



## 2016 CHILD SAFE POLICY

### **Rationale:**

All Victorian schools are required to have a child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safe that detail:

- the principles that will guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe school environment; and
- the actions the school proposes to take to:
  - i. demonstrate its commitment to child safety and monitor the school's adherence to its child safety policy;
  - ii. support, encourage and enable school staff, parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters; and
  - iii. support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.

### **COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

Morang South Primary School is committed to providing a safe environment for all children and to protect them from any form of abuse or neglect. This policy has been written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the whole school community to Child safety. This community comprises of school leaders, staff, volunteers, contractors, students and their families.

All students enrolled, and any child visiting Morang South Primary School, have a right to feel safe and be safe at all times.

At Morang South Primary School we acknowledge that:

**Everyone has the right to work and learn.**

**Everyone has the right to feel safe and comfortable.**

### **Aims:**

- The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse and any inappropriate behaviour directed towards children.
- We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety, providing them with the best opportunity to flourish as human beings.

**Implementation:**

**EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS**

(Also refer: *Student Engagement and Well Being Policy 2015-2018*)

<b>Rights</b>	<b>Responsibilities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students have a right to work and learn.</li><li>• Students have a right to feel safe and comfortable.</li></ul>	<p>Students have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ be prepared to learn</li><li>➤ explore their full potential</li><li>➤ respect the rights of others</li><li>➤ adhere to the eLearning Agreement</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Staff have a right to work and learn.</li><li>• Staff have a right to feel safe and comfortable.</li></ul>	<p>Staff have a responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ build positive relationships with students as a basis for engagement and learning</li><li>➤ use and manage the resources of the school to create stimulating, safe and meaningful learning</li><li>➤ treat all members of the school community with respect, fairness and dignity</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents/carers/members of our school community and visitors have a right to work and learn.</li><li>• Parents/carers/members of our school community and visitors have a right to feel safe and comfortable.</li></ul>	<p>Parents/carers have a responsibility to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ take an active interest in their child's educational process</li><li>➤ model positive behaviour</li><li>➤ ensure their child's regular attendance</li><li>➤ maintain open communication</li><li>➤ support the school in maintaining an effective learning environment for all students.</li></ul>

The staff and volunteers of Morang South Primary School

- encourage students to express their views.
- listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them
- actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.
- teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe.
- listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us.

Morang South Primary School's commitment to student rights and responsibilities are detailed in our Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy.

This policy ensures that the students within our community are afforded the opportunities and rights that they deserve.

## **VALUING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

At Morang South Primary School we value and celebrate diversity, especially cultural diversity, and we do not tolerate discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students and their families.
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.
- promote the personal safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability and make them feel welcome and part of all aspects of school life, providing opportunity for students with disabilities to thrive.

*For additional information please refer to the MSPS Student Engagement and Well Being Policy 2015-2018*

## **RECRUITING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

- Morang South Primary School will apply the most thorough and rigorous standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers.
- We will interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers and require police checks and Working With Children Checks (WWCC) for all staff and volunteers who will be in contact with students.
- Our commitment to child safety and our screening requirements will be included in all discernment for staff and volunteer positions at the school.

## **SUPPORTING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

- Morang South Primary School will provide support and supervision to all staff and volunteers so people feel valued, respected, affirmed in their work and fairly treated.
- The school will maintain a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom will receive training on the requirements of the Code prior to commencement of duties.
- At least annually, the school will ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to the individual members of the school staff and School Council about:
  - individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse;
  - child abuse risks in the school environment; and
  - the school's current child safety standards.

## REPORTING A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

The school records any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Code of Conduct, and stores the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements.

The complaints and disclosure processes are outlined and detailed in the Mandatory reporting policy: Managing disclosure protocol is detailed below:

### ➤ **Forming a belief on reasonable grounds**

A person may form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection after becoming aware that a child or young person's health, safety or wellbeing is at risk.

### ➤ **Reporting a belief**

Mandated staff members (*Teachers and Principals*) must make a report to Child Protection as soon as practicable after forming a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection.

Staff members, **whether or not mandated**, need to report to the principal or assistant principal their belief when the belief is formed in the course of undertaking their professional duties.

A report must be made as soon as practicable after forming the belief and on each occasion on which they become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.

If one staff member has a different view from another staff member about making a report and the staff member continues to hold the belief that a child is in need of protection, that person is obliged to make a report.

*Please refer to the Mandatory Reporting Policy 2016 for procedures in response to allegations of child abuse.*

### **These procedures do not:**

- prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school;
- state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation;
- require staff to make a judgment about the truth of the allegation of child abuse; or
- prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

Morang South Primary School is committed to identifying and reducing or removing risks of child abuse.

Child Safety will appear as an item on the school's risk management register.

Where

- the risks will be identified and
- risk control strategies will be recorded and enacted to remove or reduce risks

As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.

*Explanatory note: Different risk controls may be necessary for particular groups of children depending on the nature of the risk and the diversity characteristics of children affected by the risk.*

## Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation

The school will develop strategies to deliver appropriate education about:

- standards of behaviour for students attending the school;
- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality);
- resilience; and
- child abuse awareness and prevention.

Morang South Primary School will promote the child safety standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.

## Evaluation:

- In addition to the annual evaluation of this policies effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.

<b>Date Implemented</b>	August 2016
<b>Author</b>	Principal
<b>Ratified By</b>	School Council – July 22 <sup>nd</sup>
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	27/07/2016
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	Assistant Principal
<b>Review Date</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual evaluation by Assistant Principal to ensure policy meets DET requirements.</li> <li>• School Council: 07/2020</li> </ul>
<b>Companion Policies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MSPS Student Engagement and Well Being Policy 2015</li> <li>• MSPS Duty of Care 2014</li> <li>• MSPS Mandatory Reporting 2016</li> <li>• MSPS Risk Management Policy 2016</li> </ul> <p><b>Related DET policies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Police and DHS Interviews</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Responding to Student Sexual Assault</a></li> </ul>

<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p>There are services that can be contacted to access more information, and in some cases, to speak to somebody about your concerns.</p> <p><u>National Child Abuse Helpline (Child Wise)</u> – 1800 991 099 A toll-free number with access to expert advice from trained counsellors and an opportunity to speak up about child abuse.</p> <p><u>Kids Helpline</u> 1800 551 800 For any time and for any reason – free, private and confidential phone and online counselling 24 hours a day 7 days a week.</p> <p><u>Headspace (National Youth Mental Health Foundation)</u> – 1800 650 890 Headspace can help if you are aged 12 or over and you are going through a tough time. You can talk to someone at Headspace on the phone, online or in person. They also have a lot of information on their website.</p> <p><u>Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault</u> – 1800 806 292 Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault provide services to child and adult victims/survivors of sexual assault. The assault may have occurred recently or in the past.</p> <p><u>Create Foundation</u> – 1800 655 105 Creating a better life for children and young people in care.</p> <p><u>Youthlaw</u> – 03 9611 2412 Free and confidential legal advice.</p>
<p><b>References</b></p>	<p>Child Safe Standards <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/childsafestandards.aspx">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/childsafestandards.aspx</a></p> <p>Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide <a href="http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcae.aspx">http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcae.aspx</a></p> <p>VRQA Child Safe Standards resources. <a href="http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes/Pages/resources.html">http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes/Pages/resources.html</a><a href="http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes/Pages/resources.html">http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes/Pages/resources.html</a></p>