

Sebastopol Primary School - The New Child Safe Standards

New Ministerial Order No. 1359 sets out the specific actions that schools need to take to meet the child safe standards. The new Standards set out minimum requirements and outline the actions organisations must take to keep children and young people safe. They provide more clarity for organisations and are more consistent with standards in the rest of Australia.

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. Sebastopol 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 school will continually review child safety policies, procedures and practices to comply with the new Standard and ensure that families, carers and the community are informed about the school's operations and governance.

Sebastopol Primary School is committed to Child Safety – this a reminder to our existing community members and for the benefit of our new families to our school this year.

As a community we want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. There is zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures. We meet our legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Sebastopol Primary School is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks. We have robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers. Our school is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. As a community we support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for vulnerable children and children with a disability. Sebastopol Primary School has specific policies, procedures and training in places that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

At Sebastopol Primary School:

- Everyone connected to our school can help children be safe.
- We have zero tolerance for any abuse of children.
- We already have policies and processes in place to protect the care, safety and welfare of children. These are being strengthened to ensure a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse.

As policies are ratified at school council, they will be made available to you through the newsletter and on our web page.

- Our Child Safe Policy is on our website with a suite of information for families, carers and the community

- There will be clear boundaries about how adults in our school community may interact with the children here set out in our school's Child Safe Code of Conduct. This too is on the website.

Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility. Different people at our school have different roles and responsibilities for ensuring children's safety. **Maddie Morrish is the school's Child Safety Champion.** However, all staff are responsible for the safety of all children but there needs to be one key person who will undertake the roles listed below.

Key activities of a school Child Safety Champion

Provide authoritative advice

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.
- Liaise with the principal and school leaders to maintain the visibility of child safety.
- Lead the development of the school's child safety culture, including being a child safety champion and providing coordination in communicating, implementing, monitoring, enhancing and reporting on strategies to embed a culture of child safety.

Raise awareness

- Ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately.
- Ensure the school's child safety policy is reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Encourage among all staff a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures to protect them.

Train

- Being authoritative in providing advice by:
 - keeping their skills up to date with appropriate training carried out every two years
 - having a working knowledge of how the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and Community Service Organisations conduct a child protection case conference to be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child safety policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest DFFH and DET policies and guidance.

If you require any information or would like to know more, please contact the school.

Michelle Wilson
Principal