



CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Mitcham Primary School

JUNE 2022



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Mitcham Primary School, acknowledges the traditional lands of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation.

We pay our respect to Elders both past, present and future.



OVERVIEW

- Mitsam Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.
- Mitsam Primary School understands the Child Safety Standards are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian early childhood services and schools, to ensure they are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect by creating a safe environment.
- Mitsam Primary School follows their obligation under Ministerial Order 1359, which provides the framework for child safety in schools.



STANDARD 1 - *Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- At MPS students are encouraged and are able to, express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights and it is encouraged and actively supported by staff, students and the school community.
- Strategies within the school educate members to understand the importance of Aboriginal culture to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.
- Racism is not tolerated at MPS. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.
- MPS actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion of all cultures and families.
- MPS creates a safe and inclusive environment for all children, young people and families. This is supported by our policies, systems and procedures.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- Our students are taught about Indigenous Australians and their culture. Each year our students acknowledge and celebrate Reconciliation week and NAIDOC week, as well as our Harmony Day celebrations.
- At our school assemblies, events and meeting our leaders, students and staff commence with an acknowledgement of country.
- Displays of Aboriginal culture are in all classrooms and across the school, to ensure our environment is culturally safe respecting and valuing the identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people.
- Our Indigenous Cross Curricular team promotes cross cultural learning through all areas of the curriculum. They engage in regular professional development to ensure current practice and understanding of culture.



STANDARD 2 - *Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- MPS' commitment to child safety is transparent and publically accessible.
- Staff at all levels of MPS, including leadership and principal class, model and adhere to child safe standards.
- The Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.
- Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.
- Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping in accordance with the Code of Conduct and Child Safety standards.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- All staff and volunteers must read the Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- All staff and school councillors are provided with Child Safety professional development annually.
- Our public commitment to child safety is on the school website and available in hard copy at the school office.
- Child Safety is an agenda item in all staff meetings throughout the school and at school council meetings.
- Child Safety policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and updated. They are available on our school website, in hard copy at the school office and on our shared staff school drive.
- A Child Safety team is responsible for ensuring all these strategies are followed throughout the school.



STANDARD 3 - *Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Students at MPS are informed about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation.
- Support from peers is encouraged, to help students feel safe and supported at MPS.
- Where relevant and if required, students are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way. This is sourced by our allied health and leadership teams.
- Staff and volunteers at MPS are trained annually to recognise signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for our students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.
- MPS develops a culture that allows for participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- The Rights, Responsibilities and Respectful Relationships program is explicitly taught and implemented across the school.
- Wellbeing programs across the school work on building positive relationships.
- Student voice and agency is encouraged and supported in all classes and programs across the school.
- Programs including Student leadership, Peer Mediators and JSC allow for students to provide feedback and ask questions around students rights and safety.
- Student opinion survey/classroom opinion surveys allow students to provide feedback.
- Students are responsible for creating and upholding the school values and classroom expectations.



STANDARD 4 - *Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- MPS families participate in decisions affecting their child.
- MPS engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible via the office and school website.
- The MPS school community have a say in the development and review of school practices.
- At MPS families, carers and the community are informed about the schools' operations and governance.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- Child safety documentation is available for families and communities to view through the school website, newsletters, AIP and SSP and at the school office.
- Consultation around child safety documentation is completed with the school council.
- Parent/Carer and teacher conferences are held twice a year and families can communicate with teachers throughout the year to discuss child safety concerns.
- Feedback is sought from parents on Child Safety through the Parent Opinion Survey and through additional surveys that the school sends out to families.
- School Support Group Meetings (SSGs) are held with families as a collaborative discussion on strategies to support students.



STANDARD 5 - *Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- At a whole school level (including volunteers), MPS understands that students come from diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.
- The students in our school have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.
- MPS is inclusive of the needs of individuals with disability, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people.
- MPS is inclusive of the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- Policies and procedures are in place to support vulnerable students and the diverse needs of students in the school setting.
- Students with funding receive the appropriate support.
- Dedicated staff representative for LOOKOUT and Indigenous Cross-Curricular group.
- Kids Hope mentors visit regularly and spend time with vulnerable students.
- School-wide approach to Positive Behaviour supports, that promotes equity and respectful behaviours. The Rights, Responsibilities and Respectful Relationships program is implemented and taught across the school.



STANDARD 6 - *People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- At MPS, recruitment, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasise child safety and wellbeing.
- Staff and volunteers have current Working with Children checks or equivalent background checks. All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations where appropriate.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- All staff and volunteers must read the Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- New staff induction includes Child Safety policies, Child Safety Code of Conduct and information around their obligations towards reporting and ensuring the safety of students.
- VIT cards and Working with Children Cards are photocopied and stored on file in the school office for all staff, volunteers and visitors.
- Staff complete annual Child Safety professional development and complete the mandatory reporting module. School council completes annual Child Safety training and this is included in the meeting.
- Recruitment processes include procedures around the candidates suitability to work with children.



STANDARD 7 - *Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- MPS has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report. This policy and its processes are understood by students, families, staff and volunteers, and are culturally safe.
- At MPS complaints are taken seriously, and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
- MPS has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.
- At MPS, reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- Our school complaint policy that is available on the school website, or in hard copy, at the school office.
- Staff feel comfortable to approach a member of leadership about concerns and know the processes to follow when making a report.
- The leadership team aim to address all complaints in a timely and respectful manner.
- Families are aware of the avenues available to make complaints.
- Students are encouraged and made aware of procedures for approaching members of staff with complaints. Students are made to feel comfortable approaching staff, knowing they will be listened to.



STANDARD 8 - *Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- MPS staff are trained and supported to effectively implement and visitors are given the school's child safety and wellbeing policy.
- MPS staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people. Support, training and information about effective response to issues of child safety and wellbeing is available.
- MPS staff receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- Staff complete the annual Child Safety training and complete the compulsory online mandatory reporting training.
- Child safety is an agenda item for all staff meetings and school council meetings. This allows for staff training in child safety to occur.
- Staff receive professional development around building culturally safe environments that are inclusive for all students.



STANDARD 9 - *Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Staff at MPS identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
- At MPS, the online environment is used in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.
- MPS' risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities, and the physical environment.
- When MPS contracts facilities and services from third parties, we have appropriate policies that ensure the safety of children and young people are met.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- Our staff and students sign a Digital Technologies agreement that promotes safety with technology and for the online environment.
- Our school policies, include engagement and wellbeing, duty of care, yard duty supervision and child safety, all ensure our online and physical environments promote safety and wellbeing.
- Risk management processes occur for all excursions, camps and activities.
- Risk management is conducted for all external works being completed on the school grounds.
- Students participate in Cyber Safety lessons which focus on being safe online. This is a focus of the Digital Technologies curriculum.
- Our physical environment is well maintained and students are kept safe by secure fences, buildings and doors.



STANDARD 10 - *Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- MPS regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.
- Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and incident prevention.
- MPS reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families (including students when appropriate).

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- Policy review schedule is adhered to.
- Child safe and wellbeing policies and practices are reviewed annually or sooner, if needed.
- Safety incidents are recorded on Compass, the student wellbeing sheet and staff website. This data is reviewed by leadership and classroom level teachers where appropriate.
- Opportunities for parents to give feedback, concerns or complaints are offered in different forms over the year, to assist in addressing needs of the students and ensuring continuous reflection and improvement.
- Reporting of information is done regularly and shared with appropriate stakeholders through weekly meetings, SSGs, AIP, parent meetings, semesterly reports, school website and school newsletters.



STANDARD 11 - *Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people*

HOW WE ADDRESS THIS STANDARD AT MITCHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

- MPS' policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards. These policies and procedures are documented, accessible and easy to understand.
- MPS uses best practice models from the DET, which assist in the development of policies and procedures.
- The MPS Leadership team adhere to and model compliance with policies and procedures.
- MPS staff and volunteers understand and have access to policies and procedures.

THIS CAN BE SEEN THROUGH:

- Our school policies and procedures are reviewed and updated regularly. These policies address all the standards. These policies are available on the school website, staff google drive and in hard copy at the school office.
- Our school policies are created with the support and guidance of DET.
- The school has documentation around when the policies need to be updated.
- All school staff model the behaviours and embed the actions that are within the school policies and procedures.