

No 1844



RAYWOOD
PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Child Safety Standard 2: Child Safety Policy

Outline...

- Raywood Primary School is committed to child safety. The aim of our school is to help the children feel safe, happy and empowered
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and school volunteers
- We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children
- Raywood Primary carries a zero tolerance for child abuse. All allegations and safety concerns raised will be treated seriously and consistently in line with our child safety policies and procedures
- Raywood Primary has both legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety
- We are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, removing and reducing these risks
- Raywood Primary has specific screening procedures and recruitment practices in place for all staff and volunteers
- We are committed to the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, and to providing a safe environment for children with any form of disability
- Raywood Primary is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse, and have procedures in place to support both staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments

Our Children

The purpose of this policy is to empower children who are active members of Raywood Primary. They are involved with decision making, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their different views and both staff, volunteers and fellow peers respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance at Raywood Primary, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Indigenous Children
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally

Our staff and volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on appropriate behaviour with children at Raywood Primary.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

Supervision

The Raywood Primary School Culture aims for all staff and volunteers to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse and child safety concerns. Our staff and volunteers are trained 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 children from child abuse, promote cultural safety of all children including those from linguistically diverse backgrounds and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be supervised to ensure they understand Raywood Primary School's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from child abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, Depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with our children. We develop selection criteria which clearly advertise our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities.

We actively encourage applications from people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

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.

We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people.

Fair Procedures for Personnel

Raywood Primary Schools primary concern is the safety and wellbeing of children, however we also focus on being fair and just to our personnel.

The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and taking on disciplinary action will always be thorough and based on evidence.

At Raywood Primary all personnel are treated in a fair manner when dealing with arising situations despite their role/responsibilities within the school.

Privacy

All information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the people involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety.

Legislative Responsibilities

Raywood Primary takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- **Failure to Disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All Adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under the age of 16 have an obligation to report that information to police
- **Failure to Protect:** People of authority with Raywood Primary 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
- All personnel who are mandatory reporters must comply with their duties

Risk Management

Raywood Primary is required to protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to children.

We have risk management strategies to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by both physical and online environments.

These risk management strategies are complied to not only by the staff of the school but all volunteers, parents and visiting community.

Regular Review

This policy will be reviewed regularly and after any significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that all appropriate parties including both culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities as well as people with disabilities have the chance to contribute.

Allegations, Concerns and Complaints

Raywood Primary takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they see abuse take place 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
- 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