



# **CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

## **St Roch's Parish Primary School**

*All students attending St Roch's Primary School have the right to feel safe.*

*The care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people is a fundamental responsibility of all within our school.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

St Roch's Parish Primary School is committed to child safety and providing a safe environment for all students and young people. We want children to feel safe, happy and empowered. To achieve this the school has developed and actively enforces Child Safety Strategies to ensure that any person involved in 'child connected work' is aware of their obligations & responsibilities for ensuring the safety of all children under their care.

In accordance with requirements of the **Victorian Government's Ministerial Order No 870**, St Roch's Parish Primary School maintains a culture of 'no tolerance' to child abuse and to support this has established minimum Child Safety Standards.

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate St Roch's Parish Primary School's commitment to ensuring Child Safety. It illustrates the measures implemented by the school to maintain a safe education environment and processes for responding to suspected abuse.

### **SCOPE**

This policy & associated procedure applies to all staff members (teaching & non-teaching), clergy, casual relief staff, volunteers, and contractors engaged by the school.

### **COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

All students & young people attending St Roch's Parish Primary School have the right to feel safe. The school affirms its commitment to child safety by adopting a 'zero tolerance' to child abuse and by actively implementing and managing strategies to help protect children from harm.

Initiatives undertaken to ensure the safety of students and young people at St Roch's Parish Primary School include the following:

- An annual assessment of the effectiveness of its Child Safety Management Strategies to identify areas for improvement.
- A Code of Conduct defining workplace expectations including professional boundaries, ethical behaviours and acceptable & unacceptable relationships.
- Processes for the recruitment, support, training & supervision of staff members, clergy, casual relief staff, volunteers, and contractors who participate in 'child connected work'.
- Procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.
- Inclusion and empowerment of all students & young people in the establishment of child safety strategies.
- A commitment that promotes safety of indigenous children, children with disabilities and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

St Roch's Parish Primary School maintains policies, procedures and strategies to create a child safe environment in the following areas:

### **RISK MANAGEMENT**

St Roch's Parish Primary School recognises the importance of minimising the potential of child abuse or harm and uses this process to inform our policies, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general Occupational Health & Safety risks the school proactively manages risk via a formal assessment process.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

St Roch's Parish Primary School enforces a Code of Conduct for all staff members, clergy, casual relief teachers, volunteers, and contractors that clearly defines workplace expectations including professional boundaries, ethical behaviours and acceptable & unacceptable relationships.

This Code of Conduct aims to provide guidance and support to individuals so that they feel valued, respected and fairly treated. It is provided to any person engaged in 'child connected work' and is available on the school website and in the Staff Handbook.

## **RECRUITMENT, SUPPORT, TRAINING & SUPERVISION**

St Roch's Parish Primary School adopts administrative and human resource practices to ensure its screening, recruitment and performance management processes identify and engage the most suitable candidates for positions available at the school. Recruitment and screening processes, as well as Police and Working With Children's Checks are minimum requirements for those engaged in 'child connected work'.

Staff Members are provided with regular development opportunities, support, supervision and training to assist with addressing child safety matters.

## **RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING CHILD SAFETY CONCERNS OR ABUSE**

St Roch's Parish Primary School has appointed the Wellbeing Team (Principal, Wellbeing and Student Services Leaders) with the specific responsibilities for responding to reports or complaints made by any member of the school community relating to child safety concerns or abuse. The school's Wellbeing Team works closely with members of the Leadership Team, staff members, clergy, casual relief teachers, volunteers, contractors, students and the parent community to ensure Child Safety Standards are maintained and all child safety complaints, suspected abuse, disclosures or breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct are immediately addressed.

Where staff members have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a student or young person they are mandated by law to report their concerns immediately to the Principal, Wellbeing Team or a member of the Leadership Team before contacting DHHS Child Protection. Staff members will be supported through all aspects of the reporting process.

The school's reporting and complaints procedure is located on the school website.

## **INCLUSION & EMPOWERMENT OF ALL STUDENTS & YOUNG PEOPLE**

St Roch's Parish Primary School works with students to ensure that they are empowered to understand their rights, recognise what abuse is and encourage them to speak up when they feel uncomfortable or afraid. Staff members actively encourage students and young people to express their views on matters that directly affect them. The school educates students and young people on strategies they can adopt if they feel unsafe.

## **VALUING DIVERSITY**

St Roch's Parish Primary School values diversity and does not tolerate discriminatory practices.

To achieve this the school:

- Promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Indigenous children and their families.
- Promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from cultural and/or linguistically different backgrounds.
- Welcome children with disabilities and their families and actively promotes their participation.
- Employs the most suitable person for the position regardless of cultural background.

## **EVALUATION**

St Roch's Parish Primary School reviews its Child Safety Code of Conduct every three years, more frequently in the event of a complaint or when there has been a change to the work environment or work arrangements that may impact on the protection of children.

**LINKS TO OTHER ST ROCH'S POLICIES**

- Child Safety Policy
- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints and Communication Policy

**Policy Input**

Richard Jacques (Principal); St Roch's Parish Primary School Staff, St Roch's Parish Primary School Education Board, CEM, VRQA and Safesmart Solutions

**Date of Ratification**

25 May 2016

**Date of Review**

May 2019

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