Kala Primary School

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Kala Primary School Administration Office staff.

Purpose

The Kala Primary School Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our school's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This policy provides an overview of our school's approach to implementing Ministerial Order 1359 - PDF, 363KB which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

Scope

This policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school council members where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by for a student's use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

Definitions

The following terms in this policy have specific definitions:

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school staff
- school governing authority
- student
- volunteer.

Statement of commitment to child safety

Kala Primary School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer, questioning and asexual (LGBTIQA+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.
Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

Roles and responsibilities

School leadership team

Our school leadership team (comprising of the Principal, Assistant Principal and Wellbeing Leader) is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

Principals and assistant principals will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of, and responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

School staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our Child Safety Code of Conduct

- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures, including following the Four Critical Actions for Schools
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

School council

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, school council members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings
- undertake annual training on child safety, using the Child Safe Standards School Council Training slide presentation available on PROTECT.
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members
- ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe when hiring school council employees. At our school, school council employment duties are delegated to the principal who is bound by this policy.

Specific staff child safety responsibilities

Kala Primary School has nominated the Assistant Principal and Wellbeing Team Leader as child safety champions to support the principal to implement our child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training.

The responsibilities of the child safety champions are outlined at Guidance for child safety champions. In addition to these roles, our child safety champions are also responsible for:

Our Principal and Assistant Principal and child safety champions are the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

- The Leadership Team is responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our school community should approach a member of the Leadership Team if they have any concerns about the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- The Leadership Team is responsible for informing the school community about this policy, and making it publicly available
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and Child Safety Risk Register.

Our school has also established a Wellbeing Team and a Student Representative Council who meet regularly to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safety and wellbeing.

Our Risk Management Committee monitors the Child Safety Risk Register.

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

Managing risks to child safety and wellbeing

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Our school leadership team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

In addition, our Wellbeing Team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies to help identify students in need of support and enhance overall student wellbeing.

Establishing a culturally safe environment

(Note: Koorie is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people)

At Kala Primary School, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community:

- establishment of a Global Education Team
- we ensure our built environment and website demonstrates an appreciation and acknowledgment of the Koorie culture
- actively encourage and support a student's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights
- equip staff, students, volunteers, and the school community to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Koorie culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Koorie students.
- we have developed an *Action Plan - Aboriginal Learning Wellbeing and Safety* which outlines the measures we have in place to maintain an inclusive and culturally safe school for Aboriginal children and students and their families. This plan links to the Department of Education's Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan
- our school actively engages with Koorie Education Support Officers (KESO) to ensure culturally responsive supports and resources are available for Indigenous students and their families, fostering a sense of cultural identity, belonging, and engagement within the school community
- we support our staff to participate in the Community Understanding and Safety Training (CUST), which strengthens the capability of school staff to build more culturally inclusive practices, including embedding Aboriginal perspectives in the curriculum, and connecting with Aboriginal Community to support ongoing learning and partnership
- Address any instances of racism with appropriate consequences and ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated, in this instance our school references supports such as Schools Standing up to Racism

- Actively support the participation and inclusion of Koorie children and students and their families by creating opportunities to showcase their talents, achievements, and cultural contributions within the school community.
- We utilise additional staff resources such as the Koorie teaching resources for leaders and teachers

Student empowerment

To support child safety and wellbeing at Kala Primary School, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing. This is supported through:

- our School Wide Positive Behaviour & Respectful Relationship programs as outlined in our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy*
- our school wide *Code of Conduct Policy* and School Values which celebrates diversity and strives to develop individuals to have an active voice in their learning and school culture
- cross-age connection activities including student clubs, recess and lunchtime activities and buddy/peer support programs
- through "Welcome Circles" and providing opportunities for restorative conversations
- our *Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures* which empowers our school community to report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment
- We display visually engaging and easy-to-read posters (e.g. posters) around the school promoting child safety, student voice and agency. We also share a complaints fact sheet and scenarios on our school website and in our school newsletter for students and their parents/carers

Furthermore, our students are welcome to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year level meetings, peer support groups and student surveys. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year level Team Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.

We inform students of their rights through our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns at the school administration office.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

Family engagement

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Kala Primary School we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this by:

- seeking input from our school community via School Council, parent/carer meetings and school generated surveys.
- all our child safety policies and procedures will be available for students and parents on our school website
- Compass posts will inform families and the school community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and carers and staff via newsletters (digitally via compass), emails, the school website, and social media platforms, further supported by our *Communication with School Staff Policy*.
- PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed across the school in all classrooms and workspaces and in high traffic areas
- by creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all families regardless of cultural background we will encourage and facilitate parent and carer involvement to engage with staff through volunteering opportunities at various school events and activities.
- providing opportunities for parents and carers to engage with staff to discuss their children's experiences at school via both formal and informal meetings (Parent teacher interviews, Care Team meetings and Student Support Groups)
- organising interpreters and translations to engage families from non-English speaking backgrounds in conversations about the school's child safety strategies.
- reminding the school community about the shared roles of parents, carers and school staff in creating a positive environment for learning by promoting the Respectful Behaviours in the School Community Policy.
- hosting community workshops on child safety and wellbeing topics such as respectful relationships and behaviours and providing families with take-home information to support them talking to their children about safety and wellbeing at home.
- communicating with and appropriately involving families at all stages of the process if a concern is raised or complaint is made.

Diversity and equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQA+.

Other ways our school will implement school strategies and actions for diversity and equity are:

- Communicate that discrimination and bullying are not tolerated – if incidents of bullying or discrimination occur, address the incident in line with our *Bullying Prevention policy.*
- Check in with vulnerable students and their families to confirm their needs are being met. This can occur at pick-up or drop-off, at parent teacher interviews or through informal discussions.
- Via classroom activities engage genuinely with students to find out what matters to them, what they know and don't know about safety, and what they need to be safe and feel safe.
- Through explicit instruction and age-appropriate posters and activities we inform students how they can raise concerns or report incidents that occur at school and outside the school.
- Providing staff and volunteers with training to identify and address racism, bullying and discrimination.
- Ensure that all communications are provided in different languages especially for those students and families where they have a language background other than English.
- Seek out expert advice as needed to support inclusion - such as an occupational therapist, speech pathologist and provision and planning.
- Recognising dates that connect with our school community such as Harmony Day, National Reconciliation Week, Crazy Hair Day (Cystic Fibrosis Awareness)
- Referring to the Preventing and Addressing Racism in schools policy on PAL which provides an extensive list of resources to strengthen our schools culture and practice to prevent and address racism, also supporting compliance with Victoria's Child Safe Standards

Our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Inclusion and Diversity policy provides more information about the measures we have in place to support diversity and equity.

Suitable staff and volunteers

At Kala Primary School, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

Staff recruitment

When recruiting staff, we follow the Department of Education's recruitment policies and guidelines, available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at:

- Recruitment in Schools
- Suitability for Employment Checks
- School Council Employment
- Contractor OHS Management.

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record:
    - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
    - the person's history of working with children
    - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

Staff induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct

- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures and
- any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done by:

- engaging child safety champion/s to manage and support the school's implementation of the schools Child Safe Standards including ongoing training and professional development in this area
- establishing clear expectations and standards for staff behaviour towards children through written policies and procedures.
- providing supervision and people management of staff and volunteers that focuses on child safety and wellbeing
- early intervention to provide feedback to staff and correct any concerning or unsafe conduct to prevent harm before it occurs.
- ensuring annual VIT registrations are up to date, including five-year police checks.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school and department policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

Suitability of volunteers

All volunteers are required to comply with our Volunteers Policy, which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completing the Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

School council training and education

To ensure our school council is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment, the council is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment
- Kala Primary School child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

Complaints and reporting processes

Kala Primary School fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's Complaints Policy. The Complaints Policy can be found on our school website.

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including school council employees) must follow our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures. Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- the Four Critical Actions for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Bullying Prevention Policy cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

Communications

Kala Primary School is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document), Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure
- displaying PROTECT posters around the school
- updates to families via Compass posts
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings.

Privacy and information sharing

Kala Primary School collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to: Schools' Privacy Policy.

Records management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the Department of Education's policy: Records Management – School Records

Review of child safety practices

At Kala Primary School, we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

The Principal will:

- review and improve our policy every 2 years or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community.

Related policies and procedures

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Acceptable Use Agreement
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy

Related Department of Education policies

- Bullying Prevention and Response Policy
- Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes
- Complaints Policy
- Contractor OHS Management Policy
- Digital Learning in Schools Policy
- Family Violence Support
- Protecting Children: Reporting Obligations Policy
- Policy and Guidelines for Recruitment in Schools
- Reportable Conduct Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Supervision of Students Policy
- Visitors in Schools Policy
- Volunteers in Schools Policy
- Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors
- Preventing and Addressing Racism in schools

- LGBTIQA+ Student Support: Policy | VIC.GOV.AU | Policy and Advisory Library

Other related documents

- Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools
- Four Critical Actions for Schools
- Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending
- Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending
- Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools

Policy status and review

The Principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the Kala Primary School community.

Approval

Created date	July 2025
Consultation	Consultation with the School Council and the school community will take place in Term 1, 2026 (or as soon as the School Council is appointed)
Endorsed by	Principal
Endorsed on	August 2025
Next review date	Term 1, 2026 To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 1-2 years thereafter*

*The Child Safety and Wellbeing policy will be reviewed earlier if a significant incident occurs or due to legislative changes.