



CHILD SAFE HANDBOOK

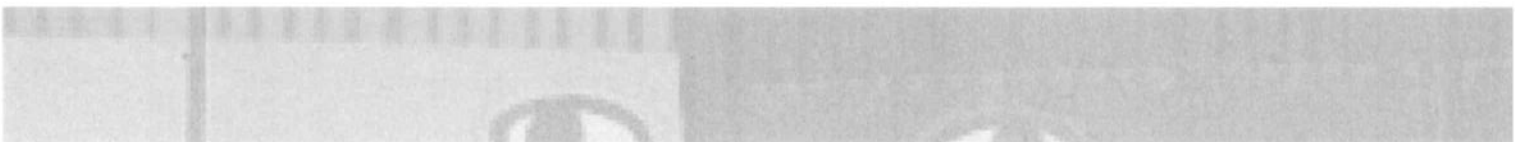
FOSTER PRIMARY SCHOOL



CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Contents:

- Student Wellbeing & Engagement Policy
- Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Responding & Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory reporting)
- Student Code of Conduct Policy
- Inclusion & Diversity Policy including equal opportunity & sexual harassment policy
- Strategies to identify & reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- Working with Children Clearance Register Procedure
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing & Safety Action Plan
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Complaints Policy





Foster Primary School

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Foster Primary School on 03 5682 2370 or foster.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Foster Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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POLICY

1. School profile

Foster Primary School is located in South Gippsland, 150 km from Melbourne. There is a steady enrolment of approximately 200 from Grade Prep- 6.

Our student population is an even mix of students who live locally in Foster; and from the surrounding small townships and rural communities who use the school services to attend our school. Our students have a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds representative of our wider community.

At Foster Primary School we aim to challenge, encourage and inspire every child to reach their academic, social, emotional and physical potential in a safe, caring and attractive environment.

Staff plan and work in teams to develop well resourced, whole school programs which cater for students' individual needs, and which reflect their interests and abilities. They participate in high quality professional development which enhance teaching and learning throughout the school and beyond.

English and Mathematics remain central to the curriculum, underpinned by an emphasis on Thinking Skills. Our school offers a range of specialist classes which appeal to different learning styles and includes an incursion each term addressing areas such as drama, science, writing, music or performance skills. Sport, Music, Art, Dance and Drama are popular in the wider school community and students are encouraged to participate both in and out of school hours.

Foster Primary School values its strong links with the wider community with volunteers supporting school programs in areas such as classroom helpers, camps and excursions and the Kitchen Garden.

2. School values, philosophy and vision

Foster Primary School's Statement of Values and School Philosophy is integral to the work that we do and is the foundation of our school community. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of respect, integrity and kindness at every opportunity.

Foster Primary School is a warm, caring and welcoming school with students at the centre of every decision we make. We aim to develop students who are confident, creative lifelong learners. We believe everyone can learn to learn. Resilience, reciprocity, resourcefulness and reflectiveness is promoted, and we always try our best!

We build positive relationships and social responsibility in a safe caring environment, using School Wide Positive Behaviours to support our students in making good choices. We have strong pastoral care. We foster independence, promote inclusivity and embrace individuality.

Our school values, based upon, "Our Best Always" were developed in consultation with staff, students and families and are:

- Be Respectful
- Be Caring
- Be Safe
- Be a Learner

Our full Statement of Values and School Philosophy is available on our school's website.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Foster Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe and less isolated. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

We are committed to promoting gender equality and respectful relationships through our participation in Victoria's Resilience, Rights & Respectful Relationships initiative. RRRR supports school leaders, educators and our school community to promote and model respect and equality and to teach our children how to build healthy relationships, resilience and confidence.

Our focus is on providing a teaching and learning atmosphere based on community happiness and excellence, which improves student learning across all curriculum strands, decreases student behavioural issues in classrooms and the playground and reflects a strong commitment to creating a happy and safe environment for our students.

We nurture our students, empowering them to deal positively with life's challenges. They experience a sense of connectedness with the school and others, and are well placed to develop into well-balanced and successful adults.

- Developing the wellbeing of our students is central to our role as a school, and is reflected in our whole school

philosophy

- Our school values and encourages student individuality, differences and diversity
- A culture of positive reinforcement and encouragement permeates all facets of our school.
- Strategies detailed in the '*Framework for Student Support Services in Victorian Government Schools*' are implemented across the school
- Programs that provide for the emotional health of students, such as 'Be You' or 'Social & Emotional Learning' underpin our curriculum
- Programs that support a safe environment to encourage open discussions, such as 'Protective Behaviours', are implemented across the school
- The curriculum is broad, providing for the needs of individual students, and is developed to cater for multiple intelligences and diverse cognitive styles
- Programs dealing with issues such as Drug Education form part of the school's Student Wellbeing program
- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining relationships
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data, student management data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Foster Primary School use the Gradual Release instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Foster Primary School adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy are incorporated into our curriculum and promoted to students, staff and parents so that they are shared and celebrated as the foundation of our school community
- carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling
- positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level
- students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council and other forums including year group meetings and Peer Support Groups. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers, Year Level Coordinator, Assistant Principal and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.
- create opportunities for cross—age connections amongst students through school plays, athletics, music programs and peer support programs
- all students are welcome to self-refer to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, School Nurse, School Chaplain, Year Group Leaders, Assistant Principal and Principal if they would like to discuss a particular issue or feel as though they may need support of any kind. We are proud to have an 'open door' policy where students and staff are partners in learning
- we engage in school wide positive behaviour support with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
 - Respectful Relationships
 - Bully Stoppers
 - Safe Schools

- programs, incursions and excursions developed to address issue specific needs or behaviour (i.e. anger management programs)
- opportunities for student inclusion (i.e. sports teams, clubs, recess and lunchtime activities, leadership opportunities) special day (eg. IDAHOBIT Day)
- buddy programs, peers support programs
- measures are in place to empower our school community to identify, report and address inappropriate and harmful behaviours such as racism, homophobia and other forms of discrimination or harassment.

Targeted

- The school has a teacher responsible to monitor the health and wellbeing of students in our care. Another teacher (Disability and Inclusion Coordinator) acts as a point of contact for students who may need additional support
- Aboriginal students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture – refer to our Aboriginal Learning Wellbeing and Safety action plan (on our website) for further information
- Our English as a second language students are supported through EAL educator, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school
- we support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background
- we provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Learning Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment
- students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, student support groups and individual education plans
- wellbeing and health staff will undertake appropriate responses to needs identified by student wellbeing data, classroom teachers or other school staff each year
- staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma

Foster Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances
- meeting with student and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school this maybe informally or in a formal SSG structure.
- developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Behaviour Support Plan
- Providing an onsite Occupational Therapist to support families and students.
- considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up
- referring the student to:
 - school-based wellbeing supports
 - Learning Adjustments
 - Student Support Services
 - Appropriate external supports such as council based youth and family services, other allied health professionals, child and adolescent mental health services or ChildFirst / Orange Door
 - Re-engagement programs such as Navigator
 - Berry Street Programs

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing

- collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student
- monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family
- engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers
- running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:
 - with a disability
 - in Out of Home Care
 - with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.
- Liaising with Courts, DFFH and Victoria Police.
- Providing food through the breakfast program where necessary.

4. Identifying students in need of support

Foster Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The Student Wellbeing team plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Foster Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled
- attendance records
- academic performance
- observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, mental health, self-care, social connectedness and motivation
- attendance, detention and suspension data
- engagement with families
- self-referrals or referrals from peers
- Recommendations by allied health and medical professionals.

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's Statement of Values highlights the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- participate fully in their education
- feel safe, secure and happy at school
- learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation
- express their ideas, feelings and concerns.

Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher, wellbeing staff or a member of the school leadership team. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's Statement of Values and School Philosophy and our Whole School Positive Behaviour Expectations.

Three policies developed and implemented at Foster Primary School determine the management of student behaviour.

1. The Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Students have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to work in a secure environment where, without intimidation, bullying (including cyber-bullying) or harassment they are able to fully develop their talents, interests and ambition • participate fully in the school's educational program 	<p>Students have a responsibility to demonstrate appropriate behaviours that help them, other students, teachers, volunteers and visitors to create a safe, comfortable and effective learning environment. Examples of these behaviours are stated in the <i>Student Code of Conduct Policy</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> listen when others speak speak with respect and use manners make an effort not an excuse when learning • manage distractions and remain focused on learning

Rights and Responsibilities of Parents/Carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Parents/Carers have the right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged 	<p>Parents/Carers have the responsibility to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote positive educational outcomes for their children by taking an active interest in their child's educational progress and by modelling positive behaviours • ensure their child's regular attendance • engage in regular and constructive communication with school staff regarding their child's learning • support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students

Rights and Responsibilities of Teachers

Rights	Responsibilities
<p>Teachers have a right to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">expect that they will be able to teach in an orderly and cooperative environmentbe informed, within Privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that will affect the teaching and learning program for that student	<p>Teachers have a responsibility to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">fairly, reasonably and consistently, implement the engagement policyknow how students learn and how to teach them effectivelyknow the content they teachknow their studentsplan and assess for effective learningcreate and maintain safe and challenging learning environments.use a range of teaching strategies and resources to engage students in effective learning

Volunteers and Visitors have the same rights as other members of our school community and in turn have a responsibility to:

- respect the rights of all members of the school community
- sign the Edupass tablet at the Office on arrival and departure
- Carry their Edupass slip while on site and sign out upon leaving.
- treat all information about students with confidentiality, discussing concerns with class teacher or school leaders
- report any student welfare concerns to the principal
- refrain from commenting about school, students, staff and parents in a negative way

2. Bullying Prevention Policy

Behavioural expectations of students, staff and families are grounded in our school's Statement of Values. Student bullying behaviour will be responded to consistently with our Bullying Prevention Policy. (See under Policies: fosterps.vic.edu.au)

3. Behaviour Management (See under Policies: fosterps.vic.edu.au)

School Wide Positive Behaviours

The school is committed to the use of restorative practices with students. Restorative Practices:

- are underpinned by student learning and facilitate an environment of safety, trust and connectedness (Bond et al. 2001, Fuller 1999)
- promote awareness of others, responsibility and empathy (Hopkins 2002)
- involve direct and voluntary participation of those affected by misconduct in its resolution (Braithwaite 2001b)
- promote relationship management rather than behaviour management (Cameron & Thorsborne 2001)
- separate the deed from the doer (Marshall et al. 2002)
- are systematic, not situational (Armstrong 2004)
- are concerned with establishing or re-establishing social equality in relationships; that is, relationships in which each person's rights to equal dignity, concern and respect are satisfied (Morrison 2002).

When a student is in breach of the behavioural standards of our school community Foster Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines. Where appropriate parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate
- teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour
- withdrawal of privileges
- restorative practices
- detentions
- behaviour reviews
- suspension
- expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are measures of last resort and may only be used in particular situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/participation/pages/engagement.aspx>

Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used in any circumstance.

7. Engaging with families

Foster Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open, respectful line of communication between parents and staff, supported by our Communicating with School Staff policy.
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this policy and bullying will be managed in accordance with our Bullying Prevention Policy.

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Foster Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by teachers and other school staff.

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>

In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Foster Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

7. Engaging with families

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- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Foster Primary School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- Compass Chronicle data
- school reports
- parent survey
- case management
- Compass, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS (Student Online Case System)
- School developed surveys
- Teacher Feedback Survey.

Foster Primary School will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	9 November 2022
Consultation	School Council – November 9 2022 School community via website – ongoing Reference in the school newsletter – monthly
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before term 4, 2024



Foster Primary School

Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

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PURPOSE

The Foster Primary School Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our school's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe. This policy provides an overview of our school's approach to implementing [Ministerial Order 1359](#) (PDF, 363KB) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

SCOPE

This policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school council members where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by for a student's use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms in this policy have specific definitions:

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school boarding environment
- school staff
- school boarding premises staff
- school governing authority
- school boarding premises governing authority
- student
- volunteer.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Foster Primary School is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families. We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

School leadership team

Our school leadership team comprising the principal, assistant principal and learning specialist, disability inclusion leader, school wide positive behaviour leader and positive climate for learning leader is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

Principals and assistant principals will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

School staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education and Training, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

School council

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, school council members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings [
- undertake annual training on child safety,
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members

- when hiring school council employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child. At our school, school council employment duties are delegated to the principal who is bound by this policy.

Specific staff child safety responsibilities

Foster Primary School has nominated a child safety champion [the Assistant Principal] to support the principal to implement our child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training.

The responsibilities of the child safety champion are outlined at [Guidance for child safety champions](#).

Our principal and child safety champion are the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

- The Principal is responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our school community should approach the Principal if they have any concerns about the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- The Principal is responsible for informing the school community about this policy, and making it publicly available
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and Child Safety Risk Register.

CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

Managing risks to child safety and wellbeing

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Our school leadership team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

Establishing a culturally safe environment

At Foster Primary School, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community:

- Our school recognises and celebrates culturally significant events, Harmony Day, NAIDOC week, Sorry Day and other local events.
- Our school also celebrates inclusion and diversity by recognising specific events such as IDAHOBIT Day, Wear it Purple Day and National Autism Week.
- Train our staff and community using the Safer School Programs.
- Engage with local KESO network to educate staff and children.
- Engage with DET training and use the Marrung guide to assist ATSI students to develop clear educational opportunities and pathways.

To support child safety and wellbeing at Foster Primary School, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging implementing our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships, our student Code of Conduct, our school values.

We inform students of their rights through, our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns on the DET website.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Foster Primary School we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this by:

- Communicating via the school website, newsletters, other communications, school council, subcommittees of school council, student, staff, and parent meetings etc.
- All of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for students and parents at www.foster.ps.vic.edu.au
- The school website will update families and the school community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety.
- PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed across the school

Diversity and equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international students
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

Our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy provides more information about the measures we have in place to support diversity and equity.

Suitable staff and volunteers

At Foster Primary School, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

Staff recruitment

When recruiting staff, we follow the Department of Education and Training's recruitment policies and guidelines, available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at:

- [Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)
- [School Council Employment](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management.](#)

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record:
 - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
 - the person's history of working with children
 - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.
 - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

Staff induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures and
- any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done through annual performance and development plans and assessment against the AITSL standards.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school and department policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

Suitability of volunteers

All volunteers are required to comply with our Volunteers Policy, which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment. Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completing the [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#) online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

School council training and education

To ensure our school council is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment, the council is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment

- Foster Primary School child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

Complaints and reporting processes

Foster Primary School fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's Complaint Policy. The Complaints Policy can be found on the DET and school website.

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including school council employees must follow our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures. Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school. As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- the [Four Critical Actions](#) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Bullying Prevention Policy cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

Communications

Foster Primary School is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document), Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure
- displaying PROTECT posters around the school
- updates in our school newsletter or Compass.
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings.

Privacy and information sharing

Foster Primary School collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to: [Schools' Privacy Policy](#).

Records management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the Department of Education and Training's policy: [Records Management – School Records](#)

Review of child safety practices

At Foster Primary School we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

We will:

- review and improve our policy every 2 years or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community.

Related policies and procedures

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Digital Learning Policy

- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy

Related Department of Education and Training policies

- Bullying Prevention and Response Policy
- Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes
- Complaints Policy
- Contractor OHS Management Policy
- Digital Learning in Schools Policy
- Family Violence Support
- Protecting Children: Reporting Obligations Policy
- Policy and Guidelines for Recruitment in Schools
- Reportable Conduct Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Supervision of Students Policy
- Visitors in Schools Policy
- Volunteers in Schools Policy
- Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors

Other related documents

- Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools
- Four Critical Actions for Schools
- Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending
- Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending
- Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following way:

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- Excursions
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/excursions/guidanceCamps, Sports and Excursions Fund>

The following school policies are also relevant to this Camps and Excursions Policy:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The Principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

Created date	19th May 2022
Consultation	Consultation with student representative groups, parent groups, school council June 2022

Endorsed by	Scott Moorhouse Principal
Endorsed on	21 st June 2022
Next review date	May 2024



Foster Primary School

Child Safety Code of Conduct



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Foster Primary School on 03 5682 2370 or foster.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school.

All Foster Primary School staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, school council members and any other adult involved in child-connected work must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by students. It also applies during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the school for student use (for example, a school camp).

Acceptable behaviours

At Foster Primary School, staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Upholding our Foster Primary School commitment to child safety and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at all times.
- treating students and families in our school community with respect in our school environment and outside our school environment as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they disclose that they or another child or student has been abused or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or student
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTIQ+) students
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Principal, Assistant Principal or wellbeing staff.
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures and the [PROTECT Four Critical Actions](#).
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable behaviours

As Foster Primary School, staff, volunteers, contractors and member of our school community involved in child-connected work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts)
- display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context

- ignore an adult’s overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance
- treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to schoolwork or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child or student in a school environment except in accordance with the [Photographing, Filming and Recording Students policy](#) or where required for duty of care purposes
- consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present
- have inappropriate contact with any student outside of school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought.

Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All Foster Primary School staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-connected work who breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the Department of Education and Training Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Foster Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the principal.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact the Assistant Principal.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following way:

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school’s website
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Created date	8 th August
Consultation	24 th August 2022
Endorsed by	School Council
Endorsed on	24 th August 2022
Next review date	August 2024



Foster Primary School

Child Safety Responding & Reporting Obligations

Including Mandatory Reporting



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Foster Primary School on 03 5682 2370 or foster.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures our school has in place to respond to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse and to ensure that all staff and members of our school community understand and follow the various legal obligations that apply to the reporting of child abuse to relevant authorities.

SCOPE

This policy applies to complaints and concerns relating to child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school (physical and online).

DEFINITIONS

Child abuse

Child abuse includes:

- physical violence inflicted on a child
- sexual offences committed against a child
- grooming of a child by an adult
- family violence committed against or in the presence of a child
- serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.

The definition of child abuse is broad and can include student to student incidents and concerns, as well as behaviour committed by an adult.

Grooming

Grooming is a criminal offence under the [Crimes Act 1958](#) (Vic) and is a form of child abuse and sexual misconduct. This offence targets predatory conduct undertaken by an adult to prepare a child, under the age of 16, to engage in sexual activity at a later time. Grooming can include communicating (including electronic communications) and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent or carer.

School staff member

For the purpose of this policy a school staff member includes a contractor engaged by the school or school council to perform child-related work.

POLICY

Foster Primary School understands the important role our school plays in protecting children from abuse. We have a range of policies and measures in place to prevent child abuse from occurring at our school or during school activities.

Information for students

- All students should feel safe to speak to any staff member to raise any concerns about their safety or any other concerns that they have.
- If a student does not know who to approach at Foster Primary School, they should start with their teacher.

Identifying child abuse

To ensure we can respond in the best interests of students and children when complaints or concerns relating to child abuse are raised, all staff and relevant volunteers must:

- understand how to identify signs of child abuse and behavioural indicators of perpetrators - for detailed information on identifying child abuse and behavioural indicators of perpetrators refer to [Identify child abuse](#).
- understand their various legal obligations in relation to reporting child abuse to relevant authorities - for detailed information on the various legal obligations refer to Appendix A
- follow the below procedures for responding to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse, which ensure our school acts in the best interests of students and children and complies with both our legal and Department policy obligations.

At Foster Primary School we recognise the diversity of the children, young people, and families at our school and take account of their individual needs and backgrounds when considering and responding to child safety incidents or concerns.

Procedures for responding to an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse

In responding to a child safety incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion, Foster Primary School will follow:

- the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) for complaints and concerns relating to all forms of child abuse
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending
- our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Bullying Prevention Policy for complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful student behaviours.

School staff and volunteer responsibilities

1. Immediate action

If a school staff member or volunteer witnesses an incident of child abuse, or reasonably believes, suspects or receives a disclosure or allegation that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused, they must:

- If a child is at immediate risk of harm, separate alleged victims and others involved, administer first aid (appropriate to their level of training) and call 000 for urgent medical or police assistance where required to respond to immediate health or safety concerns.
- Notify principal or wellbeing team as soon as possible, who will ensure our school follows the steps in these procedures.

NOTE for staff and volunteers:

- if you are uncertain if an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion gives rise to a concern about child abuse you must always err on the side of caution and report the concern to the principal.
- If the principal is unavailable, the assistant principal will take on this role.
- If the concerns relates to the conduct of the principal or assistant principal notify the South-Eastern Victoria regional office, by contacting sevr@education.vic.gov.au or 1300 338 738, who must then take on responsibility for ensuring our school follows these procedures.

Refer to Appendix B for guidance on how to respond to a disclosure of child abuse.

2. Reporting to authorities and referring to services

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, the principal **must** report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible.

The following steps will ensure our school complies with the four critical actions as well as additional actions required under the Child Safe Standards.

The principal must ensure:

- all relevant information is reported to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection, Victoria Police or relevant services where required

- the incident is reported to the Department's [eduSafe Plus portal](#) or the Incident Support and Operations Centre (1800 126 126) in accordance with the severity rating outlined in the [Managing and Reporting School Incidents Policy](#)
- all [reportable conduct](#) allegations or incidents are reported by the Principal to the Department's Employee Conduct Branch (03 7022 0005) – where a reportable conduct allegation is made against the Principal, the Regional Director must be informed who will then make a report to Employee Conduct Branch

NOTE: In circumstances where staff members are legally required to report child abuse to DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police and they are unable to confirm that the information has been reported by another person at the school or the designated member of school staff does not agree that a report needs to be made, the staff member who has formed the reasonable belief must still contact DFFH Child Protection and Victoria Police to make the report.

If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but you still hold significant concerns for their wellbeing you must still act. This may include making a referral or seeking advice from Child FIRST or The Orange Door (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support) DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police.

3. Contacting parents or carers

The principal must ensure parents and carers are notified unless advised otherwise by DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police, or there are other safety and wellbeing concerns in relation to informing parents/carers.

Principals may contact the Department of Education and Training Legal Division for advice on notifying parents and carers, and where relevant, the wider school community.

For further guidance, refer to [PROTECT Contacting parents and carers](#)

4. Ongoing protection and support

The principal must ensure appropriate steps are taken by the school to protect the child and other children from any continued risk of abuse. These steps must be taken in consultation with any relevant external agency or Department staff such as DFFH Child Protection, Victoria Police, Legal Division or Employee Conduct Branch. Ongoing protection will also include further reports to authorities if new information comes to light or further incidents occur.

Appropriate, culturally sensitive and ongoing support must be offered and provided to all affected students. Ongoing support will be based on any available advice from the Department, parents and carers, health practitioners, and other authorities (such as DFFH or Victoria Police) and may include referral to wellbeing professionals, development of a safety plan, student support group meetings, and, for student to student incidents, behaviour management and support measures.

5. Recordkeeping

The principal will ensure that:

- detailed notes of the incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion are taken using the [Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: Template](#) or the [Responding to Student Sexual Offending: template](#) including, where possible, by the staff member or volunteer who reported the incident, disclosure, or suspicion to them
- detailed notes are taken of any immediate or ongoing action taken by the school to respond to the incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion
- all notes and other records relating to the incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion, including the schools immediate and ongoing actions, are stored securely in [the locked filing cabinet in the principal's office](#).

For school visitors and school community members

All community members aged 18 years or over have legal obligations relating to reporting child abuse – refer to Appendix A for detailed information.

Any person can make a report to DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. For contact details, refer to the [Four Critical Actions](#).

Members of the community do not have to inform the school if they are making a disclosure to DFFH Child Protection or the Victoria Police. However, where a community member is concerned about the safety of a child or children at the school, the community member should report this concern to the principal so that appropriate steps to support the student can be taken

Additional requirements for all staff

All staff play an important role in supporting student safety and wellbeing and have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent reasonably foreseeable harm to students.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities in the above procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse. This means that if, after following the actions outlined in the procedure, a staff member reasonably believes that a child remains at risk of abuse, they must take the following steps:

- if they are concerned that the school has not taken reasonable steps to prevent or reduce the risk, raise these concerns with the principal in the first instance, and escalate to the regional office if they remain unsatisfied.
- report the matter to the relevant authorities where they are unable to confirm that the information has been reported by another staff member

Staff must refer to Appendix A for further information on their obligations relating to reporting to authorities.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website (or insert other online parent, carer, student communication method)
- Included in staff induction processes and annual staff training
- Included in volunteer induction processes and training for relevant volunteers
- Discussed an annual staff briefings or meetings
- Included in staff handbook or manual
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies and guidance are relevant to this policy:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Protecting Children — Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#)
- [Managing and Reporting School Incidents](#)
- [Reportable Conduct](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)
- [Identify child abuse](#)
- [Report child abuse in schools \(including four critical actions\)](#)
- [Identify and respond to student sexual offending](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this policy:

- Child Safety [and Wellbeing] Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	25 th November 2022
Consultation	student representative groups, parent groups, school council, leadership and wellbeing teams
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before November 2024

Page Break

APPENDIX A: LEGAL OBLIGATIONS RELATING TO REPORTING CHILD ABUSE

The following information outlines the various legal obligations relating to the reporting of child abuse to relevant authorities.

It is important to note that the procedures outlined in the above policy ensure compliance with the below reporting obligations, and also include additional steps to ensure compliance with Department policy and our school's duty of care obligations.

Mandatory reporting to Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection

The following individuals are mandatory reporters under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic):

- registered teachers and early childhood teachers (including principals and school staff who have been granted permission to teach by the VIT)
- school counsellors including staff who provide direct support to students for mental, emotional or psychological wellbeing, including (but not limited to) school health and wellbeing staff, primary welfare coordinators, student wellbeing coordinators, mental health practitioners, chaplains, and Student Support Services staff
- nurses
- registered psychologists
- police officers
- registered medical practitioners
- out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)
- early childhood workers
- youth justice workers
- people in religious ministry
- midwives

All mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection as soon as practicable if, during the course of carrying out their professional roles and responsibilities, they form a belief on reasonable grounds that:

- a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical abuse and/ or sexual abuse; and
- the child's parents or carers have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type.

A mandatory reporter who fails to comply with this legal obligation may be committing a criminal offence. It is important for all staff at Foster Primary School to be aware that they are legally obliged to make a mandatory report on each occasion that they form a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection and they must make a mandatory report even if the principal or any other mandatory reporter does not share their belief that a report is necessary.

If charged with not making a mandatory report, it may be a defence for the person charged to prove that they honestly and reasonably believed that all of the reasonable grounds for their belief had been the subject of a report to child protection made by another person.

The identity of a person who reports any protective concerns to DFFH Child Protection is protected by law. It is an offence for a person, other than the person who made the report, to disclose the name of the person who made a report or any information that is likely to lead to their identification.

At our school, all mandated school staff must undertake the *Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations eLearning Module* annually. We also require/encourage all other staff to undertake this module, even where they are not mandatory reporters.

The policy of the Department of Education and Training (DET) requires all staff who form a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection to discuss their concerns with the school leadership team and to report their concerns to DFFH and in some circumstances to Victoria Police, or to ensure that all the information relevant to the report has been made by another school staff member.

Any person can make a report to DFFH Child Protection (131 278 – 24 hour service) if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection even if they are not a mandatory reporter listed above.

Reporting student wellbeing concerns to Child FIRST/Orange Door

At *Foster Primary School* we also encourage staff to make a referral to Child FIRST/Orange Door when they have significant concern for a child's wellbeing. For more information about making a referral to Child FIRST/Orange Door see the Policy and Advisory Library: [Protecting Children – Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#).

Reportable Conduct

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is focussed on worker and volunteer conduct and how organisations investigate and respond to suspected child abuse. The scheme aims to improve organisational responses to suspected child abuse and to facilitate the identification of individuals who pose a risk of harm to children.

There are five types of 'reportable conduct' listed in the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*:

- sexual offences against, with or in the presence of, a child
- sexual misconduct (which includes grooming) against, with or in the presence of, a child
- physical violence against, with or in the presence of, a child
- behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- significant neglect of a child.

A reportable conduct allegation is made where a person makes an allegation, based on a reasonable belief, that a worker or volunteer has committed reportable conduct or misconduct that **may** involve reportable conduct.

If school staff or volunteers become aware of reportable conduct by any current or former employee, contractor or volunteer, they must notify the school principal immediately. If the allegation relates to the principal, they must notify the Regional Director.

The principal or regional director must notify the Department's Employee Conduct Branch of any reportable conduct allegations involving current or former employees of the school (including Department, allied health, casual and school council employees), contractors and volunteers (including parent volunteers).

- Employee Conduct Branch: 03 7022 0005 or employee.conduct@education.vic.gov.au

The Department's Secretary, through the Manager, Employee Conduct Branch, has a legal obligation to inform the Commission for Children and Young People when an allegation of reportable conduct is made.

For more information about reportable conduct see the Department's *Policy and Advisory Library*: [Reportable Conduct](#) and the Commission for Children and Young People's [website](#).

Failure to disclose offence

Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults (ie persons aged 18 years and over), not just professionals who work with children, have a legal obligation to report to Victoria Police, as soon as practicable, where they form a 'reasonable belief' that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16 in Victoria.

Failure to disclose information to Victoria Police (by calling 000, local police station or the Police Assistance Line 131 444) as soon as practicable may amount to a criminal offence unless a person has a 'reasonable excuse' or exemption from doing so.

"Reasonable belief" is not the same as having proof. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed when:

- a child states that they have been sexually abused

- a child states that they know someone who has been sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves)
- someone who knows a child states that the child has been sexually abused
- professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a mandated professional to form a belief that the child has been sexually abused
- signs of sexual abuse leads to a belief that the child has been sexually abused.

"Reasonable excuse" is defined by law and includes:

- fear for the safety of any person including yourself or the potential victim (but not including the alleged perpetrator or an organisation)
- where the information has already been disclosed to Victoria Police and you have no further information to add (for example, through a mandatory report to DFFH Child Protection or a report to Victoria Police from another member of school staff).

Failure to protect offence

This reporting obligation applies to school staff in a position of authority. This can include principals, assistant principals and campus principals. Any staff member in a position of authority who becomes aware that an adult associated with their school (such as an employee, contractor, volunteer or visitor) poses a risk of sexual abuse to a child under the age of 16 under their care, authority or supervision, must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce that risk. This may include removing the adult (ie persons aged 18 years and over) from working with children pending an investigation and reporting your concerns to Victoria Police.

If a school staff member in a position of authority fails to take reasonable steps in these circumstances, this may amount to a criminal offence.

Further information

For more information about the offences and reporting obligations outlined in this fact sheet refer to: [Protecting Children — Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#).

Page Break

APPENDIX B: MANAGING DISCLOSURES OF CHILD ABUSE

Important information for staff

When managing a disclosure relating to child abuse you should:

- listen to the student and allow them to speak
- stay calm and use a neutral tone with no urgency and where possible use the child's language and vocabulary (you do not want to frighten the child or interrupt the child)
- be gentle, patient and non-judgmental throughout
- highlight to the student it was important for them to tell you about what has happened
- assure them that they are not to blame for what has occurred
- do not ask leading questions, for example gently ask, "What happened next?" rather than "Why?"
- be patient and allow the child to talk at their own pace and in their own words
- do not pressure the child into telling you more than they want to, they will be asked a lot of questions by other professionals, and it is important not to force them to retell what has occurred multiple times
- reassure the child that you believe them and that disclosing the matter was important for them to do
- use verbal facilitators such as, "I see", restate the child's previous statement, and use non-suggestive words of encouragement, designed to keep the child talking in an open-ended way ("what happened next?")
- tell the child in age appropriate language you are required to report to the relevant authority to help stop the abuse, and explain the role of these authorities if appropriate (for a young child this may be as simple as saying "I will need to talk to people to work out what to do next to help you")
- Take prompt action in relation to following the procedures outlined below.

When managing a disclosure you should AVOID:

- displaying expressions of panic or shock
- asking questions that are investigative and potentially invasive (this may make the child feel uncomfortable and may cause the child to withdraw)

- going over the information repeatedly (you are only gathering information to help you form a belief on reasonable grounds that you need to make a report to the relevant authority)
- making any comments that would lead the student to believe that what has happened is their fault
- making any promises you will keep the information the student provided confidential
- making promises to the child about what will occur next or that things will be different given the process can be unpredictable and different for each child depending on their circumstances (instead reassure them that you and others will do your best to help).



Foster PS is a Learning Environment where there are Rights & Responsibilities.

The school is a learning environment. Everyone has a right to learn at our school.

When you come to learn at our school, we expect behaviour in line with our values and this means:

- At the beginning of the day all students must be present at 8:55am when the second bell rings and there is a teacher present in their classroom.
- At the end of recess and lunchtimes Grades Prep-4 must line up quietly and wait for their teachers, while Grades 5-6 may walk in quietly and meet their teachers in their classroom.
- Always walk through school buildings.
- You only enter other classrooms or teaching places with a teacher's permission.
- Personal devices must be left at the school office during school time.
- Keep noise to a minimum in the buildings and where others are learning.
- Respect all, including school property.

In the Classroom:

1. You and the teacher have the right to do your best learning, therefore:
 - Punctuality-you need to be on time.
 - Be organized in your own learning space.
 - Attention-you need to listen when others speak.
 - Effort-make an effort not an excuse when learning.
 - Absorb yourself in your learning and manage distractions.
2. You and the teacher have the right to feel comfortable and safe in the classroom, therefore:
 - You should pass all objects by hand
 - You need to speak with respect and use manners
 - You should keep your hands to yourself
 - You should not help yourself to other's belongings, unless with permission from the owner.
 - Teachers should be aware of students with allergies
 - Teachers should encourage everyone to wash their hands regularly to help prevent illness
 - Follow all directions from the teacher.

Student's Name:

Parent's Name.....

Parent's Signature.....

Date.....

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain Foster Primary School's commitment to making sure every member of our school community, regardless of their background or personal attributes, is treated with respect and dignity. This policy should be read alongside the following Department of Education and Training policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- For staff, the [Respectful Workplaces](#) policies (including [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#), [Sexual Harassment](#) and [Workplace Bullying](#)) as these whole of Department policies apply to all staff at Foster Primary School.

POLICY

Definitions

Personal attribute: a personal characteristic that is protected by State or Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation. These include: race, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious belief or activity, political belief or activity, age, intersex status, physical features, pregnancy, carer and parental status, breastfeeding, marital or relationship status, lawful sexual activity, employment activity, industrial activity, expunged homosexual conviction or personal association with anyone who is identified with reference to any protected attribute.

Direct discrimination: unfavourable treatment because of a person's protected attribute.

Indirect discrimination: imposing an unreasonable requirement, condition or practice that disadvantages a person or group of people with a protected attribute.

Sexual harassment: unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature towards another person which could reasonably be expected to make that other person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It may be physical, verbal, visual or written.

Disability harassment: an action taken in relation to the person's disability that is reasonably likely, in all the circumstances, to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress the person.

Vilification: conduct that incites hatred towards or revulsion or severe ridicule of a person or group of people on the basis of their race or religion.

Victimisation: subjecting a person or threatening to subject them to detrimental treatment because they (or their associate) has made an allegation of discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected attribute (or asserted their rights under relevant policies or law).

Inclusion and diversity

Foster Primary School strives to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive school environment which values the human rights of all students and staff.

Foster Primary School is committed to creating a school community where all members of our school community are welcomed, accepted and treated equitably and with respect regardless of their backgrounds or personal attributes such as race, language, religious beliefs, gender identity, disability or sexual orientation so that they can participate, achieve and thrive at school.

Foster Primary School acknowledges and celebrates the diversity of backgrounds and experiences in our school community, and we will not tolerate behaviours, language or practices that label, stereotype or demean others. At Foster Primary School we value the human rights of every student and we take our obligations under anti-discrimination laws and the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities seriously.

Foster Primary School will:

- Actively nurture and promote a culture where everyone is treated with respect and dignity
- ensure that students are not discriminated against (directly or indirectly) and where necessary, are reasonably accommodated to participate in their education and school activities (eg schools sports, concerts, on the same basis as their peers)
- acknowledge and respond to the diverse needs, identities and strengths of all students
- encourage empathy and fairness towards others
- challenge stereotypes that promote prejudicial and biased behaviours and practices
- contribute to positive learning, engagement and wellbeing outcomes for students
- respond to complaints and allegations appropriately and ensure that students are not victimised.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated at Foster Primary School. We will take appropriate measures, consistent with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* and *Bullying* policies to respond to students who demonstrate these behaviours at our school.

Students who may have experienced or witnessed this type of behaviour are encouraged to speak up and to let their teachers, parents or carers know about those behaviours to ensure that inappropriate behaviour can be addressed.

Reasonable adjustments for students with disabilities

Foster Primary School also understands that it has a legal obligation to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate students with disabilities. A reasonable adjustment is a measure or action taken to assist students with disabilities to participate in their education on the same basis as their peers. Reasonable adjustments will be made for students with disabilities in consultation with the student,

their parents or carers, their teachers and if appropriate, their treating practitioners. Our school may consult through Student Support Group processes and in other less formal ways. For more information about support available for students with disabilities, and communicating with us in relation to a student's disability, please refer to our school's eg: *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy or contact Andrea Bell, for further information.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

For other related policies, visit the [School's webpage](#).

For staff, please see the Department's [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination Policy](#), [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Workplace Bullying Policy](#) which apply to all staff working at our school.

Other relevant Department policies and resources on the Department's Policy and Advisory Library are:

- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [Koorie Education](#)
- [Teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Culture](#)
- [Safe Schools](#)
- [Supports and Services](#)
- [Program for Students with Disabilities](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	April 2022
Consultation	Ratified by School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	April 2025



Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Child Safe Standards toolkit: Resource 6



The Child Safe Standards require organisations that provide services or facilities for children to have strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse. Your organisation may already have existing strategies. This resource is designed to assist organisations to identify common risks of abuse and potential courses of action to help protect children from abuse.

Taking a risk management approach to child safety

Risk management involves developing policies and procedures to identify and reduce risk as well as ensuring these measures are understood and followed. You can never eliminate all risks, but you can have processes in place to ensure they are reduced and managed appropriately when they arise. Generally, risk management tends to focus on what can go wrong, but it is important to remember that any event, circumstance or situation that occurs can also provide an opportunity for improvement.

The examples provided in this document are not exhaustive and should be considered in the context of your organisation. Your organisation's risk management approach should recognise your duty of care to protect children from abuse based on a range of activities including:

- the types of activities or services for children that your organisation provides and the level of care, supervision or authority over children whether as part of your primary function or otherwise
- opportunities within those activities or services for a person to be on their own with a child or children, or to develop relationships of trust with children and/or their families
- risk of harm to children because of the action or inaction of a person involved (including staff, volunteers, families and other children)
- online and physical environments
- ages, abilities and cultural diversity of children
- specific activities such as excursions and overnight trips.

If you require further generic risk management information, please contact the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority on (03) 9270 6900 or refer to the [Victorian Government Risk Management Framework page](http://www.vmia.vic.gov.au/risk/victorian-government-risk-management-framework) <www.vmia.vic.gov.au/risk/victorian-government-risk-management-framework> on their website.

A framework for mitigating risks to child safety

A successful risk management strategy includes a number of crucial steps that should be taken in regular consultation with staff, volunteers, children and their families. These steps are detailed below and should be well-documented, accessible, and reviewed periodically.

1. **Identify the risks** - The first thing you need to do is recognise the risks to child safety within your organisation. A risk is anything that has the potential to cause harm to children or enables that harm to occur. Risks can include processes associated with ineffective screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices.

2. **Assess and evaluate the risks** - Once you have identified the risks, you need to determine which risks to address as a priority. This decision will be based on the likelihood of each risk occurring and the severity of the consequences for a child or children should that risk occur.
3. **Manage and treat the risks in a timely manner** – Develop an action plan for your organisation to eliminate or reduce the risks to child safety you have identified, and ensure that the actions are completed in a timely manner. Ensure ongoing oversight of the action plan to confirm that the actions are appropriate and successful.
4. **Review and improve your strategy** – Regularly review and reiterate your approach to build and demonstrate an organisational culture of child safety that is influenced and driven by effective leadership.
5. **Designate and manage:** Risk management is part of an ongoing quality improvement process for your organisation. Nominate a person to be responsible for the ongoing management of your strategy and ensure that the strategy is embedded in your organisation’s culture and management.

Your risk management strategy must include a plan for managing any action or inaction by a person in your organisation that fails to comply with any policies and procedures which make up your risk management strategy.

Circumstances and situations are constantly changing. Once you commence the process of risk management, there is no doubt that new or different risks will appear that will trigger a new risk assessment. This includes risks associated with a ‘special event’ or risks associated with a change in service provision. Your organisations need to manage these risks when they arise and adapt your risk management strategy so that it remains contemporary.

Key risks and recommended responses

Please note: The list of risk considerations below is not exhaustive. Organisations must consider their situation specifically to identify and manage their risks of child abuse. The suggested strategies to reduce or remove these risks are suggestions only. An organisation’s response should be appropriate in the particular circumstances.

The following areas may be considered in order to meet Standard 6 (Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse) of the Child Safe Standards.

Risk considerations	Strategies to reduce or remove these risks
<p>Factors related to the children who receive services from your organisation</p> <p>This may include factors that mean children may be at greater risk of harm. Factors which may contribute to risk for children include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • disability • mental health issues • age • living arrangements (for example, out-of-home care, in hospital or in a residential facility) • living circumstances that make a child more isolated or vulnerable • identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander • identifying as being from a culturally diverse and/or linguistically diverse background • language barriers • identifying as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans-gender or intersex • exhibiting behaviours of concern (for example, sexualised behaviours). 	<p>Appropriate responses to these risks may include ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies and procedures to protect the diversity of children, including their cultural safety, are implemented • children with heightened risks of abuse have a detailed plan to manage their circumstances • Aboriginal children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds have adequate opportunity to stay connected with their culture, community and their support network/s (for example, family, kin or Elders) • children have adequate support to understand what is happening • children are adequately informed about, supported and involved in decisions that affect them • the number of staff and/or volunteers and their level of experience and qualifications adequately meets the needs of children • staff and/or volunteers are competent in recognising, mitigating and responding to issues (for example, ensuring appropriate supervision)

	when accessing shared toilets or other secluded spaces).
<p>Factors related to your organisation's board members, staff and volunteers</p> <p>The following considerations may contribute.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are staff and/or volunteers supervised (by senior staff or peers)? • What level of qualification do staff and/or volunteers possess? • What level of experience, knowledge and skill do board members, staff and/or volunteers possess or demonstrate in relation to child wellbeing and safety? • Are staff and/or volunteers competent to manage difficult or unusual situations? • Are all staff and/or volunteers subject to the same safety screening? • Are people who have not been subject to the organisation's safety screening processes present (including guest speakers, work experience participants, networking opportunities, contractors, and families)? • Have the staff and/or volunteers been the subject of concern or allegations previously? 	<p>Appropriate responses to these risks may include putting in place systems and monitoring to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • appropriate staffing and supervision arrangements are in place at all times • staff are aware of the organisation's code of conduct and expectations for conduct with children • children (where appropriate) understand appropriate and inappropriate conduct toward them and understand the processes in place if they feel unsafe • there are clear policies and procedures in place for children who feel unsafe, and that staff adhere to these processes • staff and/or volunteers undertake necessary training, certification or qualifications • induction and ongoing training is undertaken by board members, staff and volunteers • the organisation's policies and procedures are clear, concise, publicly displayed and appropriately address foreseeable risks • staff and/or volunteers have necessary supports available to them to manage unusual situations • deployment of staff and/or volunteers is informed by the above concerns.
<p>Your organisation's physical environment</p> <p>Considerations may include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can the organisation's staff maintain a line-of-sight to child-staff and child-child interaction? • Can staff or volunteers isolate children? • How are higher risk locations, such as change rooms, toilets or bedrooms overseen? • Are procedures and policies detailing staff and/or volunteer presence in higher risk locations, such as change rooms, toilets or bedrooms clear, visible and well-understood by everyone? • Are confidential personal details stored securely? 	<p>Appropriate responses to these risks may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a detailed and specific plan to manage each identified risk, including issues such as supervision and managing access to secluded areas • ensuring that when physical contact is necessary, staff and children are aware of what constitutes appropriate contact and what is inappropriate • ensuring that children know where they are allowed to go or not go (clear "out of bounds" rules) • having in place rules to manage higher risk locations such as taking children to the toilets in small groups • rostering two or more staff to higher risk situations or locations • ensuring that children know who to approach or talk with if they feel unsafe or are worried about the safety of another child.
<p>The nature of activities undertaken by your organisation</p> <p>Considerations may include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations providing services such as accommodation, emergency response or other services, which have a high degree of care or direction over children, may have a higher level of risk. 	<p>Appropriate responses to these risks may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a detailed and specific plan to manage each identified risk, including issues such as supervision, managing access to secluded areas and linking the organisation's code of conduct to these policies

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisations providing services which largely involve the oversight or participation of each child's parent or other trusted adult may have a lower level of risk. • Does the organisation deliver activities which involve staff or volunteers working in isolation? • Does the organisation provide services for people who present a higher risk to children? For example, people with sexualised behaviours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementing responses commensurate with the level of risk involved in the organisation's activities or services • ensuring that staff and volunteers are appropriately supported with supervision, peer support, debriefing opportunities and contacts to manage critical events • ensuring that staff and volunteers have appropriate induction training and ongoing supervision.
<p>Online communication</p> <p>Your organisation must identify what protections are in place to protect children in the online environment. Considerations may include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do staff and/or volunteers communicate with children using online and/or other media channels either as part of their role or away from work? • Do staff and/or volunteers communicate with their peers using online and/or other media channels as part of your organisation's activities? • Does the organisation effectively monitor online and other media communication of staff and volunteers and between children? • Does the organisation have and enforce a policy on online and other media behaviour and communication? • Are confidential personal details stored securely and only shared in accordance with relevant legislation and in line with your organisation's privacy policy? 	<p>Appropriate responses to these risks may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that a detailed policy or code of conduct includes guidance about online and other media interaction, including addressing the following concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What online relationships are acceptable? – Can staff or volunteers take photos of children with the consent of parents/guardians? How are the photos used? Can pictures be posted and 'tagged' online or printed and used locally? – Can staff or volunteers contact children or their families outside the services provided by the organisation? If so, under what circumstances?
<p>'Non-core' activities (including fetes, overnight trips, carnivals, excursions, guests at the organisation)</p> <p>Considerations may include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are appropriate supervision arrangements (based on age, location or other factors)? • What is an appropriate level of staffing? Should there be a designated ratio of organisational staff compared to volunteers in place? • What are appropriate sleeping arrangements (based on age, gender, supervision and other factors)? • Are processes in place for children to voice concerns at the time? • What orientation/induction is necessary for children, staff, volunteers or visitors (including any support staff contracted by other organisations)? • What support will be available to staff to manage unusual situations? • Do staff and volunteers know what to do if a child is not picked up on time or in the case of an emergency? 	<p>Appropriate responses to these risks may include ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supervision and coordination of activities are well-planned and responsibilities are known in advance • qualified and/or experienced staff or volunteers are present to supervise • adequate child/adult ratios are in place • the organisation has clear policies to guide unexpected situations, such as a child who has not been picked up on time • organisations providing support staff who assist children to access your activities have a strong focus on child safety

<p>Awareness of rights</p> <p>Considerations may include the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does your organisation enable children, their families, carers and community to be aware of their rights? • What information is available and accessible to children so they understand their rights and are encouraged raise concerns? • Are strategies in place to support the participation and empowerment of children? • What support is available to children and their families to understand appropriate and inappropriate conduct? • How are children and their families, carers and communities encouraged to raise concerns or speak out? 	<p>Appropriate responses to these risks may include ensuring that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • leaders and managers create an organisational culture that protects children from abuse • policies and procedures for raising concerns or making complaints are accessible to children, families and carers • contact points within the organisation are able to sensitively, confidentially and appropriately respond to allegations of abuse, following the organisation's complaints or allegation of abuse policy • the culture of the organisation is one of safety and transparency, not secrecy or defensiveness • the requirements of Child Safe Standard 7 (Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children) is met.
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Further information

Further information about the [Child Safe Standards](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards) <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards> can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services (the department) website. This includes additional resources that have been designed for organisations that are funded and/or regulated by the department. In particular, an [overview of the Victoria Child Safe Standards](https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/overview-victorian-child-safe-standards-word) <https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/overview-victorian-child-safe-standards-word> has information to help organisations to understand the requirements of each of the Child Safe Standards.

All organisations may also refer to the information and resources available on the [Child Safety page](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/) <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/> on the Commission for Children and Young People's website.

Disclaimer

This resource provides general guidance only on the Child Safe Standards. The department does not guarantee that the examples provided in this document are sufficient for the purposes of an organisation's compliance with the Child Safe Standards.

To receive this publication in an accessible format, email [Child Safe Orgs](mailto:childsafeargs@dhhs.vic.gov.au) <childsafeargs@dhhs.vic.gov.au>.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

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In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. 'Indigenous' or 'Koori/Koorie' is retained when part of the title of a report, program or quotation.

ISBN 978-1-76069-584-2 (online/pdf/MS word)

Available at <<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards>>



Foster Primary School

Working with Children Clearance Register Procedure



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Foster Primary School on 03 5682 2370 or foster.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

To ensure compliance with the requirements of the Minimum Standards for school registration, including the Child Safe Standards, Foster Primary School maintains a register of all employees, volunteers and visitors (including contractors) Working with Children Clearance (WWCC) details, where they are required to have one under the *Worker Screening Act 2020* or under our school or department policies.

The register includes each person's:

- name
- clearance number
- expiry date

This procedure outlines how our school maintains this register. It also outlines the required process for entering WWCC and Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration information onto eduPay.

PROCEDURE

VIT registration and WWCC requirements

All employees of Foster Primary School employed to undertake teaching duties must be registered with the VIT. This includes Casual Relief Teachers (CRTs). Staff with VIT registration do **not** also require a WWCC.

All employees of Foster Primary School employed as education support staff or in roles that are non-teaching roles must have a current WWCC (unless they have VIT registration).

Employee VIT registration and WWCC details must be recorded in eduPay. Procedures for staff to enter VIT registration and WWCC details into eduPay are set out in the [Update Victorian Institute of Teaching and Working With Children Check card details](#) quick reference guide.

All volunteers and visitors (including contractors or staff placed through agencies/third parties) who are engaged in child-related work or are required to have a WWCC under our school's Volunteers or Visitors policies will be required to provide evidence of a current WWCC.

Employee, volunteer and visitor WWCC details will be recorded in our WWCC Register.

Any employee, volunteer or visitor who does not have a current satisfactory WWCC or VIT registration where required under this procedure, will be removed from their duties until such time as they provide satisfactory evidence of their clearance.

WWCC Register

Our school maintains the WWCC Register in Edpass sign in point and also on the U drive server.

Adding new employees, volunteers and visitors to the WWCC Register

Foster Primary School front office staff are responsible for sighting, verifying and recording WWCC information for any new employee, volunteer or visitor (where applicable), under the following process:

1. Ensure the visitor enters their details on the Edpass sign in system, which records the relevant WWCC clearance details with the WWCC Status Checker and saves this record on the back end. The system will check the status

2. Ensure the WWCC card type is correct (Employee or Volunteer) and take a photocopy of the card for our records.
3. Request that the employee, volunteer (or visitor if engaged to work at the school on a regular basis) access their [MyCheck account](#) to update their details to include the name of the school
4. As a back up checker, the WWC Status Checker is saved in U Drive, Administration, Child Safe.
5. Retain a copy of any documentation sent by the Department of Justice and Community Safety (such as the letter of confirmation for employees and any volunteers or contractors who have listed the school on their WWCC details), and records of any other child safety suitability checks (such as reference checks) in the employee file or relevant file for visitors and volunteers WWCC information.

Ongoing maintenance of the WWCC Register

1. At the beginning of each school year admin staff will run another check of the [WWC Status Checker](#) to check if there have been any changes to a person's WWCC status
2. Where a person's WWCC status has changed to indicate a concern (eg expired, suspension or revocation of clearance) admin staff will inform the principal immediately and steps will be taken to ensure the person is removed from their duties until such time as they provide satisfactory evidence of their clearance.
3. At the same time as running the check admin staff will note where clearances are due to expire during the year
4. Where the check is expiring during the year admin staff will contact the WWCC holder to remind them that their WWCC is due to expire and to request updated information once it has been renewed
5. When the updated information is provided the information is entered into the [WWC Status Checker](#) and verified by clicking "Start status check"
6. The next time the visitor signs into the Edpass system, the new card information will be entered, stored and checked each time the visitor signs in.

Employee VIT or WWCC information on eduPay

Upon engagement of a new employee the Business Manager will follow the [eduPay User Guide: School Appointments](#) to ensure they are properly entered into eduPay (regardless of whether they are Department or school council employees) including:

- checking that employees have been entered correctly as either a teacher (if they are performing teaching duties) or education support staff, and that valid and current VIT registration or WWCC information (as applicable) has been entered into eduPay by the staff member
- for employees who have entered WWCC information, checking that the card type is entered as 'Employee' and verifying the WWCC details through the process outlined above.

VIT registration status is verified and monitored through a centralised process between VIT and the Department of Education and Training and our school will be informed by the Department of any change to VIT registration status that requires action.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following way:

- Included in staff induction processes and staff training
- Available publicly on our school's website
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Foster Primary School policies:

- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Department policies:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management](#)
- [Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)
- [Visitors in Schools](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Working with Children Checks and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	21 st February 2023
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before February 2026

VISITORS POLICY

PURPOSE

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to Foster Primary School.

SCOPE

This policy outlines our school's arrangements for visitors who attend school grounds when the school is open for instruction between the hours of 8:50am to 3:15pm, and when the office is staffed to monitor/receive visitors at reception, including parents, carers, family members, volunteers, contractors or student support services. Outside of these times, our front office is not staffed and this policy does not apply.

DEFINITIONS

Child-related work: As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020* (Vic), child-related work is work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to the work.

POLICY

Foster Primary School strives to create an open and inclusive school community and encourages parents and carers to be actively involved in their child's development and education. We also strive to foster strong partnerships with local community services, schools and other organisations.

Foster Primary School is not a public place. The principal has the authority to permit or deny entry to school grounds, and encourages all visitors to familiarise themselves with our school's *Statement of Values and School Philosophy, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct, Volunteers Policy*.

From time to time, different members of the public may visit our school. Visitors may include, but are not limited to:

- Parents
- Volunteers – see our school's Volunteers Policy for more information
- Prospective parents, students and employees
- Invited speakers, sessional instructors and others addressing learning and development
- Public officials (e.g. Members of Parliament, local councillors)
- Persons conducting business e.g.: uniform suppliers, booksellers, official school photographers, commercial salespeople
- Tradespeople
- Children's services agencies
- Talent scouts
- Department of Families, Fairness and Housing workers
- Victoria Police
- Persons authorised to enter school premises (e.g. Worksafe inspectors, health officers etc)
- Other Department of Education and Training staff (including allied health staff) or contractors
- NDIS therapists or other allied health or health practitioners

Sign in procedure

All visitors to Foster Primary School are required to report to the school office on arrival (see exceptions below in relation to parents/carers). Visitors must

- Record their name, signature, date and time of visit and purpose of visit in Edpass
- Provide proof of identification to office staff upon request
- Produce evidence of their valid Working with Children Clearance where required by this policy (see below)
- Wear a visitor's tag at all times
- Follow instruction from school staff and abide by all relevant school policies relating to appropriate conduct on school grounds including [insert relevant policies eg: Child Safety Code of Conduct, Respect for School Staff, Statement of Values and School Philosophy etc] as well as Department policies such as the [Sexual Harassment Policy](#) and [Workplace Bullying Policy](#)
- Return to the office upon departure and sign out on Edpass
- Foster Primary School will ensure that our school's Child Safety Code of Conduct is available and visible to visitors when they sign in.

COVID-19 vaccination information

Our school follows Department of Education and Training policy with respect to the requirements relating to attendance on school sites and COVID-19 vaccinations.

For further information, refer to:

- [COVID-19 Vaccinations – Visitors and Volunteers on School Sites](#)

Working with Children Check and other suitability checks

For Working with Children Check (WWCC) and other suitability check requirements relating to parents/carers and other volunteers working with students please see our Volunteers Policy.

All visitors who are engaged in **child-related work** (see definition above) must have a valid WWCC. Additional suitability checks may also be required such as reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

In some circumstances, visitors to Foster Primary School who are **not** engaged in child-related work will also be required to produce a valid WWCC depending on the particular circumstances of their visit. For example, Foster Primary School will require a valid WWCC for:

- **visitors who will be working regularly with children** during the time they are visiting, even though direct contact with children is not a central part of their normal duties
- **visitors (e.g. contractors)**, who will regularly be performing unsupervised work at the school during school hours or any other time where children are present. Further background checks, including references, may also be requested at the discretion of the principal.

Visitors who will be working in areas away from students (e.g. a visiting auditor who will be located in the front office with administration staff) or who will be supervised and accompanied by a staff member during their visit (e.g. a Member of Parliament, a journalist, a prospective parent on a school tour) will not be required to have a WWCC.

Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWCC, but may be asked to verify that they are sworn officers by providing proof of identification.

Invited speakers and presenters

On occasion, Foster Primary School may invite external speakers or providers to deliver incursions, presentations, workshops and special programs for our students. Consistent with Department of Education and Training requirements, Foster Primary School will:

- ensure that the content of presentations and programs by external providers contributes to the educational development of our students and is consistent with curriculum objectives
- ensure that any proposed visit, programs or content delivered by visitors complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular and is consistent with the values of public education, Department policies and the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic). In particular, programs delivered by visitors are to be delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to:
 - elected government
 - the rule of law
 - equal rights for all before the law
 - freedom of religion, speech and association
 - the values of openness and tolerance
 - respect for the range of views held by students and their families.

Parent visitors

We understand that there may occasionally be a reason why a parent or carer may want to speak to or see their child at school, during school hours.

If there is a particular pressing or unavoidable issue that cannot wait until the end of the school day, we ask that parents or carers call the school office to make the request to speak to or see their child during school hours.

We also ask that parents avoid arranging to visit their children at school wherever possible, as this can cause inappropriate disruptions to the school day.

All parents or carers who visit our school during school hours, other than for the purposes of school pick-ups and drop offs or for specific school events (e.g. parent teacher interviews, concerts, assemblies etc), are required to sign in as a visitor at the school office.

Parents or carers who are prohibited from entering the school under a court order or direction of the Principal are not permitted to visit the school. Our school maintains and provides office staff with a list of restricted parents/carers which may include identifying photographs and any other information as required depending on the level of risk posed.

Other visitors

All business operators, tradespeople and other visitors attending the school to conduct work must report to the school office upon arrival for instruction and follow the sign in procedure outlined above.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Department policies:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Visitors in Schools](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	24 th August 2022
Consultation	School council August 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2024

PURPOSE

To outline the processes that Foster Primary School will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the legal rights of volunteers.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer at our school.

DEFINITIONS

Child-connected work: work authorised by the school governing authority/provider of a school boarding services and performed by an adult in a school or school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child-related work: As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020* (Vic), child-related work is work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to the work.

Closely related family member: parent, carer, parent/carer's spouse or domestic partner, stepparent, parent/carer's mother or father in-law, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister, including step or half siblings.

Volunteer worker: A volunteer school worker is a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work without payment or reward.

School work: School work means:

- Carrying out the functions of a school council
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the school council, any parents' club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the school
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of the school at the request of the principal or school council
- Providing assistance in the work of any school or kindergarten
- Attending meetings in relation to government schools convened by any organisation which receives government financial support

This is a broad definition and means that volunteers who participate in school community activities, such as fundraising and assisting with excursions, are legally protected (ie indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

POLICY

Foster Primary School is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Foster Primary School recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community and the work that we do.

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Foster Primary School's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

Becoming a volunteer

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to contact the school on 56822370. We will often request volunteers to help with school sports, camps and excursions. The classroom teacher will be in contact directly to arrange this.

COVID-19 vaccination information

Our school follows Department of Education and Training policy with respect to the requirements relating to attendance on school sites and COVID-19 vaccinations.

For further information, refer to:

- [COVID-19 Vaccinations – Visitors and Volunteers on School Sites](#)

Suitability checks including Working with Children Clearances

Working with students

Foster Primary School values the many volunteers that assist in our classrooms/with sports events/camps/excursions/school concerts/other events and programs. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Worker Screening Act* and the Child Safe Standards, Foster Primary School is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance and may also involve undertaking reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

Where prospective volunteers are required under the law and this policy to have a WWC Clearance, the principal has the discretion to accept evidence of a WWC check application in order to commence volunteer work, provided the volunteer provides the school with evidence of the application outcome (clearance or exclusion) as soon as practicable after the applicant receives it.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Foster Primary School is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Clearance and produce their valid card to the office for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at the school if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised.

- **Parent/family volunteers** who are assisting with any classroom or school activities involving direct contact with children in circumstances where the volunteer's child is **not** participating, or does not ordinarily participate in the activity.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not
- **Parent/community School Council members** sitting on School Council with student School Council members, regardless of whether their own child is a student member or not
- **Out of hours school care employees**

In addition, depending on the nature of the volunteer work, our school may ask the volunteer to provide other suitability checks at its discretion (for example, references, work history involving children and/or qualifications). Proof of identity may also be required in some circumstances.

Non child-related work

On some occasions, parents and other members of the school community may volunteer to do work that is not child-related. For example, volunteering on the weekend for gardening, maintenance, working bees, parents and friends club coordination, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, fete coordination, other fundraising groups that meet in the evenings. At Foster Primary School, volunteers for this type of work will still be required to provide a valid WWC.

School council members and volunteers on any sub-committee of School Council will be asked to provide evidence of a valid WWC Clearance. Whilst we acknowledge that these volunteers will not be engaging in child-related work as part of their role, even when there is a student sitting on the School Council, we believe that it is important that our volunteers who are involved in making important decisions about our school which will have an impact on students do have a valid WWC Clearance.

Training and induction

Under the Child Safe Standards volunteers must have an appropriate induction and training in child safety and wellbeing.

To support us to maintain a child safe environment, before engaging in any work where children are present or reasonably likely to be present, volunteers must familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures and code of conduct referred to in our Child Safety Information Booklet and ensure the actions and requirements in these documents are followed when volunteering for our school.

Depending on the nature and responsibilities of their role, Foster Primary School may also require volunteers to complete additional child safety training.

Management and supervision

Volunteer workers will be expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the principal (or their nominee). This will include the requirement to follow our school's policies, including, but not limited to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, our Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Volunteer workers will also be expected to act consistently with Department of Education and Training policies, to the extent that they apply to volunteer workers, including the Department's policies relating to [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#), [Sexual Harassment](#) and [Workplace Bullying](#).

The principal (or their nominee) will determine the level of school staff supervision required for volunteers, depending on the type of work being performed, and with a focus on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students.

The principal has the discretion to make a decision about the ongoing suitability of a volunteer worker and may determine at any time whether or not a person is suitable to volunteer at Foster Primary School.

Privacy and information-sharing

Volunteers must ensure that any student information they become aware of because of their volunteer work is managed sensitively and in accordance with the [Schools' Privacy Policy](#) and the Department's policy on [Privacy and Information Sharing](#).

Under these policies, student information can and should be shared with relevant school staff to:

- support the student's education, wellbeing and health;
- reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to the student, other students, staff or visitors;
- make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the student's disability; or
- provide a safe and secure workplace.

Volunteers must immediately report any child safety concerns that they become aware of to a member of staff to ensure appropriate action. There are some circumstances where volunteers may also be obliged to disclose information to authorities outside of the school such as to Victoria Police. For further information on child safety responding and reporting obligations refer to: *Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures*.

Records management

While it is unlikely volunteers will be responsible for any school records during their volunteer work, any school records that volunteers are responsible for must be provided to the office to ensure they are managed in accordance with the Department's policy: [Records Management – Schools](#).

Compensation

Personal injury

Volunteer workers are covered by the Department of Education and Training's Workers' Compensation Policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in school work.

Property damage

If a volunteer worker suffers damage to their property in the course of carrying out school work, the Minister (or delegate) may authorise such compensation as they consider reasonable in the circumstances. Claims of this nature should be directed to the principal who will direct them to the Department's Legal Division.

Public liability insurance

The Department of Education and Training's public liability insurance policy applies when a volunteer worker engaged in school work is legally liable for:

- a claim for bodily injury to a third party
- damage to or the destruction of a third party's property.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in induction processes for relevant staff and volunteers
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Policies and resources relevant to this policy include:

Department policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Privacy and Information Sharing](#)
- [Records Management – School Records](#)
- [Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Volunteer OHS Management](#)
- [Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- [Workplace Bullying](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	17 th August 2022
Consultation	25 th August 2022 school council consultation
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2024



Foster Primary School

Aboriginal Learning, Wellbeing and Safety Action Plan



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Foster Primary School on 03 5682 2370 or foster.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

Note: Throughout this document the term Aboriginal is used to refer to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Foster Primary School embraces the vision of the [Marrung Aboriginal Education Plan](#) and celebrates the culture, knowledge and experiences of First Nations Peoples. We are committed to creating and maintaining a school environment that empowers Aboriginal students to feel valued, respected and culturally strong.

Our school has a number of measures in place to ensure our community acknowledges and appreciates the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. These measures are outlined below.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES AND FEEDBACK

We actively seek participation and feedback from Aboriginal students, families and Community by:

- acknowledging the existing knowledge of Aboriginal students and their families and seeking their feedback on decisions that affect them, and on how well we are meeting their needs, through initial enrolment meetings, Student Support Groups, during the development of Individual Education Plans and cultural safety plans.
- working with our regional Aboriginal Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) for advice on how we can create a culturally inclusive learning environment and to build our capacity to provide support for individual Aboriginal students attending our school
- partnering with the GLOWAC to seek feedback and advice on existing and new actions we can take to support the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal students and children in our community.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF STAFF

To ensure our staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to create and maintain a positive and inclusive school environment we:

- ensure staff participate in [Community Understanding and Safety Training \(CUST\)](#) training
- provide tailored training and professional development each year to build knowledge for specific staff based on any emerging or current areas of need
- ensure training and professional development equips teaching staff to deliver Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives within the classroom curriculum
- support teachers to work in their Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) to map and develop teaching and learning activities within the Victorian Curriculum priorities to enable staff to build their confidence with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and to recognise opportunities to draw upon Aboriginal pedagogies and practices within their classrooms
- ensure training and professional development equips staff with an understanding and appreciation of the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students.

CURRICULUM AND LEARNING

Foster Primary School supports the development of high expectations and individualised learning for Aboriginal students and creates a learning environment for all students that acknowledges, respects and values Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and identities. This includes:

- implementing the Department of Education and Training's Aboriginal Education Policy and the Marrung Plan
- ensuring that all Aboriginal students have individual education plans developed in partnership with students, families, and KESOs.

ASSEMBLIES AND OTHER SCHOOL EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

We ensure our school events and activities acknowledge and celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture by:

- acknowledging Gunai Kurnai and Bunurong Country and Traditional Owners of the land on which our school is located at the start of every school assembly and meeting
- arranging Welcome to Country by local Elders at major school events such as the opening of new buildings or campuses
- arranging incursions and excursions, and recognising key events and anniversaries that celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture

BUILT AND DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

We ensure our built environment and website demonstrates an appreciation and acknowledgment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture through:

- flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on school grounds.
- displaying plaques/signs outside our main entrance that Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners
- including an Acknowledgement of Country and Traditional Owners on our website home page

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

We recognise that our school's practices must be regularly reviewed and updated in partnership with our families and local communities. We encourage you to contact the principal with any feedback, concerns or suggestions.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Plan last reviewed	25 th November 2022
Consultation	school Aboriginal community, student representatives, parent groups, school council executive
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before November 2024

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

PURPOSE

Foster Primary School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Foster Primary School community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Foster Primary School will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Foster Primary School to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and understands the importance of reporting bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders, witnesses and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Foster Primary School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Foster Primary School aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

Foster Primary School acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

SCOPE

This policy addresses how Foster Primary School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Foster Primary School recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It also applies to bullying behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.

POLICY

Definitions

Bullying

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

There are four main types of bullying behaviour:

- Physical – examples include hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.
- Cyberbullying – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to: [Bully Stoppers \(education.vic.gov.au\)](http://education.vic.gov.au) and the Department's [Bullying Prevention and Response](#) policy on the Policy and Advisory Library.

Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and/or this Bullying Prevention Policy and Child Safe Standards where the behaviour constitutes bullying.

Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Foster Primary School will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

Harassment is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment.

Discrimination is behaviour that treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic (for example, race, religious belief or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation).

Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at our school and there may be serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group. Further information about discrimination and harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

Policy

Foster Primary School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture and relationships to promote wellbeing. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling, encouraging and teaching behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Foster Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

- We identify and implement evidence-based programs and initiatives from the [Schools Mental Health Menu](#) that are relevant to preventing and addressing bullying and help us to build a positive and inclusive school climate.
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- We participate in the Respectful Relationships initiative, which aims to embed a culture of respect and equality across our school.
- We celebrate the diverse backgrounds of members of our school community and teach multicultural education, including Aboriginal History, to promote mutual respect and social cohesion.
- We participate in the Safe Schools program to help us foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQ+ students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- Where practical a range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- We promote upstander behaviour as a way of empowering our students to positively and safely take appropriate action when they see or hear of a peer being bullied.

- The Peer Support Program (KOALA Crew) and the Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- We participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy.

Incident Response

Reporting concerns to [Foster Primary School](#)

Bullying is not tolerated at our school. We ensure bullying behaviour is identified and addressed with appropriate and proportionate consequences. All bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively..

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff or another trusted adult as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Foster Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their teacher. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including [teachers, wellbeing staff, visiting SSS staff and ESP members etc.].

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Foster Primary School should contact the Principal on 56822370.

Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in Compass.
2. inform relevant staff involved and the Principal.

The relevant teacher in conjunction with the Principal is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the investigator may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parent/carer(s) of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

Responses to bullying behaviours

When the investigator has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with teacher and Principal.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Foster Primary School will consider:

- the age, maturity and individual circumstances of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour.

The teacher or Principal may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer wellbeing support, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS, external provider to:
 - the target student or students
 - the students engaging in the bullying behaviour
 - affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including connect affected students with an older Student Mentor, resilience programs, etc.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.

- Implement cohort, year group, or whole school targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example using strategies from School Wide Positive Behaviour.
- Implement proportionate disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Foster Primary School understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The investigator is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website Included in staff induction processes
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Our school also follows Department of Education and Training policy relating to bullying including:

- [Bullying Prevention and Response](#)
- [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support Policy](#)

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)

- [ReachOut Australia](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data to inform this review will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular student wellbeing surveys
- regular staff surveys
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent Opinion Survey

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with student representative groups, parents groups, school council.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June 2022
Consultation	With student representative groups, parent groups, school council June 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	June 2024

COMPLAINTS POLICY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Provide an outline of the complaints process at Foster Primary School so that students, parents and members of the community are informed of how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our school.
- Ensure that all complaints and concerns regarding Foster Primary School are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

SCOPE

This policy relates to complaints brought by students, parents, carers, or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school.

In some limited instances, we may need to refer a complainant to another policy or area if there are different processes in place to manage the issue including:

- Complaints and concerns relating to fraud and corruption will be managed in accordance with the department's [Fraud and Corruption Policy](#).
- Criminal matters will be referred to Victorian Police.
- Legal claims will be referred to the Department's Legal Division.
- Complaints and concerns relating to child abuse will be managed in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures.

POLICY

Foster Primary School welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our families and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

We value and encourage open and positive relationships with our school community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and our school.

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties will:

- be considerate of each other's views and respect each other's role .
- be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of the student involved at the centre.
- act in good faith and cooperation.
- behave with respect and courtesy.
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate.
- operate within and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with any applicable legislation and Department policy.
- recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

Complaints and concerns process for students

Foster Primary School acknowledges that issues or concerns can cause stress or worry for students and impact their wellbeing and learning. Foster Primary School encourages our students to raise issues or concerns as they arise so that we can work together to resolve them.

Students with a concern or complaint can raise them with a trusted adult at school, for example, with your classroom teacher, Wellbeing staff, Education Support staff or the principal. This person will take your concern or complaint seriously and will explain to you what steps we can take to try to resolve the issue and support you.

You can also ask your parent, carer or another trusted adult outside of the school, to talk to us about the issue instead. Information about our parent/carer complaints and concerns process is outlined further below. The parent/carer process also applies to students who are mature minors, refer to: [Mature Minors and Decision Making](#).

Other ways you can raise a concern or complaint with us include:

- participating in our Attitudes to School Survey (for Grades 4-6).
- participating in our student forums.
- writing a note for our anonymous student suggestions in the Wellbeing box.

Further information and resources to support students to raise issues or concerns are available at:

- [Report Racism Hotline](#) (call 1800 722 476) – this hotline enables students to report concerns relating to racism or religious discrimination
- [Reach Out](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#) (call 1800 55 1800)
- [Victorian Aboriginal Education Association](#) (VAEAI)

Complaints and concerns process for parents, carers and community members

Preparation for raising a concern or complaint

Foster Primary School encourages parents, carers or members of the community who may wish to submit a complaint to:

- carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss
- remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise
- think about how the matter could be resolved
- be informed by checking the policies and guidelines set by the Department and Foster Primary School.

Support person

You are welcome to have a support person to assist you in raising a complaint or concern with our school. Please advise us if you wish to have a support person to assist you, and provide their name, contact details, and their relationship to you.

Raising a concern

Foster Primary School is always happy to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to your child's teacher,

Assistant Principal or Principal]. Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.

Making a complaint

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the Principal or Assistant Principal.

If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together. The following process will apply:

1. **Complaint received:** Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting through the front office with the Assistant Principal or Principal, to outline your complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss your complaint in a way that is convenient for you, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.
2. **Information gathering:** Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, Assistant Principal or nominee may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation. This process may also involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.
3. **Response:** Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the [Assistant Principal/Principal] to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties. If after the resolution meeting we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with you to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event you would like to take further action about it. In some circumstances, the Principal may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate.
4. **Timelines** Foster Primary School will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible usually within two school days and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Foster Primary School may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. We will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, Foster Primary School will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place. If external parties are involved these timelines may be extended.

Please note that unreasonable conduct (e.g. vexatious complaints) may need to be managed differently to the procedures in this policy.

Resolution

Where appropriate, Foster Primary School may seek to resolve a complaint by:

- an apology or expression of regret
- a change of decision
- a change of policy, procedure or practice
- offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support

- other actions consistent with school values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, Foster Primary School may also ask you to attend a meeting with an independent third party or participate in a mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.

Escalation

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved by the school, or if your complaint is about the Principal and you do not want to raise it directly with them, then the complaint should be referred to the SEVR (South East Victoria Region) by contacting 8688 7885.

Foster Primary School may also refer a complaint to SEVR if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department’s parent complaints process, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Raise a complaint or concern about your school.](#)

Record keeping and other requirements

To meet Department and legal requirements, our school must keep written records of:

- Serious, substantial or unusual complaints
- Complaints relating to the Child Information Sharing Scheme and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, to meet regulatory requirements - refer to Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes for further information

Our school also follows Department policy to ensure that record-keeping, reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met when responding to complaints or concerns.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on school website
- Annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Complaints - Parents](#)

The Department’s parents’ website:

- [Raise a complaint or concern about your school](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	24 th August 2022
Consultation	School Council 17 th August
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	August 2024

