%7CRebecca.Legge%40education.vic.gov.au%7C5d1b462dcd2543123ad008da66038087%7Cd96cb3371a8744cfb69b3cec334a4c1f%7C0%7C0%7C637934462493820235%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=RCJ9kdCnCSIRt%2FUPJbXjpjyTvjWK%2Fg3xKYq%2B61sj784%3D&reserved=0) – Policies and procedures that document how schools are safe for children, young people and students.

## Scope

This policy:

* applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school council members where indicated.
* applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by for a student’s use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers
* should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

## Definitions

The following terms in this policy have [specific definitions](https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions):

**Child**

* Child means a child or young person who is under the age of 18 years.

**Child safety**

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

**Child abuse**

* Child abuse includes:

a) any act committed against a child involving:

* + a sexual offence
  + grooming offences under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958

b) the infliction, on a child, of:

* + physical violence
  + serious emotional or psychological harm

c) the serious neglect of a child.

* Emotional child abuse occurs when a child is repeatedly rejected, isolated, or frightened by threats. It also includes hostility, derogatory name-calling and put-downs, and persistent coldness from a person to the extent that the child suffers, or is likely to suffer, emotional or psychological harm to their physical or developmental health.
* Physical child abuse is any non-accidental infliction of physical violence on a child by any person. It can be inflicted in many ways, including beating, shaking or burning and assault with implements and female genital mutilation.
* Child sexual abuse is when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve them in sexual activity. It can include a wide range of sexual activity. Sexual offences are governed by the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)

**Child-connected work**

* Child-connected work means:

a) work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present

b) for the purposes of a school boarding premises, work authorised by the provider of school boarding premises in a school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

* Note: Working with Children clearance is required by law only for people who engage in child-related work. Schools and school boarding premises may also choose to require suitability checks (including Working with Children clearance) for visitors and volunteers engaging in child-connected work.

**Child-related work**

* The Worker Screening Act 2020 defines ‘child-related work’ as work which usually involves (or is likely to involve) direct contact with a child, irrespective of whether that contact is supervised or not, and in any of the child-related occupational fields listed in the Act.
* The definition of direct contact includes oral, written or electronic communication as well as face-to-face and physical contact. ‘Child-related work’ may be either paid or unpaid (voluntary).
* There are exemptions from the Act including people under 18 years of age, parent volunteers whose child ordinarily participates in the activity, sworn police officers, teachers currently registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, and visiting workers who do not ordinarily reside and perform child-related work in Victoria, among others.

**School environment**

* School environment means any of the following physical, online or virtual places, used during or outside school hours:

a) A campus of the school

b) Online or virtual school environments made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child or student (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services)

c) Other locations provided by the school or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for:

* + camps
  + approved homestay accommodation;
  + delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school; or (iv) sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.

**School boarding environment**

* School boarding environment means any physical, online or virtual space made available or authorised by the school boarding premises governing authority for a child or student boarding at a school boarding premises to use at any time, including:
* online or virtual school boarding environments (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services)
* other locations provided by the provider of school boarding services or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for:
* camps
* approved homestay accommodation
* delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school
* sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events

**School staff**

* school staff means:

a) in a government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:

* + employed under Part 2.4 of the ETR Act in the Government teaching service
  + employed under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act
  + a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by the school governing authority to perform child-related work

b) in a non-Government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:

* + directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
  + a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by the school governing authority to perform child-related work
  + a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the school.

**School boarding premises staff**

* School boarding premises staff means:

a) in a government school boarding premises, an individual working in a school boarding premises environment who is:

* + employed by the school boarding premises governing authority
  + a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by the school boarding premises governing authority to perform child-related work.

b) in a non-government school boarding premises, an individual working in a school boarding environment who is:

* + directly engaged or employed by the school boarding premises governing authority
  + a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by the school boarding premises governing authority to perform child-related work
  + a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the school.

**School governing authority**

* School governing authority means:
* a) the proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor
* b) the governing body for a school (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of a school or the ETR Act
* c) the Principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the ETR Act.

**School boarding premises governing authority**

* School boarding premises governing authority means:
* the provider of school boarding services
* the governing body for a school boarding premises (however described) as authorised by the provider of school boarding services or the ETR Act.

**Student**

* Student means a person who is enrolled at or attends the school or a student at the school boarding premises.

**Volunteer**

* Volunteer means a person who performs work without remuneration or reward for the school or school boarding premises in the school environment or school boarding premises environment.

## Statement of commitment to child safety

Hasting Primary School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child’s safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies. If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse, please phone 000.

## Roles and responsibilities

**School leadership team**

Our school leadership team is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

Principals and Assistant Principals will:

* ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
* model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
* enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
* reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
* promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings
* facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of responding to abuse
* create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

**School staff and volunteers**

All staff and volunteers will:

* participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education and Training, and always follow the school’s child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
* act in accordance with our Child Safety Code of Conduct
* identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/report.aspx)
* ensure students’ views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
* implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

**School council**

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, school council members will:

* champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
* ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings
* undertake annual training on child safety
* approve updates to, and act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members
* when hiring school council employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe. At our school, school council employment duties are delegated to the Principal who is bound by this policy.

### **Specific staff child safety responsibilities**

Hastings Primary School has nominated the Assistant Principal to support the Principal to implement our child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training.

The responsibilities of the Assistant Principal are outlined at [Guidance for child safety champions](https://www.vic.gov.au/guidance-child-safety-champions).

Our Principal and Assistant Principal are the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

* The Assistant Principal is responsible for monitoring the school’s compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our school community should approach the Assistant Principal if they have any concerns about the school’s compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
* The Principal and Assistant Principal are responsible for informing the school community about this policy, and making it publicly available
* Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and Child Safety Risk Register.

Our school has also established a Child Safety and Wellbeing Team. The Child Safety and Wellbeing Team meet regularly to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safety and wellbeing.

Our Risk Management Committee monitors the Child Safety Risk Register.

## Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

## Managing risks to child safety and wellbeing

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Our school leadership team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

## Establishing a culturally safe environment

At Hastings Primary School we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community:

* equip staff, students, volunteers and the school community to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students
* adopt measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated
* address any instances of racism within the school environment with appropriate consequences
* actively support participation and inclusion in the school by Aboriginal children, students and their families
* ensure school policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, students and their families
* develop and endorse a policy or statement detailing the strategies and actions the school will take.

## Student empowerment

To support child safety and wellbeing at Hastings Primary School, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging implementing our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships and our Student Code of Conduct (found on our school website) which underpins the school values of caring, respecting and learning.

**CARING means** to display kindness, empathy, sensitivity and understanding to those within our community and beyond.

**CARING is**

**COMPASSION** - Feeling and showing empathy and understanding to others.

**CONNECTEDNESS** - Taking action to care for our community and environment with thoughtfulness and consideration.

**CONSIDERATION** - Being a welcoming, friendly and reliable member of our community.

**RESPONSIBILITY** - Seeking to make amends when we do harm.

**RESPECTING means -** appreciating and valuing ourselves and others, and demonstrating this in our behaviours and attitudes.

**RESPECTING is**

**SELF RESPECT** - Accepting and valuing who we are, and doing the very best we can.

**INCLUSION** - Valuing diversity and understanding everyone has a voice.

**BELONGING -** Actively supporting others to feel included and accepted members of our school community.

**INTEGRITY** - Being honest, trustworthy and loyal.

**LEARNING means** a step-by-step process in which an individual experiences permanent, lasting changes in knowledge, behaviours or ways of processing the world.

**LEARNING is**

**ENGAGEMENT** - Being curious, motivated and engaged in learning.

**ENDEAVOUR** - Having a growth mindset and believing you can learn more with effort.

**RESILIENCE -** Taking risks in our learning and accepting mistakes as opportunities to learn and grow.

**UNDERSTANDING -** Making sense of the world through the use of critical and creative inquiry skills.

**DETERMINATION -** Being optimistic and confident about finding solutions and positive outcomes.

We inform students of their rights through our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns at the school office.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant’s account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

Hastings Primary School will:

* Inform students of their rights
* Empower students to contribute to school life
* Empower students to raise their concerns
* Strengthen peer support for safety and wellbeing
* Establish protective factors

### Communicate in a respectful and age-appropriate way

### Use sensitivity and build trust

**Family engagement**

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children’s safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Hastings Primary School we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school’s child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this by:

### creating a welcoming environment

* ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
* engaging families and communities in building a child safe organisation
* newsletters and the COMPASS Parent Portal will inform families and the school community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety
* maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff
* PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed across the school
* providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
* seeking input from families and the community
* involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
* coordinating resources and services from the community for families
* including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual education plans for students.

## Diversity and equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

* Aboriginal children and young people
* children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
* children and young people with disabilities
* children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
* international students
* children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

Hastings Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, positive behaviour and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise there are diverse backgrounds, needs and circumstances for all of our students. A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

* high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
* prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
* creating a culture that is respectful, inclusive, engaging and supportive
* welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
* analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
* teachers at Hastings Primary School use the Framework for Improving Student Outcomes [FISO] and the Workshop Model [instructional framework] to ensure;
  + an explicit, common and shared model of instruction that is evidenced-based,
  + high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons.
* teachers at Hastings Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
* our school’s Statement of Values are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
* carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
* positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
* monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
* students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on:
  + Decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Social Circle Groups.
  + Lesson delivery and learning supports provided by teachers to ensure that students are progressing towards their academic and social goals.
  + Yard and social expectations through restorative conversations and feedback circles which are facilitated by staff in classrooms and during lunchtimes.
  + Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
* create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
* All students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, First Aid person, Year Group Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an ‘open door’ policy where students and staff are partners in learning
* we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  + Restorative Practices
  + Resilience Programs
  + RRRR
  + Mentoring
* programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
* opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime clubs)
  + buddy programs, peers support programs, Wellbeing camps

Targeted

* connect all Koorie students with a Koorie Engagement Support Officer
* all students in Out of Home Care will have an Individual Learning Plan and will be referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
* wellbeing and health staff will undertake health promotion and social skills development in response to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
* staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma
* students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department’s policy on [Students with Disability](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/students-disability/policy), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans

We are committed to providing exceptional engagement strategies for:

* English as a second language students, who would be supported through an Individual Learning Plan [ILP] inclusive of all cultural and linguistically diverse students, who are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through the respectful relationships curriculum and restorative approaches to conflict,
* students from refugee backgrounds will be supported through and IEP and access to our School Chaplain and School Counsellor.
* we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department’s policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support]](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/lgbtiq-student-support/policy) and through the delivery of the RRRR curriculum.
* students enrolled under the Department’s international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/international-student-program/guidance/supporting-students-learning-and-engagement-section-7)

Individual

* [Student Support Groups](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-groups/policy)
* [Individual Education Plans](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/individual-education-plans-ieps/policy)
* [Disability Inclusion](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/learningneeds/Pages/disability-inclusion.aspx)
* [Student Support Services](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-support-services/policy)
* Within the school - referral to Student Welfare Coordinator, HPS Paediatric clinic, Private Psychologists, Private Speech Pathologist, Biala Occupational Therapist, Chaplain and Student Support Services
* Referral to Orange door- Anglicare, Child First, Good Shepherd, OzChild, DFFH, Headspace
* [Mental health toolkit](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/mentalhealth/Pages/mentalhealthtoolkit.aspx)
* [Headspace](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/mentalhealth/Pages/headspace-counselling-secondary.aspx)
* [LOOKOUT](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/lookout.aspx)

Hastings Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

* building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
* meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school
* developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
* considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
* referring the student to:
  + school-based wellbeing supports
  + Student Support Services
  + Appropriate external supports such as council-based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, headspace, child and adolescent mental health services or Child First
  + Re-engagement programs such as Navigator

Where necessary the school will support the student’s family to engage by:

* being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student’s circumstances and health and wellbeing
* collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
* monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
* running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
  + with a disability
  + in Out of Home Care
  + and with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.

Hastings Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Hastings Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

* personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
* attendance records
* academic performance
* observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
* attendance, Restorative Room attendance and suspension data
* engagement with families
* self-referrals or referrals from peers

## Suitable staff and volunteers

At Hastings Primary School, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

**Staff recruitment**

When recruiting staff, we follow the Department of Education and Training’s recruitment policies and guidelines, available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at:

* [Recruitment in Schools](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/recruitment-schools/overview)
* [Suitability for Employment Checks](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suitability-employment-checks/overview)
* [School Council Employment](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/school-council-employment/overview)
* [Contractor OHS Management](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/contractor-ohs-management/policy).

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

* sight, verify and record the person’s Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
* collect and record:
  + proof of the person’s identity and any professional or other qualifications
  + the person’s history of working with children
  + references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

### Staff induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

* the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
* the Child Safety Code of Conduct
* the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures and
* any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

### Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done by regular performance reviews.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school and department policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

### Suitability of volunteers

All volunteers are required to comply with our Volunteers Policy which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

## Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

* our school’s child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
* completing the [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](http://elearn.com.au/det/protectingchildren/) online module annually
* recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
* responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
* how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
* information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
* how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

### School council training and education

To ensure our school council is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment, the council is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

* individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
* child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment
* Hastings Primary School’s child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

## Complaints and reporting processes

Hastings Primary School fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school’s Complaint Policy. The Complaints Policy can be found on our website.

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including school council employees) must follow our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures. Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

* the [Four Critical Actions](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/FourCriticalActions_ChildAbuse.pdf) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
* the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/stusexual.aspx) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

## Communications

Hastings Primary School is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

* ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document), Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure
* displaying PROTECT posters around the school
* updates in our school newsletter and COMPASS Parent Portal
* ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings.

## Privacy and information sharing

Hastings Primary School collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to: [Schools’ Privacy Policy](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/schoolsprivacypolicy.aspx).

## Records management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the Department of Education and Training’s policy: [Records Management – School Records](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/records-management/policy)

## Review of child safety practices

At Hastings Primary School we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

We will:

* review and improve our policy every 2 years or after any significant child safety incident
* analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
* act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community.

## Related policies and procedures

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

* Bullying Prevention Policy
* Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
* Child Safety Code of Conduct
* Complaints Policy
* Digital Learning Policy
* Inclusion and Diversity Policy
* Visitors Policy
* Volunteers Policy

### **Related Department of Education and Training policies**

* [Bullying Prevention and Response Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/bullying-prevention-response/policy)
* [Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/information-sharing-schemes/policy)
* [Complaints Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/complaints/policy)
* [Contractor OHS Management Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/contractor-ohs-management/policy)
* [Digital Learning in Schools Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/digital-learning/policy)
* [Family Violence Support](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/family-violence-support/policy)
* [Protecting Children: Reporting Obligations Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/protecting-children/policy)
* [Policy and Guidelines for Recruitment in Schools](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/recruitment-schools/policy-and-guidelines)
* [Reportable Conduct Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/reportable-conduct-scheme/policy)
* [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/student-engagement/policy)
* [Supervision of Students Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/supervision-students/policy)
* [Visitors in Schools Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/visitors/policy)
* [Volunteers in Schools Policy](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/volunteers/policy)
* [Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suitability-checks/policy)

### **Other related documents**

* [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandard5_SchoolsGuide.pdf)
* [Four Critical Actions for Schools](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/FourCriticalActions_ChildAbuse.pdf)
* [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/SSO_Policy.pdf)
* [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/FourCriticalActions_SSO.pdf)
* [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/PROTECT_Schoolstemplate.pdf)

## Policy status and review

The Principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

## Approval

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| --- | --- |
| Created date | July 2022 |
| Consultation | School Council – Feb 2024  Staff – Feb 2024 |
| Endorsed by | Simone McDonald  Principal |
| Endorsed on | 13th February 2024 |
| Next review date | February 2025 |