



CHILD SAFE POLICY



Department of
Education & Training

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Wedge Park Primary School Policies attached:

- Child Safe
- Staff Code of Conduct – Safeguarding children and young people
- Child protection and reporting
- Duty of care
- Onsite supervision
- Anti-Bullying
- Working with Children Check

1. Introduction

Wedge Park Primary School is a school where students are constantly exposed to explicit teaching, authentic learning, and high expectations. Students are challenged, excited, curious and engaged. They are given the skills to take responsibility for their own learning.

Wedge Park Primary School is committed to the principles of democratic decision-making, the provision of a stimulating learning environment, contemporary teaching strategies, assessment and reporting and on-going review and evaluation. The school aims to cater for the needs, abilities, talents and interests of all students in a secure, caring and stimulating environment. Academic success and personal development demands a high level of self-discipline and respect for learning which teachers encourage, nurture and expect.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the strong commitment of *Wedge Park Primary School* to the care, safety and wellbeing of all students at our school. It provides an outline of the policies, procedures and strategies developed to keep students safe from harm, including all forms of abuse in our school environment, on campus, online and in other locations provided by the school.

This policy takes into account relevant legislative requirements within the state of Victoria, including the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in [Ministerial Order No. 870](#).

This policy applies to school staff, including school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy.

3. Principles

State schools have a moral and legal responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe.

The following principles underpin our commitment to child safety at *Wedge Park Primary School*:

- All students deserve, as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- Our school works in partnership with families and the community to ensure that they are engaged in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on child safety and protection.
- All students have the right to a thorough and systematic education in all aspects of personal safety, in partnership with their parents/guardians/caregivers.
- All adults in our school, including teaching and non-teaching staff, volunteers and contractors as well as the broader school community have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any kind of harm or abuse.
- The policies, guidelines and codes of conduct for the care, wellbeing and protection of students are based on honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults and children and young people.
- Policies and practices demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements and cooperation with governments, the police and human services agencies.
- All persons involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.
- Staff, volunteers, contractors, parents/guardians and students should feel free to raise concerns about child safety, knowing these will be taken seriously by school leadership.
- Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally or pastorally.

4. Definitions used in this Policy

Child: A child or a young person enrolled as a student at the school.

Child abuse includes:

- (a) any act committed against a child involving:
 - (i) a sexual offence
 - (ii) an offence under section 49B(2) of the **Crimes Act 1958** (grooming)
- (b) the infliction, on a child, of:
 - (i) physical violence
 - (ii) serious emotional or psychological harm
- (c) serious neglect of a child. ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#)).

Child safety encompasses 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 incidents or allegations of child abuse. ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#)).

Child neglect: The failure by a parent or caregiver to provide a child (where they are in a position to do so) with the conditions that are culturally accepted as being essential for their physical and emotional development and wellbeing. ([Safe Schools Hub](#)).

Child physical abuse: Generally, child physical abuse refers to the non-accidental use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behaviours include shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning. The fabrication or induction of an illness by a parent or carer (previously known as Munchausen syndrome by proxy) is also considered physically abusive behaviour. ([Safe Schools Hub](#)).

Child protection: Statutory services designed to protect children who are at risk of serious harm. ([Safe Schools Hub](#)).

Child sexual abuse: Any sexual activity between a child under the age of consent (16) and an adult or older person (i.e. a person five or more years older than the victim) is child sexual abuse.

Child sexual abuse can also be:

- any sexual behaviour between a child and an adult in a position of power or authority over them (e.g. a teacher); the age of consent laws do not apply in such instances due to the strong imbalance of power that exists between young people and authority figures, as well as the breaching of both personal and public trust that occurs when professional boundaries are violated
- any sexual behaviour between a child and an adult family member, regardless of issues of consent, equality or coercion
- sexual activity between peers that is non-consensual or involves the use of power or coercion
- non-consensual sexual activity between minors (e.g. a 14-year-old and an 11-year-old), or any sexual behaviour between a child and another child or adolescent who, due to their age or stage of development, is in a position of power, trust or responsibility over the victim. Sexual activity between adolescents at a similar developmental level is not considered abuse. ([Safe Schools Hub](#)).

Mandatory Reporting: The legal requirement to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect is known as mandatory reporting. Mandated persons include teachers, nurses, police, psychologists, psychiatrists and medical practitioners. ([Safe Schools Hub](#)).

Reasonable Belief: When staff are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, they must assess that concern to determine if a report should be made to the relevant agency. This process of considering all relevant information and observations is known as forming a ‘reasonable belief’. A ‘reasonable belief’ or a ‘belief on reasonable grounds’ is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A ‘reasonable belief’ is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- other locations provided by the school for a child’s use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events). ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#)).

School staff means an individual working in a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#)).

5. Policy Commitments

All students enrolled at **Wedge Park Primary School** have the right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we do not and will not tolerate child abuse. Wedge Park Primary School will have a **zero tolerance to child abuse**. We aim to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where children are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety. There is particular attention paid to the most vulnerable children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

Our commitment to our students

- We commit to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people enrolled in our school.
- We commit to providing children and young people with positive and nurturing experiences.
- We commit to listening to children and young people and empowering them by taking their views seriously, and addressing any concerns that they raise with us.
- We commit to taking action to ensure that children and young people are protected from abuse or harm.
- We commit to teaching children and young people the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.
- We commit to seeking input and feedback from students regarding the creation of a safe school environment.

Our commitment to parents and guardians

- We commit to communicating honestly and openly with parents and carers about the wellbeing and safety of their children.
- We commit to engaging with, and listening to, the views of parents and carers about our child-safety practice, policies and procedures.
- We commit to transparency in our decision-making with parents and carers where it will not compromise the safety of children or young people.
- We commit to acknowledging the cultural diversity of students and families, and being sensitive to how this may impact on student safety issues.
- We commit to continuously reviewing and improving our systems to protect children from abuse.

Our commitment to our school staff (school employees, volunteers, visitors and contractors.)

- We commit to providing all **Wedge Park Primary School** staff with the necessary support to enable them to fulfil their roles. This will include regular and appropriate learning opportunities.
- We commit to providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm policy and procedures in relation to child safety and young people’s protection and wellbeing. This will include annual training in the principles and intent of the Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct, and staff responsibilities to report concerns.
- We commit to listening to all concerns voiced by **Wedge Park Primary School** staff, volunteers, and contractors about keeping children and young people safe from harm.
- We commit to providing opportunities for **Wedge Park Primary School** employees, volunteers and contractors to receive formal debriefing and counselling arising from incidents of the abuse of a child or young person.

6. Responsibilities and Organisational Arrangements

Everyone employed or volunteering at **Wedge Park Primary School** has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

The school has allocated roles and responsibilities for child safety as follows:

6.1 Guide to Responsibilities of School Leadership

The Principal, the school governing authority and school leaders at **Wedge Park Primary School** recognise their particular responsibility to ensure the development of preventative and proactive strategies that promote a culture of openness, awareness of and shared responsibility for child safety.

Responsibilities include:

- creating an environment for children and young people to be safe and to feel safe
- upholding high principles and standards for all staff, volunteers, and contractors
- promoting models of behaviour between adults and children and young people based on mutual respect and consideration
- ensuring thorough and rigorous practices are applied in the recruitment, screening and ongoing professional learning of staff
- ensuring that school personnel have regular and appropriate learning to develop their knowledge of, openness to and ability to address child safety matters
- providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm legislative obligations, policy and procedures in relation to child and young people's protection and wellbeing
- ensuring the school meets the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 870.

6.2 Guide to Responsibilities of School Staff

Responsibilities of school staff (school employees, volunteers and contractors) include:

- treating children and young people with dignity and respect, acting with propriety, providing a duty of care, and protecting children and young people in their care
- following the legislative and internal school processes in the course of their work, if they form a reasonable belief that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected
- providing a physically and psychologically safe environment where the wellbeing of children and young people is nurtured
- undertaking regular training and education in order to understand their individual responsibilities in relation to child safety and the wellbeing of children and young people
- assisting children and young people to develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from abuse
- following the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct.

6.3 Organisational Arrangements

At *Wedge Park Primary School* the child safety organisation arrangements are:

- Leadership roles supporting and overseeing student welfare and wellbeing in the school.
- A Student Wellbeing Officer to support the needs of students and families within the school.
- A School Improvement Team to focus on the needs of the school in Engagement and Wellbeing.
- A budget allocation to enable regular training and education in order to understand their individual responsibilities in relation to child safety and the wellbeing of children and young people
- Use of school newsletter to remind and to keep parents and carers informed of child safety commitments, procedures and arrangements

7. Expectation of our School Staff – Child Safety Code of Conduct

At *Wedge Park Primary School* community, we expect school employees, volunteers and contractors to proactively ensure the safety of students at all times and to take appropriate action if there are concerns about the safety of any child at the school. All school staff must remain familiar with the relevant laws, the code of conduct, and policies and procedures in relation to child protection and to comply with all requirements. We have developed a **Child Safe Code of Conduct**, which recognises the critical role that school staff play in protecting the students in our care and establishes clear expectations of school employees, volunteers and contractors for appropriate behaviour with children in order to safeguard them against abuse and or neglect.

Our Code also protects school staff through clarification of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

8. Student Safety and Participation

At *Wedge Park Primary School*, we actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.

We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe and enable them to understand, identify, discuss and report on child safety. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us.

9. Reporting and Responding

Our school records any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and stores the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements. Our school complies with legal obligations that relate to managing the risk of child abuse under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.), the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic.) and the recommendations of the *Betrayal of Trust* report.

Child protection reporting obligations fall under separate pieces of legislation with differing reporting requirements.

Our school's **Child Protection – Reporting Policy**, sets out the actions required under the relevant legislation when there is a reasonable belief that a child at our school is in need of protection or a criminal offence has been committed, and provides guidance and procedures on how to make a report.

Our policy assists staff, volunteers and families to:

- identify the indicators of a child or young person who may be in need of protection
- understand how a 'reasonable belief' is formed
- make a report of a child or young person who may be in need of protection
- comply with mandatory reporting obligations under child protection law and their legal obligations relating to criminal child abuse and grooming under criminal law.

Our school has also established internal processes to ensure that appropriate action is taken to respond to concerns about the wellbeing and/or safety of a student.

Our complaints and disclosure processes are outlined and detailed in the following policies and procedures:

- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *Anaphylaxis Management Policy*
- *First Aid Policy*
- *Health Care Policy*
- *Student Inclusion and Engagement Policy*
- *Visitors Policy*

10. Screening and Recruitment of School Staff

Wedge Park Primary School will apply thorough and rigorous screening processes in the recruitment of employees and volunteers involved in child-connected work. Our commitment to child safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements for such employee, contractor and volunteer positions, and all applicants are provided with copies of the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Child Safety Policy.

When recruiting and selecting employees, contractors and volunteers involved in child-connected work, we make all reasonable efforts to:

- confirm the applicant's Working with Children Check and National Police Check status and/or professional registration (as relevant)
- obtain proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications
- verify the applicant's history of work involving children
- obtain references that address the applicant's suitability for the job and working with children.

We have processes for monitoring and assessing the continuing suitability of school staff to work with children, including regular reviews of the status of Working with Children Checks and staff professional registration requirements such as Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration.

11. Child Safe – Education and Training for School Staff

Wedge Park Primary School provides employees and volunteers with regular and appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge of, openness to and ability to address child safety matters. This includes induction, ongoing training and professional learning to ensure that everyone understands their professional and legal obligations and responsibilities, and the procedures for reporting suspicion of child abuse and neglect.

Staff Induction specifically includes:

- familiarisation with this Child Safe Policy and its many implications
- familiarisation with and a signed commitment to the *Wedge Park Primary School* Child Safe Code of Conduct
- training about child protection reporting obligations, protocols for receiving/recording complaints
- training and familiarisation around all the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child-connected work
- understanding of supervision arrangements that are in place for all staff who engage in child-connected work.
-

Staff Professional Learning provides opportunities for staff (and where appropriate, volunteers) to:

- maintain, develop and improve skills and capabilities around child safety, including relevant legislative requirements
- develop understanding of the risk of harm to children; the different types of harm; and how to identify grooming and abuse
- understand and build confidence around their reporting obligations
- complete the Department of Education & Training online modules i.e. mandatory reporting

12. Risk Management

At *Wedge Park Primary School* we are committed to proactively and systematically identifying and assessing risks to student safety across our whole school environment, and reducing or eliminating (where possible) all potential sources of harm. We document, implement, monitor and periodically review our risk management strategies for child safety and ensure that the strategies change as needed and as new risks arise.

13. Relevant Legislation

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.)
- *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic.)
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic.)
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
- *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic.) – Three new criminal offences have been introduced under this Act:
 - a) **Failure to disclose offence:** Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.
 - b) **Failure to protect offence:** The offence will apply where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
 - i) **Grooming offence:** This offence targets predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with a child. Grooming can be conducted in person or online, for example via interaction through social media, web forums and emails.

14. Related Policies

14.1 Department of Education Policies

- [Policy 2.2: Guidelines Relating to the Employment of Staff](#)
- [Policy 2.19: Child Protection – Reporting Policy](#)
- [Policy 2.19a: School Guidelines –Police and DHHS Interview Protocols](#)
- Ministerial Order 199
- [Department of Education Legislation](#)

14.2 School Policies

- *BYOD - 1 to 1 Device Program Policy*
- *Anaphylaxis Management Policy*
- *Staff Bullying and Harassment Policy*
- *Camps and Excursion Policy*
- *Caring for ill students Policy*
- *Communication Policy*
- *Curriculum and Student Learning Policy*
- *Duty of Care Policy*
- *Emergency Management Process*
- *Enrolment Policy*
- *First Aid Policy*
- *ICT Security Policy*
- *Child Protection Policy*
- *On-Site Supervision Policy and Procedures*
- *Policy Development and Implementation Policy*
- *Reporting to Parents policy*
- *Student Inclusion & Engagement Policy*
- *Visitors policy*
- *Working with Children Check policy*
- *Student Attendance*

15. Breach of Policy

Where an **employee** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this Policy, *Wedge Park Primary School* may start the process under Complaints, Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance guidelines for managing employment concerns. This may result in disciplinary consequences.

Where the **principal** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this policy, the concerned party is advised to contact the Regional Director. Relevant notification should also be made to the Department of Education and Training.

Where any **other member of the school community** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this policy, the school is to take appropriate action, including in accordance with Department of Education (Conduct and Ethics Branch and Legal Branch) and Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

16. Review of this Child Safety Policy

At *Wedge Park Primary School* we are committed to continuous improvement of our child safety systems and practices. We intend this policy to be a dynamic document that will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is working in practice and updated to accommodate changes in legislation or circumstance.

We will maintain a history of updates to the policy.

History of Updates to Policy

Date	Comment (e.g. major review, minor review)
1/8/2016	Initial creation of Policy in alignment with Department Guidelines

17. References

Responding to allegations of student sexual assault

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/sexualassault.aspx#1

Government Schools Website: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/childsafestandards

Safe Schools Hub 2014, *National Safe Schools Framework Glossary*, Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

State of Victoria 2016, *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools: Ministerial Order No. 870*, Education & Training Reform Act 2006, Victorian Government Gazette No. S2.

Victorian Government Department of Justice 2016, *Betrayal of Trust Implementation*.

Victorian Institute of Teaching For Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics and information about employee responsibilities to report action against registered teachers in response to allegations and concerns about registered teachers.

Website: www.vit.edu.au

Child Safe Standards
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/childsafestandards.aspx>

Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcae.aspx>

VRQA Child Safe Standards resources.
<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/resources.html><http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/resources.html>

A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/spag/safety/makingareportchild.pdf>

Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Documents/protectionofchildren.PDF>

18. Resources:

There are services that can be contacted to access more information, and in some cases, to speak to somebody about your concerns.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS - MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS - Ministerial Order No. 870
<http://www.gazette.vic.gov.au/gazette/Gazettes2016/GG2016S002.pdf>

[National Child Abuse Helpline \(Child Wise\)](#) – 1800 991 099

A toll-free number with access to expert advice from trained counsellors and an opportunity to speak up about child abuse.

[Kids Helpline](#) 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.

[Headspace \(National Youth Mental Health Foundation\)](#) – 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.

[Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault](#) – 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.

[Create Foundation](#) – 1800 655 105

Creating a better life for children and young people in care.

[Youthlaw](#) – 03 9611 2412

Free and confidential legal advice.

[Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and other Obligations](#) (Module)

19. 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 review cycle.

Policy Name:	Child Safe
Date Adopted:	3 rd June 2016
Review Date:	3 rd June 2019
Referred Documents:	

RATIONALE:

Wedge Park Primary School is committed to child safety. We are committed to our childrens' safety, participation and empowerment and have zero tolerance of child abuse. All allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously. The school is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks and all staff undertake Mandatory Reporting training.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers and are committed to the cultural safety of children from diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

AIMS:

Our Children

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in our school. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say. We promote diversity and tolerance in our school, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. We promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability.

Our Staff and Volunteers

This policy informs our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our school. All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which is detailed in our Inclusion, Engagement and Wellbeing Policy. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Training and Supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

The school culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns.

For all jobs that require child connected work there will be an induction process providing explicit information about the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities and the school's child safety practices, including the code of conduct (refer to the Student Inclusion, Engagement and Wellbeing Policy).

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect all children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to employ appropriately skilled people to work with children. We identify selection criteria through Recruitment Online which clearly demonstrates our commitment to child safety. The school understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. Please see the [Working with Children Check](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) website, (www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) for further information. We carry out reference checks to ensure that we are addressing the person's suitability for the job and working with children. VIT registration is compulsory and we require proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications.

Fair Procedures for Personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected and will disclose how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES (REFER TO THE CHILD PROTECTIONN POLICY):

Our organisation takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- Any personnel who are **mandatory reporters** must comply with their duties.
- **Failure to disclose offence:** In addition to mandatory reporting and duty of care obligations, any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 must report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence except in limited circumstances, such as where the information has already been reported to Child Protection or the child is over 16 when the belief is formed.

- **Failure to protect:** Any staff member in a position of authority, who becomes aware that an adult associated with their organisation (such as an employee, contractor, volunteer or visitor) poses a risk of sexual abuse to a child under the care, authority or supervision of the organisation, must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce that risk. This may include, for example, removing the adult from child-related work pending investigation. If a staff member in a position of authority fails to take reasonable steps in these circumstances, this may amount to a criminal offence. The offence applies only to adults in a position of authority within an organisation, including Principals, senior school staff, regional directors and other senior managers.

RISK MANAGEMENT:

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, swimming), and online environments.

ALLEGATIONS, CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS:

The school takes all allegations seriously and works to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident.

Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves).
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed.
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it.
- observing suspicious behaviour.

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Policy Name:	Staff Code of Conduct – Safeguarding children and young people
Date Adopted:	September 2016
Review Date:	September 2018
Referred Documents:	

RATIONALE:

Wedge Park Primary School is a school where students are constantly exposed to explicit teaching, authentic learning, and high expectations. Students are challenged, excited, curious and engaged. They are given the skills to take responsibility for their own learning.

Wedge Park Primary School is committed to the principles of democratic decision-making, the provision of a stimulating learning environment, contemporary teaching strategies, assessment and reporting and on-going review and evaluation. The school aims to cater for the needs, abilities, talents and interests of all students in a secure, caring and stimulating environment (including all potential high risk activities such as camps, counselling, first aid, bus travel and students with high support needs). Academic success and personal development demands a high level of self-discipline and respect for learning which teachers encourage, nurture and expect.

GOAL:

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at **Wedge Park Primary School** against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, volunteers, contractors and school council members at **Wedge Park Primary School** are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and follows the school's core values. They are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

Acceptable Behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors and school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's child safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect students from abuse
- treating everyone in the school community with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/or the safety of another child.
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- a registered teacher must be supervising students and visible at all times
- dressing appropriately, ensuring that at all times the standard of attire is professional (for example, no shoe string straps, acceptable skirt length, collared shirts, no transparent clothing)
- reporting any allegations of child abuse and/or child safety concerns to the school's leadership
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching, any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher

Unacceptable Behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors and school council members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment of specific children)
- exhibit or initiate behaviours with children that may be construed as unnecessarily physical contact (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact which children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussion of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal, social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside the school without the school's leadership knowledge or consent of school council (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons, sport coaching, socialisation), accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate (Own family/relatives or existing long standing friendship between teachers would not be considered unacceptable)
- have any online social media contact with the child or their family (unless necessary eg by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting/providing students with their school work)

- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or personal email addresses with children or their families
- distribute or post a photograph/video of a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at school or school events in the presence of children
- follow school wide discipline policy when managing student behaviour



Policy Name:	Child Protection Reporting (Formally known as Mandatory Reporting)
Date Adopted:	14 th October 2014
Review Date:	14 th October 2017
Referred Documents:	Children Youth and Families Act 2005

STATEMENT:

A broad range of professional groups are identified in the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005* (CYFA) as mandatory reporters.

Mandated staff members 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 from significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

The following professionals are prescribed as mandatory reporters under section 182 of the CYFA:

- Primary and secondary school teachers and Principals (including students in training to become teachers)
- Registered medical practitioners (including psychiatrists)
- Nurses (including school nurses)
- Police

There may be times when two or more mandated staff members, for example a teacher and a Principal, have formed a belief about the same child or young person on the same occasion. In this situation, it is sufficient for only one of the mandated staff members to make a report. The other staff member is obliged to ensure that the report has been made and that all of the grounds for their own belief were included in the report made by the other staff member.

NON-MANDATED STAFF MEMBERS:

Section 183 of the CYFA states that **any person**, who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, may report their concerns to Child Protection. This means that any person, including non-mandated school staff, is able to make a report to Child Protection when they believe that a child or young person is at risk of harm and in need of protection, and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

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 and the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child.

There may be reasonable grounds for forming such a belief if:

- A child or young person states that they have been physically or sexually abused.
- A child or young person states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves).
- Someone who knows the child or young person states that the child or young person has been physically or sexually abused.
- A child shows signs of being physically or sexually abused.
- The staff member is aware of persistent family violence or parental substance misuse, psychiatric illness or intellectual disability that is impacting on the child or young person's safety, stability or development.
- The staff member observes signs or indicators of abuse, including non-accidental or unexplained injury, persistent neglect, poor care or lack of appropriate supervision.
- A child's actions or behaviour may place them at risk of significant harm and the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child.

REPORTING A BELIEF:

Staff members, whether or not mandated, need to report 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 to Child Protection.

PROTECTING THE IDENTITY OF THE REPORTER:

Confidentiality is provided for reporters under the CYFA. The CYFA prevents disclosure of the name or any information likely to lead to the identification of a person who has made a report in accordance with legislation, except in specific circumstances.

The identity of a reporter must remain confidential unless:

- The reporter chooses to inform the child, young person or family of the report.
- The reporter consents in writing to their identity being disclosed.
- A court or tribunal decides that it is necessary for the identity of the reporter to be disclosed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child.
- A court or tribunal decides that, in the interests of justice, the reporter is required to attend court to provide evidence.

Information provided during a protective investigation may be used in a court report if the risks to the child or young person require the case to proceed to court. In these circumstances, the source of the information may be required to provide evidence to the court.

If Child Protection decides that the report is about a significant concern for the wellbeing of a child, they may refer the report to a community-based child and family service and disclose the identity of the reporter to that service. However, the CYFA provides that neither Child Protection nor the community-based child and family service may disclose the reporter's identity to any other person without the reporter's consent.

PROFESSIONAL PROTECTION FOR REPORTERS:

If a report is made in good faith:

- It does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics on the part of the reporter.
- The reporter cannot be held legally liable in respect of the report.

This means that a person who makes a report in accordance with the legislation will not be held liable for the eventual outcome of any investigation of the report.

FAILURE TO REPORT:

A failure by mandated professionals and staff members to report a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of physical or sexual abuse may result in the person being prosecuted and a court imposing a fine under the CYFA.

MAKING A REPORT TO CHILD PROTECTION:

The CYFA allows for two types of reports to be made in relation to significant concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a child – a report to Child Protection or a referral to Child FIRST.

A report to Child Protection should be considered if, after taking into account all of the available information, the staff member forms a view that the child or young person is in need of protection because:

- The harm or risk of harm has a serious impact on the child's immediate safety, stability or development.
- The harm or risk of harm is persistent and entrenched and is likely to have a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development.
- The child's parents cannot or will not protect the child or young person from harm.

Where during the course of carrying out their normal duties, a school staff member forms the belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, the staff member must make a report to Child Protection regarding this belief and the reasonable grounds for it as soon as practicable.

Staff members may form a professional judgement or belief, in the course of undertaking their professional duties based on:

- Warning signs or indicators of harm that have been observed or inferred from information about the child.
- Legal requirements, such as mandatory reporting.
- Knowledge of child and adolescent development.
- Consultation with colleagues and other professionals.
- Professional obligations and duty-of-care responsibilities.
- Established protocols.
- Internal policies and procedures in an individual licensed children's service or school.

Upon receipt of a report, Child Protection may seek further information, usually from professionals who may also be involved with the child or family, to determine whether further action is required.

In most circumstances, Child Protection will inform the reporter of the outcome of the report. When the report is classified by Child Protection as a Wellbeing Report, Child Protection will, in turn, make a referral to Child FIRST.

Any person who is registered as a teacher under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, or any person who has been granted permission to teach under that Act, including Principals, is mandated to make a report to Child Protection. In the course of undertaking their professional duties, mandated staff members are required to report their belief, when the belief is formed on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of sexual abuse or physical injury.

School policy and procedures stipulate how teaching staff fulfil their Duty of Care towards children and young people in their school.

Teachers are encouraged to discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the Principal or a member of the school leadership team. If a Principal or member of the leadership team does not wish to make a mandatory report, this does not discharge the teacher's obligation to do so if they have formed a reasonable belief that abuse may have occurred. If the teacher's concerns continue, even after consultation with the Principal or member of the leadership team, that teacher is still legally obliged to make a mandatory report of their concerns.

Information about the identity of a person making a report to Child Protection must be kept confidential unless the reporter consents to the disclosure of their identity. If the staff member wishes to remain anonymous, this information should be conveyed at the time that the reporter makes the mandatory report.

THE ROLE OF SCHOOL STAFF:

School staff have a Duty of Care to protect and preserve the safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people in their care and staff must always act in the best interests of those children and young people. If a staff member has any concerns regarding the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person it is important to take immediate action.

Note: The role of investigating an allegation of child abuse rests solely with Child Protection and/or Victoria Police.

The roles and responsibilities of staff in supporting children and young people who are involved with Child Protection may include acting as a support person for students, attending Child Protection case plan meetings, observing and monitoring students' behaviour, and liaising with professionals.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

Staff must respect confidentiality when dealing with a case of suspected child abuse and neglect, and may discuss case details and the identity of the child or the young person and their family only with those involved in managing the situation.

When a child or young person has moved to another school, professional judgement should be exercised as to what information needs to be passed on. This will be guided by usual procedures for passing on information about a child's general wellbeing or special needs, and the role of the school in any ongoing care plans.

INTERVIEWS AT VICTORIAN SCHOOLS:

Child Protection may conduct interviews of children and young people at school without parental knowledge or consent. However, a child will be interviewed at a Victorian school only in exceptional circumstances and if it is in the child's best interests to proceed in this manner. Child Protection will notify the school of any intention to interview a child or young person. This may occur regardless of whether the school is the source of the report to Child Protection.

When Child Protection practitioners arrive at the school, the Principal or their nominee should ask to see their identification before allowing Child Protection to have access to the child or young person.

SUPPORT PERSONS:

Children and young people should be advised of their right to have a supportive adult present during interviews. If a child is too young to understand the significance of the interview, a staff member should make arrangements for a supportive adult to attend with the child.

A staff member may be identified as a support person for the child or young person during the interview. Prior to the commencement of the interview, the Child Protection practitioner should always authorise the staff member to receive information regarding Child Protection's investigation. This may occur verbally or in writing using the relevant Child Protection proforma.

Independent persons must refrain from providing their opinions or accounts of events during interviews. A Principal or their delegate may act as an independent person when the child or young person is to be interviewed, unless they believe that doing so will create a conflict of interest.

ADVISING PARENTS, CARERS OR GUARDIANS:

Staff **do not require** the permission of parents, carers or guardians to make a report to Child Protection, nor are they required to tell parents, carers or guardians that they have done so.

It is the responsibility of Child Protection to advise the parents, carers or guardians of the interview at the earliest possible opportunity. This should occur either before, or by the time the child arrives home.

ENSURING THAT A CHILD PROTECTION INTERVIEW TAKES PLACE:

The school does not have the power to prevent parents, carers or guardians from removing their children from the school and should not attempt to prevent the parents, carers or guardians from collecting the child. If a parent/carer or guardian removes a child before a planned interview has taken place, the Principal and/or their nominee should contact Child Protection or Victoria Police immediately.

FAILURE TO DISCLOSE OFFENCE:

In addition to mandatory reporting and duty of care obligations, **any adult** who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 must report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence except in limited circumstances, such as where the information has already been reported to Child Protection or the child is over 16 when the belief is formed.

Where any report to the DHS Child Protection involves a Koorie student, the Principal must advise the regional office. The regional office, with the Koorie support officer, ensures support is arranged.

STAFF TRAINING:

Staff will be informed of Mandatory Reporting requirements as part of their initial induction to the school and will be provided with supporting documentation in their staff handbook.

Updates will take place annually – using the online professional Learning module made available by DET or by one of the qualified SSSO staff.

REFERENCES:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/childprotection.aspx>

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/protecting-children-together>

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children%2c-youth-and-families/child-protection/specialist-practice-resources-for-child-protection-workers/child-development-and-trauma-specialist-practice-resource>

http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/586465/information-guide-registered-teachers-principals.pdf

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/about-child-abuse>

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input as part of Wedge Park Primary School's three-year review cycle.



Policy Name:	Duty of Care
Date Adopted:	6 th June 2016
Review Date:	6 th June 2019
Referred Documents:	http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx

All government school staff will be made aware of their legal responsibilities. As part of the government School Principal Contract, government school Principals are required to plan, implement and monitor arrangements to ensure the safety, security and wellbeing of students.

DEFINITION:

Whenever a student–teacher relationship exists, the teacher has a special Duty of Care. This is defined as: ‘A teacher is to take such measures as are reasonable in the circumstances to protect a student under the teacher’s charge from risks of injury that the teacher should reasonably have foreseen’ (*Richards v State of Victoria* (1969) VR 136 at p. 141).

As part of that duty, teachers are required to supervise students adequately. This requires not only protection from known hazards, but also protection from those that could arise (that is, those that the teacher should reasonably have foreseen) and against which preventive measures could be taken.

School authorities in breach of the Duty of Care may be liable for injuries inflicted by one student on another, as well as for injuries sustained by a student.

Schools normally satisfy the Duty of Care by allocating responsibilities to different staff. For example, the Principal is responsible for making and administering such arrangements for supervision as are necessary according to the circumstances in each school, and teachers are responsible for carrying out their assigned supervisory duties in such a way that students are, as far as can be reasonably expected, protected from injury. This duty extends to intervention in single-sex areas if need be by a teacher of the other gender.

RATIONALE:

In addition to their professional obligations, principals and teachers have a legal duty to take reasonable steps to protect students in their charge from risks of injury that are reasonably foreseeable.

AIMS:

To ensure that staff have an understanding of their Duty of Care to students, and behave in a manner that does not compromise these legal obligations.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Although the general duty is to take reasonable steps to protect students from reasonably foreseeable risks of injury, specific (but not exhaustive) requirements of the duty involve providing adequate supervision in the school or on school activities as well as providing safe and suitable buildings, grounds and equipment.

A teacher’s Duty of Care is not confined to the geographic area of the school, or to school activities, or to activities occurring outside the school where a student is acting on a teacher’s instructions. The duty also applies to situations both before and after school where a teacher can be deemed to have ‘assumed’ the teacher-pupil relationship.

Quite apart from Mandatory Reporting requirements, a teacher has a concurrent Duty of Care to protect a student from harm that is reasonably foreseeable. A breach of this Duty of Care may lead to legal action being taken against the individual teacher or teachers concerned. A breach of this Duty of Care will be established if a teacher or principal failed to take immediate and positive steps after having acquired actual knowledge or formed a belief that there is a risk that a child is being abused or neglected, including sexual abuse.

The teacher’s Duty of Care is greater than that of the ordinary citizen in that a teacher is obliged to protect a student from reasonably foreseeable harm or to assist an injured student, while the ordinary citizen does not have a legal obligation to respond.

Whilst each case regarding a teacher’s legal Duty of Care will be judged on the circumstances that occurred at the time, the following common examples may be times when a teacher has failed to meet their legal Duty of Care responsibilities to their students:

- Arriving late to class or leaving a class early
- Arriving late to scheduled timetabled yard duty responsibilities
- Failing to act appropriately to protect a student who claims to be bullied
- Believing that a child is being abused but failing to report the matter appropriately
- Being late to supervise the line-up of students after the music/bell has sounded
- Leaving students unattended in the classroom
- Failing to instruct a student who is not wearing a hat to play in the shade
- Ignoring dangerous play
- Leaving the school during time release without notifying the office
- Inadequate supervision on a school excursion
-

Staff members are also cautioned against giving advice on matters that they are not professionally competent to give (negligent advice). Advice is to be limited to areas within a teacher's own professional competence and given in situations arising from a role (such as careers teacher, year level coordinator or subject teacher) specified for them by the Principal.

Teachers must ensure that the advice they give is correct and, where appropriate, in line with the most recent available statements from institutions or employers. Teachers should not give advice in areas outside those related to their role where they may lack expertise (i.e. telling a parent that their child may have ADD).

RISKS TO STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT:

Legal cases establish that a teacher's Duty of Care does not start nor end at precise times during the day. The approach generally taken is that a teacher's duty applies irrespective whether the risk occurs in or outside the school environment. However, the important issue in all cases will be whether the school took reasonable steps to protect the student from the risk.

Risks outside the school environment may sometimes call for immediate and positive steps by a school depending on the age of students, urgency and threat of injury. Consider for example, if a live power line came down outside the school, no emergency workers had arrived, and primary children are about to be dismissed to walk home. No school would allow the children to walk out to that danger unsupervised.

There will be a number of other situations where the school will be under a duty to take reasonable steps. In some instances, the school's control over the activity may require it to take more active measures to satisfy the requirement that it took reasonable steps. For example, a known bully on a school bus may require the school to suspend or refuse to transport the bully. In other instances, the school may not control the activity, and the reasonable measures available to it will be limited. For example, fights at a local train or bus stop between students from rival schools may involve informing the police, contacting the other school to implement preventative measures, and notices to parents and students.

While students are generally free to move around the buildings and work independently in break out spaces and designated study areas they must be under (indirect) adult supervision at all times.

Staff are responsible for their students at all times.

The following instructions and notices **apply to all staff.**

CLASSROOM SUPERVISION:

- Staff must **not** leave the classroom unattended at any time during a lesson.
- It is **not** appropriate to leave students in the care of ES staff, parents or trainee teachers (at law, the Duty of Care cannot be delegated).
- It is **not** appropriate to leave students in the care of external education providers, for example incursions (at law, the Duty of Care cannot be delegated).
- In **an emergency situation** use the phone for the Principal or Assistant Principal or contact the teacher in the next room (if appropriate – send another student for assistance).

No student should be left unsupervised **outside the classroom** as a withdrawal consequence for misbehaviour. All teachers are to follow the classrooms individual behaviour management plan.

MOVEMENT OF STUDENTS:

- Care needs to be taken in allowing students to leave the room to work in other areas of the school.
- Use of students as monitors outside the room during class time must only occur with the approval of the Principal or Assistant Principal.
- Discretion is to be used when allowing students to visit the toilet or the library during class time.

YARD SUPERVISION:

Yard supervision is an essential element in teachers' Duty of Care. It is now clearly established that in supervising students, teacher's Duty of Care is one of positive action.

- Be aware that students are usually less constrained and more prone to accident and injury than in a more closely supervised classroom.
- Be aware that yard duty supervision within the school requires the teacher to fully comply with DET guidelines and brings with it an increased Duty of Care. It is a teacher's responsibility to be aware of these guidelines and Duty of Care responsibilities. Teachers are also expected to follow school policy whilst on Yard Duty.
- Teachers rostered for duty are to attend the designated area at the time indicated on the roster.
- Teachers on duty are to remain in the designated area until the end of the break period or until replaced by the relieving teacher, whichever is applicable.
- The handing over of duty from one teacher to another must be quite definite and **must occur in the area of designated duty**. Where a relieving teacher does not arrive for duty, the teacher currently on duty should send a message to the office, **but not leave the area until replaced**.
- Be alert and vigilant - intervene **immediately** if potentially dangerous behaviour is observed in the yard - enforce behaviour standards and logical consequences for breaches of safety rules.
- You should always be on the move and highly visible.

EXCURSIONS, INCURSIONS AND CAMPS:

- Be aware that students are usually less constrained and more prone to accident and injury than in a more closely supervised classroom.
- Be aware that an incursion with an external provider does not absolve supervision duties of the teacher, including First Aid duties. A teacher must be present at all times and remain the person designated with Duty of Care responsibilities.
- Be aware that camps and excursions outside the school require the teacher to fully comply with DET guidelines and bring with it an increased Duty of Care. It is a teacher's responsibility to be aware of these guidelines and remain the person designated with Duty of Care.
- Be aware that excursion and camp activities require the teacher to ensure that the venue and transport adhere to DET guidelines.
- Be aware that school policy is for students to be counted on and off transport and at other times on a regular basis whilst on excursion or camp activities.
- The teacher in charge will have copies of all confidential medical forms and permission notes with contact details. A copy of this material will also be kept at school. Whilst on camp a copy of this material is given to the Principal.
- Arrangements will be made for students not attending to continue their normal program at school under supervision of another classroom teacher.
- The teacher in charge or designated teacher of an excursion or camp will carry a mobile phone and a first aid kit.
- If the return time from an excursion or camp is delayed, the teacher in charge will contact the school to inform the Principal of the new arrival time so that parents can be contacted and a senior staff member will remain at school until they arrive.

- If crossing roads students are to use designated crossing points. Staff are to walk to the middle of the crossing to ensure visibility and orderly crossing. Other staff to control the flow of students across the road.

All staff must follow the DET guidelines when organising an excursion, incursion or camp. All procedural steps contained in the School camping, excursions and incursions Policy and Procedure outlines must also be followed.

INFORMING STAFF OF THE LEGISLATIVE LIABILITY OF DUTY OF CARE:

All staff will be informed of their legal requirement via:-

- A copy of this document will be provided to each member of staff at the first staff meeting at the commencement of the school year, and will be placed on the OHS Board.
- New staff will be informed of their Duty of Care as part of the school's Induction Program.
- Duty of Care will be an agenda item at staff meetings and staff will be directed to familiarise themselves with section Student Safety of the Victorian Government Schools Policy Advisory Guide.
- Staff will complete a risk assessment including Duty of Care when completing planning for camps, excursions and incursions.
- Staff will be directed to the Student Inclusion and Wellbeing Policy annually.

References: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx>



Policy Name:	Anti-Bullying
Date Adopted:	3 rd June 2016
Review Date:	3 rd June 2019
Referred Documents:	

DEFINITION:

A person is bullied when one or more other people expose them regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying can be:

- **Direct Physical Bullying** - e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
- **Direct Verbal Bullying** – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
- **Indirect Bullying** – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person, damaging a person’s social reputation or social acceptance, or cyberbullying.

Cyber-bullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile phone, chat rooms and social media. It could involve setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. It can be verbal or written.

Refer WPPS Acceptable Use Agreement for outlines of cybersafety and responsible online behaviour

Bullying is a clear form of harassment.

Wedge Park Primary School has a zero tolerance for any form of child abuse.

RATIONALE:

- Wedge Park Primary School will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment.

AIMS:

- To reinforce within Wedge Park Primary School community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- Everyone within Wedge Park Primary School community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of Wedge Park Primary School’s position on bullying.
- Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.
- Wedge Park Primary School will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

A. Primary Prevention:

- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying (including cyber-bullying), its characteristics, its effects on victims and Wedge Park Primary School’s programs and response.
- To provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- A bullying survey will be administered and acted upon annually through the Attitudes to School Survey developed by DET.
- Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year the Wedge Park Primary School policy on bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- All students and parents will be provided with the school’s Acceptable Use Agreement of the internet, and other digital technologies in their community.
- The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies
- Student Representative Council, peer support delegates, staff and students to promote the schools values and anti-bullying policy

B. Early Intervention:

- Promote children and staff reporting bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Classroom teachers and principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.
- Regular monitoring of student traffic on school’s computer networks to identify potential problems.
- Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- A designated safe and quiet place for children to access at recess and lunch times.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

C. Intervention:

- Once identified each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Students and staff identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Parents to be contacted.
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support by staff or DET personnel.
- Removal of cyber-bullies from access to Wedge Park Primary School's network and computers for a period of time. Loss of privilege to bring mobile devices to school where these are involved in any incidents.
- If staff bullying persists the principal will commence formal disciplinary action.

D. Post Violation:

- Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:
 - Counselling for both victim and bully
 - Exclusion from class
 - Exclusion from yard
 - Withdrawal of privileges
 - School suspension
- Classroom Meetings.
- Support Structures.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- Recognition and rewards for positive behaviour.
- Consequences for staff will be individually based and may involve:
 - Counselling
 - A period of monitoring
 - A formal support group
 - Disciplinary actions

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input as part of Wedge Park Primary School's three-year review cycle.

Policy Name:	Working with Children Check
Date Adopted:	16 th August 2017
Review Date:	16 th August 2019
Referred Documents:	

RATIONALE:

The Department of Education and Training and School Councils have a responsibility to ensure the safety of all children and employees, and maintain the security of assets by requiring and maintaining high standards of professional conduct from employees and volunteers.

In meeting these responsibilities the Department and School Councils must be satisfied that only those employees and volunteers who meet the highest standards of probity and suitability are employed. Verification of a criminal record is achieved by ensuring the employment of new school based employees proceeds in accordance with legislative obligations pursuant to the *Working with Children Act 2005* (for non-teaching employees and volunteers), and to the *Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001* (for principals and teachers).

BROAD GUIDELINES:

The *Working with Children Act 2005* is operational and includes a Working with Children Check (WWC Check), thereby creating minimum checking standards across Victoria for people who work or volunteer with children in certain capacities. The WWC Check will ensure that people who are unsuitable to engage in 'child-related work' do not do so.

The Act defines 'child-related work' as work which usually involves (or is likely to involve) regular, direct contact (**oral, written or electronic communication as well as face-to-face and physical contact**) with a child where that contact is not directly supervised, and in any of twenty child-related occupational fields listed in the Act. 'Child-related work' may be either paid or unpaid (voluntary).

Working With Children Check is now required for anyone engaging in 'child-related work' regardless of whether contact with a child is supervised by another person or not. This means that a volunteer or visitor who is supervised by a teacher must have a WWC Check if they engage in 'child related work'.

The Department has developed procedures for the conduct of criminal record checks for all school based and non-school based employees, including arrangements that allow for the acceptance of the criminal record checks conducted by the Victorian Institute of Teaching and Working with Children Checks to meet the Department's pre-employment suitability for employment requirements.

These procedures apply to:

- persons employed under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- persons employed under the Public Administration Act 2004
- volunteers (in school and attending excursions/events as an official helper)
- casual employees including casual relief teachers
- student teachers and interns
- contractors

There are exemptions from the Act including: people under 18 years of age, sworn police officers, teachers currently registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT), and visiting workers who do not ordinarily reside and perform child-related work in Victoria.

Further information relevant to a WWC Check can be found at the Department of Justice's internet site at www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren.

EDUCATION SUPPORT STAFF (ES):

When appointed, an ES staff member must produce their WWC Check and a copy is kept on their personnel file. A list of registered staff is created and updated annually by the office staff. A copy of the register is kept by the HR manager.

CLASSROOM/SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

- All volunteers must present their WWC Card to the Office. If the card has not yet been issued, the stamped application form from the Post Office must be presented until the card arrives.
- Office staff photocopy WWC Card for every volunteer and keep it on file in the office.
- A list of registered volunteers is created and updated annually by the office staff. A copy of the register is kept in the office.
- Teachers are responsible for checking the register for the volunteers in their classrooms. Only people on the register can be invited into the classroom or on excursions.
- When in the school, all volunteers must comply with the WPPS Visitors Policy.
- Expiry dates for all WWC Cards should be checked at the beginning of each school year by the volunteer and the school office staff.

CONTRACTORS:

- All contractors and trades people must report to the school office. OHS staff must sight the WWC Card before work can commence on the school site within school hours.
- Regular contractors in the school (eg. cleaners and regularly used trades people) must present their WWC Card at the office. Office staff will copy the card and keep it on file in the office.
- If a trade person does not have a WWC Card and is working on school grounds within school hours, the OHS Rep / Maintenance Team will supervise their work and escort them off-site once the job is complete.
- When in the school, all contractors/trades people must comply with the WPPS Visitors Policy.