

Child Safe Standards

Victorian Registration Qualifications Authority (VRQA)

Victorian schools are required under the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act to ensure that they implement compulsory child safe standards to protect children from harm. The following school's VRQA policies and procedures should be read in conjunction with all the Child Safe Standards documented in this folder.

- ❖ Mandatory Reporting
- ❖ Anti-Bullying & Anti-Cyber Bullying
- ❖ Excursions
- ❖ Incursions
- ❖ Camp
- ❖ External Providers
- ❖ Duty of Care
- ❖ On-site supervision
- ❖ Internet
- ❖ Working With Children Check

The Child Safe Standards

Ministerial Order No. 870 sets out the specific actions that schools need to take to meet the child safe standards. The introduction of child safe standards form part of the Victorian Government's response to the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust report, which found that more must be done to prevent and respond to child abuse in schools. The standards will promote cultures where protecting children from abuse is part of everyday thinking and practice in organisations.

The Child Safe Standards set out to create safe places for children to fully and actively participate in the life of the community benefiting everyone. Streeton Primary School will ensure that the children in its care are protected to the best of its ability and in line with their duty of care and the compulsory child safe standards.

The Standards

To create and maintain a child safe school, we will comply with the following standards.

Standard 1 – Good leadership & governance in child safe school – strategies to embed a school culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

Standard 2 – Commitment to Child Safety Policy - a child safe statement of commitment to child safety

Standard 3 – Code of Conduct – a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behavior with children

Standard 4 – Human Resources Practices – screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

Standard 5 – Reporting Child Abuse – processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

Standard 6 – Identifying and Reducing Risks – strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Standard 7 – Empowering Children – strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

Ministerial Order No. 870 has set out the specific actions for schools to take to meet these requirements – *these are included in this folder.*

In complying with the child safe standards above, we will be mindful of the diversity of students and school communities and include the following **inclusion principles** as part of each standard:

- Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- Promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and /or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Promoting the safety of children with a disability

(See Glossary of Terms for definitions)

A cornerstone of the development of universal child safe procedures is the rights that are outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC). CROC specifically recognizes that children have a right to be protected from physical and mental harm and neglect and be able to enjoy the full range of human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. An extract of the convention can be found below.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Highlights of the convention

- Every child has the inherent right to life, and states shall ensure to the maximum child survival and development
- Every child has the right to a name and nationality from birth
- Children shall not be separated from their parents, except by competent authorities for their wellbeing
- States shall facilitate reunification of families by permitting travel into, or out of, their territories
- Parents have the primary responsibility for a child's upbringing, but states shall provide them with appropriate assistance and develop child care institutions
- States shall protect children from physical or mental harm and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation
- States shall provide parentless children with suitable alternative care. The adoption process shall be carefully regulated and international agreements should be sought to provide safeguards and assure legal validity if and when adoptive parents intend to move a child from his or her country of birth
- Disabled children shall have the right to special treatment, educations and care
- Children are entitled to the highest attainable standard of health. States shall ensure that health care is provided to all children, placing emphasis on preventive measures, health education and reduction of infant mortality
- Primary education shall be free and compulsory. Discipline in schools shall respect the child's dignity. Education should prepare the child for life in a spirit of understanding, peace and tolerance
- Children shall have time to rest and play and equal opportunities for cultural and artistic activities
- States shall protect children from economic exploitation and from work that may interfere with their education or be harmful to their health or wellbeing
- States shall protect children from the illegal use of drugs and involvement in drug production or trafficking

- All efforts shall be made to eliminate the abduction and trafficking of children
- Capital punishment or life imprisonment shall not be imposed for crimes committed before the age of 18
- Children in detention shall be separated from adults: they must not be tortured or suffer cruel or degrading treatment
- No child under 15 shall take any part in hostilities: children exposed to armed conflict shall receive special protection
- Children of minority and indigenous populations shall freely enjoy their own culture, religion and language
- Children who have suffered mistreatment, neglect or exploitation shall receive appropriate treatment or training for recovery and rehabilitation
- Children involved in infringements of the penal law shall be treated in a way that promotes their sense of dignity and worth and aims at reintegrating them into society
- States shall make the rights set out in the convention widely known to both adults and children