



# STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY AND REDUCE OR REMOVE RISKS OF CHILD ABUSE

## CHILD SAFE STANDARD NO 6

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### PURPOSE

Mandama Primary School has an active risk management approach to the duty of care in protecting our children from any possible safety risk. We have a commitment to continuous improvement and a legal responsibility to ensure the safety of all children.

### SCOPE

Ensuring our children are safe is the shared responsibility of all staff members at Mandama Primary School, in reducing and removing any potential risks. Mandama Primary School has a formal and structured approach to managing risks associated with child safety to meet the requirements of Child Safe Standard 6. The process includes risk assessment, implementation of controls, and a monitoring and review process to ensure the efficacy of the risk management approach.

### STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY AND REDUCE OR REMOVE RISKS OF CHILD ABUSE

The school's risk management strategies regarding child safety identify and ultimately remove the risk(s) of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of our school environment, the activities expected to be conducted in our environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.

In taking into account the characteristics and needs of all children (including and especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse children and other vulnerable children), the school develops, implements, monitors and evaluates risk management strategies to ensure child safety in a range of school related environments (e.g. at school, on excursions, online environments and any school organised activities).

The school has identified any potential risks and the action(s) the school will take to reduce or remove the risks (risk controls). The School Council will monitor and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the child safety plan.

The overall plan for Child Safety and Wellbeing is recorded within the school's 7 Child Safe Standards documentation to:

- include reference to the training and education of staff about their individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse
- reference the Code Of Conduct, the 4 critical actions to be taken in response to an allegation of child abuse, and the Child Safe training and training about abuse risks in the school, that must be undertaken as scheduled and as the need arises (e.g. after an incident). The training, depending on the risk, would involve the School Council and/or school staff.

The school will utilise the Child Safe audit tool (see Appendix ) to determine adherence to the Child Safe Policy (incorporating the 7 Standards). The audit tool will be used reflectively, on an annual basis, and will be used to inform the continued focus and improvement of child safe practices within the school.

Managing risk at Mandama Primary School involves the following steps and considerations:

- Identifying the school's child safety risks across a range of school environments (including excursions, camps and online (see Mandama Primary School's Child Safety Register, excursion and camp policies for further information).
- Ensuring that all areas of the School's Risk Assessment document (as required by the DE&T School Policy & Advisory Guide: Risk Management Policy) rating is rated as 'low risk'.
- Engage in a 2 year review of the existing Risk Assessment plan, child safe standards and related school policies and or, internal processes addressing the reduction and removal of any risk(s).

Effective risk management strategies will be transparent, well understood and diverse, to take account of the increased level of risk associated with the specific nature of some activities and the vulnerability of particular groups. Effective risk management strategies are dynamic and change over time as new risks arise and others may no longer be relevant.

**Mandama Primary School implements this standard by including the following Risk Management strategies:**

- Ensuring clear, documented and accessible processes for evaluating risks posed by situations and activities appropriate to the school, its size and resources, physical and online environments, and the characteristics of the children to whom it provides services
- Developing, recording and communicating clear processes for removing risks to children (eg Bullying /cyberbullying Prevention, ICT acceptable use, Duty of Care and Supervision, Excursions and Camps Policies Staying on Track procedures for students, Positive Behaviour Matrix)
- Providing staff with training and resources in identifying child abuse risks
- Engaging methods for continual improvement in how risks are managed by learning from past experiences, including policy review and staff training
- Reinforcing/reviewing supervision of children requirements for staff and volunteers
- Establishing processes for periodic review of risk management approaches and/or processes following any incidents
- Recognising and adapting to the needs of children and communities, including Aboriginal children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and children with a disability. For example, acknowledgement that greater staff or volunteer to child ratios may be needed for some children with a disability
- Recognising and addressing risks to Aboriginal children which might exist if a child does not feel safe identifying themselves as Aboriginal, or if there is an inadequate response to self-identification
- Recognising and addressing risks to children with a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, which might exist because of their experiences, by increasing communication with families to build trust and understanding of school activities
- Recognising and addressing risks for children with a disability, such as communication barriers when telling an adult they feel unsafe
- Adhering to the Child safety Code of Conduct
- Developing Behaviour Management and Safety Plans for students
- Induction for all visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors
- Train students and staff to detect and report inappropriate behaviour
- Access supports such as Counselling or Network Student Support Services for students in need
- Assessment of new or changed physical environments for child safety risks
- Pre-employment reference checks that include checking for child safety
- Criminal history checks and confirming currency of WWCC/VIT registration
- Having a Student Welfare Officer as a central reporting and advisory contact for staff and the wider community, to raise concerns with, and regarding concerns about a child safety.
- Teachers accompany students to and from specialist classrooms.
- Students always move around the school in pairs.
- Instillation of Security cameras around the school.

For more information, see: [Strategies to Identify and Reduce or Remove Risks of Child Abuse](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/cssix.aspx)  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/cssix.aspx>  
Appendix – the Child Safe Standards self-audit tool

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and is scheduled for review in August, 2020, or immediately following any significant incidents if they occur.



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## The Child Safe Standards self-audit tool

**Name** (person completing audit):

**Position:**

**Contact details:**

### Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

Activity	In place	Partially in place	Not in place	Action required	Timeframe for actions
Child safety is a core part of public and internal messaging.					
Policies and practices exist that prioritise child safety and promote shared responsibility – not just at a leadership level – by outlining all staff responsibilities.					
A culture exists of supporting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and the safety of children with a disability.					
Policies include the steps staff, volunteers, children or their families should take if they have concerns about the organisation's leadership in regard to child safety.					
A culture exists in which staff, volunteers, children and families feel comfortable and supported when talking about any child safety concerns.					

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

<b>Activity</b>	<b>In place</b>	<b>Partially in place</b>	<b>Not in place</b>	<b>Action required</b>	<b>Timeframe for actions</b>
The organisation has a child safe policy or statement of commitment, which is accessible to the public.					
The policy or statement of commitment includes the organisation's commitment to Aboriginal cultural safety, culturally and/or linguistically diverse cultural safety and the safety of children with a disability respectively.					
All staff and volunteers are aware of the organisation's commitment to child safety and their duty of care requirements.					

**Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>In place</b>	<b>Partially in place</b>	<b>Not in place</b>	<b>Action required</b>	<b>Timeframe for actions</b>
Appropriate safe behaviour with children is clearly defined in a code of conduct which is accessible and understood by staff, volunteers, families and children.					
Staff, volunteers, families and children understand safe behaviour and relationships with Aboriginal children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and children with a disability respectively.					
Procedures for dealing with identified child safety risks or breaches of the code of conduct are clearly communicated and understood.					

**Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel**

Activity	In place	Partially in place	Not in place	Action required	Timeframe for actions
Interviews, reference checks and Working With Children Checks (where necessary) <sup>1</sup> are undertaken for staff and volunteers.					
Recruitment processes select appropriate staff and volunteers, and discourage inappropriate staff entering the organisation.					
The organisation actively encourages applications from Aboriginal peoples and people from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background.					
Staff and volunteers are trained in child safety, and understand and practice appropriate behaviour, including with Aboriginal children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and children with a disability respectively.					

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

Activity	In place	Partially in place	Not in place	Action required	Timeframe for actions
Staff and volunteers are aware of actions they should take in the event of an incident or allegation, including the type of contact that should be reported, who is responsible for reporting and to whom the report should be made.					

<sup>1</sup> The Child Safe Standards are not intended to expand the existing categories of employees and volunteers requiring a Working with Children Check.

<b>Activity</b>	<b>In place</b>	<b>Partially in place</b>	<b>Not in place</b>	<b>Action required</b>	<b>Timeframe for actions</b>
If child abuse alleged/suspected, all legal requirements for reporting to authorities complied with (eg police and/or child protection).					
Disciplinary processes, that are clearly defined and understood by all staff and volunteers, are adhered to when necessary.					
The organisation understands that if an allegation of abuse concerns an Aboriginal child, culturally and/or linguistically diverse child or child with a disability, particular measures should be taken to support the child.					
All breaches of child safe policies and procedures are appropriately managed, including adhering to all mandatory requirements (e.g. professional codes of conduct) and other matters of law, and suspending (where necessary to ensure alleged victims' safety) staff or volunteers while allegations are investigated.					

**Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove the risk of abuse**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>In place</b>	<b>Partially in place</b>	<b>Not in place</b>	<b>Action required</b>	<b>Timeframe for actions</b>
Situational risks are considered and understood by all personnel.					
Risk management approaches are regularly reflected on and improved.					

**Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.**

Activity	In place	Partially in place	Not in place	Action required	Timeframe for actions
Reporting procedures are accessible for all children.					
Children understand how to report an allegation of abuse or concern for their safety to the organisation and external bodies (for example, the police and/or child protection).					
Children feel safe, empowered and taken seriously if they raise concerns.					
Measures are taken to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and the safety of children with a disability.					