

# Mornington Special Developmental School

## CHILD SAFE POLICY

### Standard 2

#### **Rationale:**

Victoria has introduced compulsory minimum standards that will apply to organisations that provide services for children to help protect children from all forms of abuse. The child safe standards form part of the Victorian Government's response to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry.

Ministerial Order No. 870 sets out specific actions that registered schools need to take to meet the Child Safe Standards.

The child safe environments policy sets out the school's approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

This policy will apply to all staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people.

A child safe environment applies to all school environments (inclusive of physical and online environments) and includes all school excursions, camps and competitions and other events.

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

Mornington Special Developmental School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people in our care are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. We always promote and protect the best interests of the students involved in its programs.

#### **Definition:**

All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background have equal rights to protection from abuse.

#### **Policy:**

Mornington Special Developmental School has zero tolerance for child abuse which includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm and serious neglect of a child.

Child protection is a shared responsibility between Mornington SDS, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the Mornington SDS community.

Mornington SDS will consider the opinions of children and use their opinions to develop child protection policies.

Mornington SDS supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers.

Mornington SDS is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

**Responsibilities:**

The Principal of Mornington SDS has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. The School Council is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Protection Code of Conduct are in place.

**Implementation:**

Mornington Special Developmental School will implement the Child Safe Standards to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students at the school. Mornington Special Developmental School will promote an organisational culture that manages the risk of child abuse and neglect through widespread understanding and compliance of the seven standards set out below.

**Standard 1:** Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety

**Standard 2:** A child safety policy or a statement of commitment to child safety

**Standard 3:** A Child Safety Code of Conduct

**Standard 4:** Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse

**Standard 5:** Procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

**Standard 6:** Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

**Standard 7:** Strategies to promote child participation and empowerment

**Reporting Procedure and Investigation**

The Principal of Mornington SDS is responsible for:

- Dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse according to DET Policy and Procedures.
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct;
- Ensuring that all adults within the Mornington SDS community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with DET policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- Providing support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All staff must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate / minimise any risk to the extent possible;
- Educate others about the prevention and detection of child abuse;
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.

Staff should be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

All staff/volunteers/contractors share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and Mornington SDS's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;

**Evaluation:**

This Policy will be disseminated annually to all school staff, students, and parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

This policy was last ratified by School Council on 12-9-19

School Council President ..... W. J. Beckett .....  
Valerie Beckett

Principal ..... D. Newport .....  
David Newport

**REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy is scheduled for review on 12/9/21