



JOHN
MONASH
SCIENCE SCHOOL

CHILD SAFE POLICY – STANDARD 2
STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Version 1: 26th July 2016

Approved by School Council

Signed by President of School Council: Stephen Duggan

PURPOSE:

This policy supports and protects students and staff, volunteers and contractors.

- ❖ See Appendix #1 for Definitions.

The support of the staff, volunteers and contractors includes delineating clear responsibilities and expectations, articulates how the recruitment process and training will affect them with regard to Child Safe Standards, and reduces ambiguity with respect to student-teacher relationships and interactions.

We involve students, parents, and staff when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them.

- We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.
- We promote diversity and tolerance at JMSS
- In particular we promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and gender diverse students. We also ensure that students with disabilities are safe and can participate equally.

This policy also intends to guide all staff, volunteers and contractors on how to behave with students in our organisation.

All of our staff, volunteers and contractors are expected to comply with our Code of Conduct on Child Safety which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with students. Staff, students and parents are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Code of Conduct.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO STUDENT SAFETY

John Monash Science School (JMSS) is committed to maintaining the safety and wellbeing of all its students whilst at school and participating in school related events. JMSS actively encourages an environment that fosters a culture of openness, inclusiveness and awareness.

We want our students (and other students who are on-site such as visiting students, students on exchange programs and Emerging Science Victoria students) to be safe. We are committed to the safety of all students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, the safety of gender diverse students and providing a safe environment for students with disabilities.

JMSS is committed to the Victorian Government's Child Safe Standards to prevent child abuse, including encouraging the reporting of abuse and appropriate responses to all allegations.

At JMSS we ensure that our staff:

- are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all students.
- are in compliance with the JMSS Staff Code Of Conduct and that all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently within our policies and procedures.
- are aware of, and understand their legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when worried about a student's safety.
- are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and /or reducing these risks.
- regularly attend training and education about child abuse risks

PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Communicate the Statement of Commitment and Child Safe Policy / Standards publicly to the JMSS school community. Communication will be via the JMSS website, newsletters and recruitment advertisements.
2. Communicate the Statement of Commitment and Child Safe Policy in other languages where appropriate.
3. Ensure that the School Council, staff, volunteers and contractors are aware of the school's Child Safe Policy and the commitment to their duty of care (through Staff Meetings / Briefings, Professional Development and On-Line Professional Development (where appropriate)).
4. Ensure that the Child Safe Policy / Standards and Procedures will be part of the Staff / Volunteer / Contractor Induction Program.
5. Ensure that students, parents and staff at JMSS understand that student safety is everyone's responsibility through training for staff, education for students and information through newsletters / websites for parents.
6. Train staff, volunteers and contractors to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect students from abuse; and promote the safety of: Aboriginal students, students from linguistically / ethnically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, and gender-diverse students.
7. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the nature and urgency of the matter.

8. All reasonable steps will be taken to employ skilled people to work with students. Selection criteria and advertisements will be developed which clearly demonstrate JMSS's commitment to student safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our school understands that when recruiting staff, volunteers and contractors, we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.
9. All staff, 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.
10. Reference checks will be conducted to ensure that JMSS is recruiting people appropriate for the job. Police record checks are conducted by the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).
11. The safety and wellbeing of all students is the school's 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 and based on evidence.
12. All allegations of abuse and safety concerns will be recorded using our Incident Reporting Form, including investigation updates. All records will be securely stored.
13. If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, JMSS will provide updates to the student(s) and parents on progress and any actions that JMSS will undertake.
14. All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved (staff, volunteers, contractors, parents or students). We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure all personal information is protected. Individuals involved are entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.
15. JMSS takes its legal responsibilities seriously, including:
 - o Reporting child sexual abuse, and that reporting of the abuse is a community-wide responsibility. NB: All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 years of age have a legal and moral obligation to report that information to the police.
 - o Personnel of authority in our school will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
16. All staff and students who are 18 years and over are mandatory reporters.
17. In addition to general Occupational Health and Safety risks, JMSS proactively manage risks of abuse to our students. 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 and online environments.
18. This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. JMSS will ensure that families and students have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities, people with a disability and people with gender diversity.

19. JMSS takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place (Child Safe Standard 3 – Code of Conduct).

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- ❖ Child Safe Standard 3: Code of Conduct
- ❖ Child Safe Standard 4: Human Resources Practices for Child Safety
- ❖ Child Safe Standard 5: Recruitment Practices for Child Safety
- ❖ Child Safe Standard 6: Incident Reporting Forms
- ❖ E-Smart Policy
- ❖ Staff Induction Policy
- ❖ Safe-School Coalition

DRAFTED BY:

Sally Cheah-Johnson - Assistant Principal (Student Achievement & Wellbeing) with input from School Council Student Empowerment Committee (Members: School Council representatives, parents, staff and student representatives).

PROPOSED REVIEW DATE: July 2018

PROTECT



Education and Training

Resource & Reference: DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Child Safe Standard 3: Definitions

Child abuse includes— any act committed against a child involving:

- a sexual offence or
- an offence under section 49B(2) of the **Crimes Act 1958** (grooming)
- the infliction, on a child, of:
- physical violence or
- serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work means work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

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.

Proprietor in relation to a government school, means the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

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).

School governing authority means, in the case of a government school:

- the Secretary; or
- a school council, as authorised by or under the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**; or
- the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school or under the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**.

School staff being 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), and including a chaplain or minister of religion.

APPENDIX #2

PROTECT



RESOURCE & REFERENCES:

- Victorian Government, Education & Reform Act 2006, Gazette No. S2, January 2016, *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools*, Ministerial Order No. 870.
- Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (2016) Information Sheet. CHILD SAFE STANDARD 2: A child safety policy or a statement of commitment to child safety
- Commission for Children and Young People (2015) A Guide For Creating A Child Safe Organisation, Version 2.0.
- [A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST](#)
- [Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people](#)
- [Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations](#) - elearning module (log-in required)
- State of Victoria (2010) Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people: A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools