

Valkstone
Primary School



CHILD SAFE STANDARDS INFORMATION

FOR FAMILIES, SCHOOL
COUNCIL AND STAFF

WHAT IS CHILD SAFE?

Children have the right to be safe and protected, including at school. It is important that children and their families feel confident that children are safe and well while in the care of their school.

Schools are responsible for keeping children safe. Schools have to meet legal requirements for the care, safety and welfare of students. These are known as the Child Safe Standards.

The Child Safe Standards are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian schools, to ensure they are well prepared to protect children from abuse. There are seven standards plus a principle of inclusion.

All Victorian schools must comply with [Ministerial Order 870 — Child Safe Standards — Managing the risk of child abuse in schools](#), which specifically outlines how the Child Safe Standards apply in schools.

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) is responsible for ensuring school compliance with the Standards. Schools are required to comply with the standards for registration.

VALKSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILD SAFE OFFICERS

**ANGELA DAWSON
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL**



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VALKSTONE PRIMARY SCHOOL – APPROACH TO CHILD SAFETY

The following slides state the child safe standards and how Valkstone Primary School ensures the standard is addressed in the culture, policies, procedures and actions of the day-to-day running of the school.

At Valkstone Primary School we:

- Ensure all staff members know the policy – embed into staff meetings as agenda item, staff handbook, PD, Induction.
- Communicate clearly so that staff, students and the community know who to contact with child safety concerns (the school Child Safe Officers).
- Use a variety of communication methods with the community (website, email notifications, Compass, newsletter, discussion etc)
- Undertake the Child Safety Training yearly with the School Council
- Embed E-smart/cybersafety within both classroom and Digital Technologies programs.
- Teach Respectful Relationships.
- Embed Child safe practices into classroom wellbeing programs.
- Display Child Safe information on the school website.
- Display Posters child friendly information (e.g. Protect poster) in places that are easily accessible to students.
- Mentor staff through related discussions, interactions and processes.
- Prioritise Child Safety at Staff meetings (including statement at the top of meeting agenda).
- Have a well documented and utilised Student Wellbeing tiered approach document, which outlines direct reporters.
- Review policies through the School Council policy subcommittee in accordance with DET regulations.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 1: STRATEGIES TO EMBED AN ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE OF CHILD SAFETY

Required Actions

- The school develops, and the Principal approves strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety.
- The school (and school council where relevant) implements the strategies and informs the school community of them.
- The school's strategies are included in its Child Safety Policy.

At Valkstone Primary School we:

- Regularly update our Child Safety Policy (last updated in June 2020).
- Review and get approval of the Policy by School Council (July 2020 and is scheduled for next review in July 2023).
- Make the policy publicly available via the school website and hard copies are available upon request.
- Include the following wording as our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety:

Valkstone Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Valkstone Primary School has zero tolerance of child abuse.

We are committed to providing a child-safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard when making decisions that affect their lives. This will include the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, as well as the safety of vulnerable children.

Every person involved in Valkstone Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 2: A CHILD SAFETY POLICY OR A STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Required Actions:

- The school develops, and the Principal approves the Child Safety Policy.
- The Child Safety Policy is made publicly available.

At Valkstone Primary School we:

- Ensure that VIT registration is current through the Principal and the Department of Education and Training eduPay portal.
- Clearly outline the behaviours and expectations of interactions between staff, students and parents within the school in our School Values and Code of Conduct.
- Require all staff to read and sign the code of conduct when appointed to the position.
- Publicly share our Code of Conduct on the school website.
- Regularly review and update the Code of Conduct (last updated March 2021).

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 3: A CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Required Actions:

- The school develops, and the Principal approves a Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- The school council approves the Code of Conduct (to the extent it applies to school council employees and members, unless delegated to the Principal).
- The Code of Conduct is made publicly available.

At Valkstone Primary School we:

- Follow Merit and Equity based procedures.
- Carry out all school based recruitment via Recruitment online and following DET recruitment requirements.
- Ensure advertisements, interviews, background checks all include child safe focus to ensure appropriate staff are employed.
- Outline in the VPS “Child Safe Policy” that **all** people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a WWCC and provide evidence of this check.
- Monitor and assess continued staff suitability for child-connected work as part of the yearly Performance and Development Plans (PDPs).
- Offer and direct staff to appropriate training through DET modules.
- Include Child Safety in our Induction Program.
- Have a Duty of Care Policy, which all staff adhere to.
- Annual training in Child Safety undertaken at the first yearly meeting of the newly formed School Council.
- ‘Four Critical Actions’ posters displayed for staff in their teacher workspaces.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 4: SCREENING, SUPERVISION, TRAINING AND OTHER HUMAN RESOURCES PRACTICES THAT REDUCE THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE

Required Actions:

- The Principal ensures the school follows the Recruitment in Schools Guide to ensure the school’s hiring practices are child safe.
- School councils (for school council employees, unless delegated to the Principal) ensure that selection, supervision and management practices are child safe.
- The school follows their Volunteers policy.
- The Child Safety Policy refers to the school’s recruitment, supervision and management practices in place to protect children.

At Valkstone Primary School we:

- Support our staff in their role as mandatory reporters and ensure they are trained in reporting allegation and suspicion of abuse and understand procedures.
- Include our responding and reporting procedures in the Mandatory Reporting Policy and the process is displayed in teachers work spaces throughout the school and in the Staff Handbook.
- Support all teachers to report on their belief, independent to school leadership if required.
- As a Victorian Government school we are required to adopt the Department's Schools' Privacy Policy
- Respect record keeping requirements, confidentiality and privacy - on enrolment, families are provided with the "Primary School Privacy Notice" which is to be read before completing the Enrolment Form.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 5: PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

Required Actions:

- The school develops, and the Principal approves a Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) policy and procedures.
- The Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) policy and procedures are made publicly available and accessible.

At Valkstone Primary School we:

- Provide regular training for all staff in relation to all standards.
- Ensure Child Safe is on the agenda for every leadership meeting and school council meeting.
- Have Child Safe Officers available for School Community.
- Undertake risk assessments of excursions, incursions and camps to include child safe precautions.
- Screen all volunteers, outside agencies and contractors (SAMS 4 Schools) for adherence to the child safe standards (including OSHC staff).
- We require visitors to acknowledge Child Safety during on-site sign-in system for visitors (using Compass Kiosk).
- Embed the teaching of Respectful Relationships (age appropriately) in classrooms.
- Regularly review and update the School Risk Register (03/2021)
- Actively ensure that staff complete the required Mandatory Reporting online training module - “Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations eLearning Module”.

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

Required Actions:

- The school develops, implements, records, and monitors risk management strategies, for example by using a Child Safety Risk Assessment Register, approved by the Principal.
- At least annually, the school council undertakes appropriate guidance and training about child safety
- At least annually, the Principal ensures appropriate guidance and training about child safety is provided to school staff.

At Valkstone Primary School we:

- Encourage Student Leadership, for all students to be heard.
- Create class agreements in all classes at the start of each year.
- Healthy and Respectful Relationships are a focus of a Major Curriculum Team – Student Wellbeing
- Empower children at their level by the inclusion in integrated lessons, such as picture books within literacy programs.
- Develop trusting relationships where students are listened to.
- Teach Respectful Relationships – for consistency in and explicit teaching of positive and protective behaviours.
- Include Cyber Safety as part of the school program.
- Proactively support all students through our Wellbeing team.
- Display student friendly posters to promote safety.

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 7: STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE CHILD PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Required Actions:

- The school develops, and the Principal approves, strategies to deliver appropriate education about:
 - Standards of behaviour for students attending the school
 - Healthy and respectful relationships
 - Resilience; and
 - Child abuse awareness and prevention.
- The school promotes the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.

At Valkstone Primary School we:

- Specifically include the following wording in our Child Safety Policy in the 'Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Child Safety Principles', which is also shared with the community on our school website: "...This will include the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, as well as the safety of vulnerable children."
- Take diversity into consideration when making all decisions.
- Share an Acknowledgement of Country at the beginning of events, such as all school assemblies and special events.
- Display the Australian, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on outside flagpoles, in the office and at major school events such as whole school assemblies.
- Celebrate and note significant events such as NAIDOC week and Harmony Day.
- Provide training for school staff on supporting the needs of diverse students and families (CUST, Students with Additional Learning Needs etc).

PRINCIPLE OF INCLUSION:

Required Actions:

Schools must take account of and make reasonable efforts to accommodate the diversity of all children in implementing the Child Safe Standards, including (but not limited to) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable.

**Valkstone
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Aiming for EXcellence