

Child Safe Standards - Victoria





Support for you:

If you need to talk to someone, it is recommended that you speak to your school leadership team about arranging appropriate support. You can also talk to your GP or another allied health professional.

You can also contact the Employee Assistance Program on 1300 361 008.

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Learning Intention:

To increase our understanding of:

- Child Safe Standards
- why Child Safe Standards and the principles are important
- the role of organisations and all staff and volunteers and contractors to protect children
- our child safe policies and where they are located on the Drive.

Vision Statement

We believe that every child can learn and every child has the right to learn at their point of need and beyond.

Through high quality teaching practices, every student develops the knowledge, skills and dispositions to be confident, life long learners.

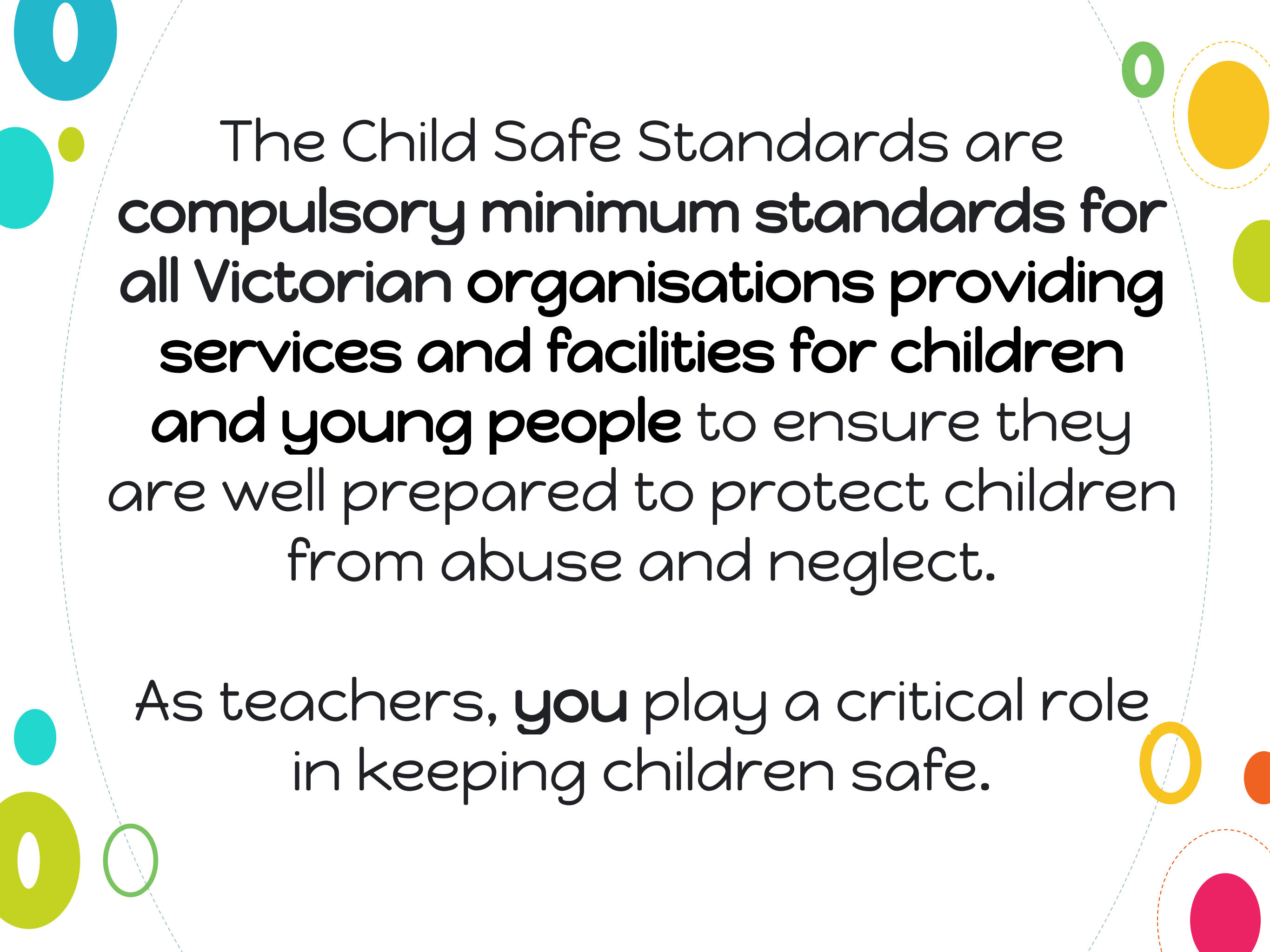
Our staff are part of a passionate culture of educators who do their work with excellence and operate harmoniously.

Through active partnerships with our community, students grow to understand the broader global community and become dynamic citizens within it.

Principle of Inclusion

Orchard Grove Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe, feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, procedures, strategies and practices will be inclusive of the needs of all children, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.

Orchard Grove Primary School takes into account and makes reasonable adjustments to accommodate the diversity of all children including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who are vulnerable; students in out of home care, LGBTIQ students and international students.

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The Child Safe Standards are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian organisations providing services and facilities for children and young people to ensure they are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect.

As teachers, you play a critical role in keeping children safe.



What the Standards cover

- ⦿ Sexual abuse (including grooming)
- ⦿ Physical abuse
- ⦿ Emotional and psychological abuse
- ⦿ Serious neglect
- ⦿ Family violence

For children under the age of 18 years.

Identifying signs of child abuse



Characteristics of children being abused

- Gender: 18% of girls, 10% of boys
- Age: rates of *substantiated* reports decrease with age
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children: 7 times more likely to be subjects of substantiated reports

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Sexual Abuse

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Physical Abuse

Grooming

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Emotional abuse

Neglect

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Family violence



Time for a break ...

Pen flipping

Standard 1

Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements.

Child Safe Standards

Standard 1 examples

To engage in this cultural change, organisations need to:

- Embed child safety into everyday thinking ie OHS
- Take a **zero tolerance** approach to child abuse
- Ensure leadership is aware of allegations and responds to protect children.
- Promote a culture of reporting
- Child safety as a regular agenda item
- Respecting, embracing and supporting the **diversity** of children
- Adopt a continuous improvement approach

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Standard 2

A child safe policy or statement of
commitment to child safety

Standard 2 examples

Child Safe Policy should:

- Cover all elements of the child safe standards: commitment to children's safety and best interests, definition of child abuse including grooming, detection, prevention, responding, reporting requirements/processes
- Consolidate policies, include other regulatory requirements and obligations etc

Communicate child safety policies and procedures to all staff, volunteers, visitors/contractors, children and families and the community.

Standard 3

A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.

Standard 3 example

Provide **clear written guidance** on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children.

Cover **boundaries** and detail acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, for example, physical contact, personal care, online communication

Communicate and publicise code of conduct to staff, volunteers, parents and children and what will happen if a person does not comply

Act on concerns or allegations of non-adherence to your Code of Conduct.

OGPS Code of Conduct

Standard 4

Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

Standard 4 examples

- OGPS School Response
- OGPS Position Criteria Regarding Child Safety
- OGPS Working with Children Check Protocol
- OGPS Working with Children Check Policy

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Standard 5

Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

Standard 5 example

Provide **support** to child and family

***Inform** parents of allegations

Maintain accurate **record** keeping

Communicate policies and procedures on how to respond to allegations and who to report to (authorities and internal organisational processes)

Failure to disclose child sexual abuse - **criminal offence.**

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Standard 6

Strategies to identify and reduce or
remove risks of child abuse

Standard 6 examples

- Be **proactive** to reduce the likelihood of risks emerging or escalating, rather than responding when harm has occurred.
- Provide **training** to identify, prevent and reduce risks.
- This covers both ‘business as usual’ risks and risks posed by specific activities.
- Ensure **contractors** are compliant with child safe standards.
- Failure to protect children from sexual abuse – **criminal offence** not to act to reduce or remove risk.

Standard 7

Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

Standard 7 example

Establish **trusting environments** where children feel safe and comfortable in reporting concerns.

Promote the **participation of children** - provide opportunities for children to contribute to child safe policies and in decisions that effect them.

Actively **valuing and respecting** children's opinions

Empower children through education to understand their rights, child abuse and grooming, code of conduct, how to raise concerns about abuse. Seeking their views about what makes them feel safe and unsafe, including **cultural safety**
Raise **community awareness** on children's rights and cultural safety.

Understanding your obligations to protect children

Mandatory Reporting and Duty of Care
Reasonable suspicion
Changes to Victorian legislation



Failure to disclose

Failure to disclose child sexual abuse offence that requires adults to report to police a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed against a child (unless they have a reasonable excuse for not doing so).

It establishes that reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility.

The law states that all adults must report to police: any **reasonable belief** that a **sexual offence** has been committed

by another adult (over 18) against a **child under the age of 16**.

unless there is a **reasonable excuse** or an **exemption** applies.

Failure to protect

Failure to protect a child from sexual abuse offence applies to people within organisations if:

they hold a **position of authority** within a **relevant organisation** that works with children

they know of a **substantial risk** another **adult associated with the organisation** may commit a sex offence against a child under 16 within the organisation's care

they have the **power or responsibility to remove or reduce that risk**

BUT they **negligently fail** to do so.

Maximum penalty is 5 years imprisonment.

Identifying and Responding to all forms of Child Abuse in Victorian Schools - 4 Critical Actions

- you **must** ensure their safety by:
- separating alleged victims and others involved
 - administering first aid
 - calling **000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance** to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
 - identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police.

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.



WITHIN THE SCHOOL

VICTORIA POLICE
You **must** report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor or volunteer to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report **internally** to:

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/or leadership team
- Employee Conduct Branch
- DET Security Services Unit

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

- School Principal and/or school chairperson

WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION
You **must** report to DHHS Child Protection if a child is considered to be:
in need of protection from child abuse
at risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development.

VICTORIA POLICE
You **must also** report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.

If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse **significant concerns** for their wellbeing you **must** report to the police. This may include making a referral or seeking advice from the police **FIRST** (in circumstances where the family are on

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PROTECT: Responding to all forms of child abuse

PROTECT

Everyone has the right to be safe and be protected from abuse.

No one should behave in a way that makes you feel unsafe or afraid, including anyone in your family, anyone at school or anywhere else in the community.

Tell a teacher or any adult at your school if you feel unsafe.



It's everyone's responsibility.

Adults at school must listen and respond to concerns about child abuse.

If you suspect abuse of any child or young person, you have a responsibility to report it, even if you are not sure.

Further information & resources
www.education.vic.gov.au/protect

Designing child safe schools

First principles:

- ‘Child safe, child friendly’ environments
- Prevention begins with clear & valid conception of the problem
- Focus on local settings



New Child Safe Standards

Need to be compliant by July 1 2022

This will include managing online safety