



# Coolaroo South Primary School

## Child Safe Environment

### Policy

#### Policy Statement

[Ministerial Order No.870- Child Safe Standards- Managing The Risk Of Child Abuse](#) In Schools requires schools to implement minimum standards for maintaining “Child Safe Environments’ for all organisations with direct and regular contact with children. This policy will provide clear guidelines for staff regarding their responsibilities in relation to child abuse.

#### Commitment to Child Safety

Coolaroo South Primary School aims to create a child safe and child friendly environment where all children are valued, feel safe and are free from physical, sexual, serious emotional and psychological abuse and serious neglect. We value diversity and promote cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe and inclusive environment for children with a disability.

**Note: This commitment applies to all our school policies, frameworks and processes where the term “safe” is referenced.**

#### Definition

Child Abuse refers to the long term and/or short term maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 years of age. It is the result of action or inaction which results in harm or injury to a child. Child abuse may be categorised as follows:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse and/or psychological abuse
- neglect

Greater detail on the definitions of child abuse may be found on the Department of Humans Service website. <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/about-child-abuse/what-is-child-abuse>

This policy, from the date of endorsement, applies to all employees at Coolaroo South Primary School. In this policy, the term “employee” is intended to cover all persons occupying any position listed below:

- employees (permanent and casual)
- volunteers
- contractors
- sub-contractors
- work experience students
- indirect service providers
- any other individual involved in this organisation

## **Children's Participation**

Coolaroo South encourages and respects the views of children. We listen to and act upon any concerns that children or their families raise with us. We teach children what they can do if they feel unsafe. We ensure that children and their families know their rights and how to access the complaints procedures available to them. We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices. The Principal or Principal's Nominee ( Welfare Officer) is our first point of contact to provide advice and support to children, parents, employees and volunteers regarding the safety and well-being of children in our school.

## **Recruitment Practices**

Coolaroo South Primary School takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. We employ a range of screening measures and apply best practice standards in the screening and recruitment of employees and volunteers. For more detail refer to the the school's Working with Children Policy.

## **Code of Conduct**

The code of conduct for both students and teachers is outlined in our Behaviour Management Framework.

## **Support for Employees and Volunteers**

Coolaroo South Primary School seeks to attract and retain the best employees and volunteers. We provide support and supervision so people feel valued, respected and fairly treated. We ensure that employees/volunteers who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their capacity is developed and enhanced to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment.

Strategies we have implemented include:

- All new employees undergo induction and receive a copy of our child safe policy and Behaviour Management Framework. All Policies are available on the school Intranet.
- All employees receive regular updates that include a focus on ongoing learning about child protection and other matters that affect children.
- The Principal or Welfare Officer is the first point of contact for all child protection matters.

## **Reporting and Responding to Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect**

The school's Mandatory Reporting Policy outlines the legal obligations and processes when reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

Coolaroo South Primary School will not tolerate incidents of child abuse. All employees and volunteers understand their obligation to notify the Police 000 when it is suspected that a child's safety is at immediate risk.

## **Supporting Children, Young People and Their Families**

Child Protection is everyone's responsibility. Coolaroo South Primary School recognises that even where a report is made, we may still have a role in supporting the child or young person. This support may include:

- Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
- Displaying and publishing information about services that can assist children and their families.

## **Dealing with Reports Or Concerns Relating To The Actions Of An Employee Or Volunteer Within Our School**

In addition to making a report to the Child Abuse Report Line, employees and volunteers must also report to the Principal or Principal's nominee. If reasonable suspicion is formed that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected by another member, employee, or volunteer.

In response to any report to the Principal or Principal's nominee concerning a member, employee or volunteer within the school, The Principal or Principal's nominee may determine to take disciplinary action. Other protective actions may also be introduced to ensure the safety of children and young people within our school.

### **Strategies to Minimise Risk**

To help maintain a safe environment, Coolaroo South Primary School has developed the following programs, plans and policies to minimise and manage the risks associated with child abuse and neglect.

#### **Programs**

- KidsMatter- Mental Health and Wellbeing Program
- Bounce Back
- CAMHS and Schools Early Action (**CASEA**) program
- Building Resilience Social Emotional Learning Program (DeT)

#### **Policies, Plans and Processes**

- Anti Bullying, including Cybersafety and Anti Harassment Policy
- Critical Incident Plan
- Behaviour Management Plan
- Duty of Care Policy
- Facebook Policy
- ICT acceptable Use and Agreement Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Student Health Policy
- Student Welfare Policy

#### **Harassment/Bullying (including Cybersafety)**

Coolaroo South Primary School opposes all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying. We take this issue seriously and encourage anyone who believes that they, or another person, has been harassed, discriminated against or bullied to raise this issue with the Principal or Principal's nominee. For more detail refer to the school's Antbullying (including Cybersafety) and Harassment Policy.

#### **COMMUNICATION and EVALUATION**

Coolaroo South Primary School will ensure that everyone to whom this policy applies is aware of and has had an opportunity to read the policy. This policy will also be reviewed as part of the school's regular policy review process.

