MONTPELLIER PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 6 – STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY AND REDUCE OR REMOVE RISKS OF CHILD ABUSE.

LEGISLATION

On 26 November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015, which amended the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 to introduce the Child Safe Standards that would apply to all organisations involved in child related work in Victoria.

Ministerial Order 870 - Child Safe Standards - Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools provides guidance on how the Standards apply to a school setting. It came into effect on 1 August 2016.

PURPOSE

Montpellier Primary School has an active risk management approach to the duty of care in protecting our children from any possible safety risk. We have a commitment to continuous improvement and a legal responsibility to ensure the safety of all children.

SCOPE

Ensuring our children are safe is the shared responsibility of all staff members at Montpellier Primary School, in reducing and removing any potential risks. Montpellier Primary School has a formal and structured approach to managing risks associated with child safety to meet the requirements of Child Safe Standard 6. The process includes risk assessment, implementation of controls, and a monitoring and review process to ensure the efficacy of the risk management approach.

Strategies to reduce or remove risks of child abuse
The school's risk management strategies regarding child safety identify and ultimately remove the risk(s) of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of our school environment, the activities expected to be conducted in our environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.
In taking into account the characteristics and needs of all children (including and especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disabilities, culturally and linguistically diverse children and other vulnerable children), the school develops, implements, monitors and evaluates risk management strategies to ensure child safety in a range of school related environments (e.g. at school, on excursions, online environments and any school organised activities).
The school has comprehensively identified any potential risks and the action(s) the school will take to reduce or remove the risks (risk controls). The School Council will monitor and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the child safety plan.

The overall plan for Child Safety and Wellbeing is recorded within the school's 7 Child Safe Standards documentation to:
- include reference to the training and education of staff about their individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse
- reference the Code of Conduct,
- the 4 critical actions to be taken in response to an allegation of child abuse,

- the Child Safe training and training about abuse risks in the school, that must be undertaken as scheduled and as the need arises (e.g. after an incident)
- the training, depending on the risk, would involve the School Council and/or school staff.

Managing risk at Montpellier Primary School involves the following steps and considerations:
- Identifying the school's child safety risks across a range of school environments (including excursions, camps and online.
- Ensuring that all areas of the School's Risk Assessment document (as required by the DE&T School Policy & Advisory Guide: Risk Management Policy) rating is rated as 'low risk'.
- Engage in a 2-year review of the existing Risk Assessment plan, Child Safe Standards and related school policies and or, internal processes addressing the reduction and removal of any risk(s).

Effective risk management strategies will be transparent, well understood and diverse, to take account of the increased level of risk associated with the specific nature of some activities and the vulnerability of particular groups. Effective risk management strategies are dynamic and change over time as new risks arise and others may no longer be relevant.

Montpellier Primary School implements this standard by including the following Risk Management strategies:

- Ensuring clear, documented and accessible processes for evaluating risks posed by situations and activities appropriate to the school, its size and resources, physical and online environments, and the characteristics of the children to whom it provides services
- Developing, recording and communicating clear processes for removing risks to children (eg Bullying Prevention, ICT acceptable use, Duty of Care and Supervision, Excursions and Camps,)
- Providing staff with training and resources in identifying child abuse risks
- Engaging methods for continual improvement in how risks are managed by learning from past experiences, including policy review and staff training
- Reinforcing/reviewing supervision of children requirements for staff and volunteers
- Establishing processes for periodic review of risk management approaches and/or processes following any incidents
- Recognising and adapting to the needs of children and communities, including Aboriginal children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and children with a disability. For example, acknowledgement that greater staff or volunteer to child ratios may be needed for some children with a disability
- Recognising and addressing risks to Aboriginal children which might exist if a child does not feel safe identifying themselves as Aboriginal, or if there is an inadequate response to self-identification
- Recognising and addressing risks to children with a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, which might exist because of their experiences, by increasing communication with families to build trust and understanding of school activities
- Recognising and addressing risks for children with a disability, such as communication barriers when telling an adult, they feel unsafe
- Adhering to the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Developing Behaviour Management and Safety Plans for students as required
- Induction for all visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors
- Train students and staff to detect and report inappropriate behaviour
- Access supports such as counselling or Network Student Support Services for students in need

- Assessment of new or changed physical environments for child safety risks
- Pre-employment reference checks that include checking for child safety
- Criminal history checks and confirming currency of WWCC/VIT registration
- Having a School Leadership team structure and School Chaplain as a central reporting and advisory contact for staff and the wider community, to raise concerns with, and regarding concerns about a child safety.
- Teachers accompany students to and from specialist classrooms.
- Students always move around the school in pairs.
- The school has CCTV cameras in areas around the school.

For more information, see: Strategies to identify and reduce or Remove Risks of Child Abuse

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/csssix.aspx

Appendix –

REVIEW CYCLE
This policy was last updated and ratified on 16/09/19 following review and development by School Council. It is scheduled for review in September 2021