



Buninyong
Primary School

CHILD SAFE PROGRAM

Buninyong Primary School Child Protection Program – An Introduction

Statement of Commitment from Buninyong Primary School Principal and Chair of Council

Buninyong 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. Buninyong has zero tolerance for child abuse. Buninyong is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability. Every person involved in Buninyong Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that their wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision-making and operations Buninyong Primary School will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramounts
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers
11. Implement a system of continuous improvement and review

Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence.

Buninyong has zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse. At Buninyong, a child includes Buninyong Students & visiting students.

This Child Safe Program is made up of work systems, practices, policies and procedures designed to maintain a child safe environment and to embed an organisational culture of child safety within the School community. The Program deals specifically with child protection issues and is designed to ensure compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and related child protection laws. Broader child safety issues arising from our common law duty of care are dealt with through our Student Code of Conduct and Student Engagement Policy.

If you have a belief or suspicion that a child is being, or has been, subjected to any form of abuse you must contact the Victorian Child Protection Service or, where You need guidance on making a report or have questions regarding child safety, contact one of the School's appointed Child Protection Officers. *Whenever they are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.*

Bernie Conlan
Principal

Darren Holland
School Council President

The Victorian Child Safe Standards

The Victorian Child Safe Standards comprise seven (7) Standards and three (3) Principles.

The seven (7) Standards are as follows:

- Standard 1:** Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
- Standard 2:** A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
- Standard 3:** A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- Standard 4:** Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- Standard 5:** Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- Standard 6:** Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- Standard 7:** Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

In addition to the seven (7) Standards. The School is required to take into consideration the following three (3) Principles as part of our response to each Standard:

- Principle 1:** promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- Principle 2:** promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Principle 3:** promoting the safety of children with a disability

To assist organisations to interpret each of the Standards, the Victorian Government has published a guide entitled 'An overview of the Victorian Child Safe Standards'. In addition, the Minister for Education has published *Ministerial Order 870* that prescribes certain matters with which registered schools in Victoria must comply as part of their registration requirements.

Buninyong has established and implemented our Child Protection Program in accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

The table below sets each Standard with a summary of how we comply with that Standard.

Standard	Short Description	How Buninyong Applies this Standard
1	Organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements	Buninyong complies with this Standard in a number of ways including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of this Child Safe Program and the appointment of senior staff members as the School's Child Protection Officers who act as 'Child Protection Champions' and are tasked with the overall responsibility for embedding an organisational culture of child protection in the School • Each staff member and Direct Contact Volunteer having to complete Child Protection Training which provides information with respect to key risk indicators of child abuse and reporting procedures • Establishing clear guidelines for reporting child abuse concerns • Creating an environment supportive of children from culturally diverse backgrounds and children with disabilities
2	A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety	Buninyong has developed and implemented a Child Protection and Safe Policy that describes the key elements of our approach to child protection as well as an overarching set of principles guiding the development of policies and procedures to protect children from child abuse. Our Child Protection and Safety Policy is published through various medium including our public website.
3	A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children	Buninyong has created a plain English Child Safety Code of Conduct which specifies appropriate standards of behaviour for adults towards students in all School environments, including outside of school hours.
4	Screening,	Buninyong has created child safe human resources

	supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel	practices including those relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruitment, Selection & Screening ▪ Our Working With Children Checks Policy ▪ Child Protection Training
5	Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse	Buninyong has established simple and accessible procedures for anyone to report a child abuse concern internally to one of the School's Child Protection Officers. Buninyong has developed and implemented procedures for School Council members, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers for responding to allegations and disclosures of child abuse or suspected child abuse, including procedures for Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse.
6	Strategies to identify and reduce or remove the risk of abuse	The School has adopted a risk management approach to child safety. Key risk indicators of child abuse are documented in our Child Protection Program and also included in our Child Protection Training. The School has developed a number of strategies, policies and procedures to create a risk-based approach to child safety and protection.
7	Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children	Buninyong has developed strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children including policies and procedures related to age appropriate student wellbeing and supporting children with disabilities and child from culturally diverse background.

Principle of Inclusion

In addition to implementing the Standards, the School implements principles of inclusion prescribed by the Standards and *Ministerial Order No. 870* through our

- Disability Discrimination Policy
- Cultural Diversity Policy

Child abuse Definition and Key Risk Indicators

Child Abuse & Family Violence

Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined in section 3 of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) as including:

- any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or a grooming offence listed in the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)
- the infliction of physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm
- the serious neglect of a child

A child is defined by the Act as a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Family Violence

Whilst the term 'family violence' does not form part of the official definition of 'child abuse', the impact of family violence on a child is commonly referred to as a form of child abuse.

In Victoria section 5 of the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) defines 'family violence' as behaviour by a person towards a family member that is:

- physically or sexually abusive
- emotionally or psychologically abusive
- economically abusive
- threatening
- coercive
- in any other way controlling or dominating the family member and causes them to feel fear for their own, or other family member's safety or wellbeing

Behaviour that causes a child to hear, witness, or be exposed to the effects of such behaviour also falls within the definition of 'family violence'.

Sexual Offences

A sexual offence occurs when a person involves a child in sexual activity, or deliberately puts the child in the presence of sexual behaviours that are exploitative or inappropriate to the child's age and development. Children may be bribed or threatened physically and psychologically to make them participate in the activity.

Sexual abuse can involve a wide range of sexual activity and may include fondling, masturbation, oral sex, penetration, voyeurism and exhibitionism. It can also include exploitation through pornography or prostitution as well as grooming behaviour.

Possible Physical Indications of Sexual Abuse:

- injury to the genital or rectal area, such as bruising or bleeding
- vaginal or anal bleeding or discharge
- discomfort is urinating or defecating
- presence of foreign bodies in vagina and/or rectum
- inflammation or infection of genital area

- sexually transmitted diseases
- pregnancy, especially in very young adolescents
- bruising and other injury to breasts, buttocks or thighs
- anxiety related illnesses such as anorexia or bulimia
- frequent urinary tract infections

Possible Behavioural Indicators of Sexual Abuse:

- the student discloses sexual abuse
- persistent and age appropriate sexual activity, including excessive masturbation, masturbation with objects, rubbing genitals against adults, playing games that act out a sexually abusive event
- drawings or descriptions in stories that are sexually explicit and not age appropriate
- a fear of home, a specific place, a particular adult, or excessive fear of men or of women
- poor or deteriorating relationships with adults and peers
- poor self-care/personal hygiene
- regularly arriving early at school and leaving late
- complaining of headaches, stomach pains or nausea without physiological basis
- frequent rocking, sucking or biting
- sleeping difficulties
- reluctance to participate in physical or recreational activities
- regressive behaviour, such as bedwetting or speech loss
- sudden accumulation or money of gifts
- unplanned absences or running away from home
- delinquent or aggressive behaviour
- depression
- self-injurious behaviour, including drug/alcohol abuse, prostitution, self-mutilation, or attempted suicide
- sudden decline in academic performance, poor memory and concentration
- wearing provocative clothing, or layers of clothes to hide injuries
- promiscuity

Grooming

Grooming refers to predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. It is a sexual offence under section 49B of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) carrying a maximum 10 year term of imprisonment.

Grooming behaviour typically involves a graduation from attention giving and non-sexual touching to increasingly more intimate and intrusive behaviour.

Grooming does not necessarily involve any sexual activity or even discussion of sexual activity. For example, it may only involve establishing a relationship with a child, a parent or carer for the purpose of facilitating sexual activity at a later time.

Certain behaviours or acts will not in isolation constitute grooming behaviour. However, where there is a repeating pattern of indicative behaviour, or several incidents of indicative behaviour, it may constitute grooming behaviour.

Indicators of Grooming Behaviours:

- persuading a child or group of children that they have a special relationship
- asking a child to keep the relationship to themselves
- inappropriately allowing a child to overstep the rules
- testing boundaries, for example by undressing in front of a child
- manoeuvring to get or insisting on uninterrupted time alone with a student
- buying a student gifts
- insisting on physical affection such as hugging, wrestling or tickling even when the student clearly does not want it
- being overly interested in the sexual development of a student
- taking a lot of photos of a student
- engaging in inappropriate or excessive physical contact with a student
- sharing alcohol or drugs with a student
- making inappropriate comments about a student's appearance or excessive flattery
- using inappropriate pet names
- making jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature
- making obscene gestures or using obscene language
- sending correspondence of a personal nature via any medium
- inviting, allowing, or encouraging students to attend a staff member's home without parental/guardian permission
- entering change rooms or toilets occupied by students when supervision is not required or appropriate
- communicating with a child's parent/step parent, legal guardian, teacher, religious official or spiritual leader with the intention of facilitating the child's involvement in sexual conduct
- inappropriately extending a relationship outside of work
- photographing, audio recording, or filming students via any medium without authorisation or having parental consent to do so

What is Not Grooming?

Not all physical contact between a student and a staff member or any person engaged by the school to provide services to children, including a volunteer, will be inappropriate and/or an indicator of possible grooming behaviour. The following physical contact with students is not grooming behaviour:

- administration of first aid
- supporting students who have been hurt
- non-intrusive gestures to comfort a student who is experiencing grief, loss or distress (i.e. a hand on the upper arm or upper back)
- non-intrusive touching (i.e. shaking a student's hand or a pat on the back)

Physical Violence

Physical violence occurs when a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from a non-accidental injury or injuries inflicted by another person. Physical violence can be inflicted in many ways including beating, shaking, burning or using weapons (such as belts and paddles).

Possible Physical Indicators of Physical Violence:

- unexplained bruises
- bruises or welts on facial areas and other areas of the body, including back, bottom, legs, arms or inner thighs
- any bruises or welts in unusual configurations, or those that look like the object used to make the injury, for example fingerprints, handprints, buckles, iron or teeth
- burns that show the shape of the object used to make them, such as an iron, grill, cigarette, or burns from boiling water, oil or flames
- fractures of the skull, jaw, nose or limbs, especially those not consistent with the explanation offered or with the type of injury probably/possible at the child's age and development
- cuts and grazes to the mouth, lips, gums, eye area, ears or external genitalia
- human bite marks
- bald patches where hair has been pulled out
- multiple injuries, old and new

Possible Behavioural Indicators of Physical Violence:

- inconsistent or unlikely explanation for an injury
- inability to remember the cause of an injury
- fear of specific people
- wearing clothes unsuitable for weather conditions (such as long sleeved tops) to hide injuries
- wariness or fear of a parent/guardian and reluctance to go home
- no reaction or little emotion displayed when hurt
- little or no fear when threatened
- habitual absences from school without explanations (the parent/guardian may be keeping the child away until signs of injury have disappeared)
- overly compliant, shy, withdrawn, passive and uncommunicative
- fearfulness when other children cry or shout
- unusually nervous or hyperactive, aggressive, disruptive and destructive to self and/or others
- excessively friendly with strangers
- regressive behaviour, such as bed wetting or soiling
- poor sleeping patterns, fear of dark, nightmares
- sadness and frequent crying
- drug or alcohol misuse
- poor memory and concentration
- suicide attempts
- academic problems

Serious Emotional or Physiological Harm

Serious emotional or psychological abuse may occur when a child is repeatedly rejected, isolated or frightened by threats or the witness of family violence. It also includes hostility, derogatory name-calling and put-downs, or persistent coldness from a person, to the extent where the behaviour of the child is disturbed or their emotional development is at serious risk or being impaired. Serious emotional or psychological harm could also result from conduct that exploits a child without necessarily being criminal, such as encouraging a child to engage in inappropriate or risky behaviours.

Psychological or emotional abuse may occur with or without other forms of abuse.

Possible Physical Indicators of Serious Emotional or Psychological Harm:

- speech disorders
- delays in emotional, mental or even physical development
- physical signs of self-harming

Possible Behavioural Indicators of Serious Emotional or Psychological Harm:

- exhibiting low self-esteem
- exhibiting high anxiety
- overly compliant, passive or undemanding behaviour
- extremely demanding, aggressive, or attention-seeking behaviour
- anti-social, destructive behaviour
- low tolerance or frustration
- unexplained mood swings
- self-harming
- behaviours that are not age appropriate, for example, overly adult (parenting of other children), or overly infantile (thumb sucking, rocking, wetting or soiling)
- fear of failure, overly high standards and excessive neatness
- depression, or suicidal thoughts
- running away
- violent drawings or writing
- contact with other students forbidden

Serious Neglect

Serious neglect is the continued failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention or adequate supervision, to the extent that the child's health, safety and/or development is, or is likely to be, jeopardised. Serious neglect can also occur if an adult fails to adequately ensure the safety of a child where the child is exposed to extremely dangerous or life threatening situations.

Possible Physical Indicators of Serious Neglect:

- consistently dirty and unwashed
- consistently inappropriately dressed for weather conditions
- consistently without adequate supervision and at risk of injury or harm
- consistently hungry, tired and listless, falling asleep in class, or malnourished
- unattended health problems and lack of routine medical care

- inadequate shelter and unsafe or unsanitary conditions
- abandonment by parents
- poor hygiene

Possible Behavioural Indicators of Serious Neglect:

- begging or stealing food
- gorging when food is available
- inability to eat when extremely hungry
- alienated from peers, withdrawn, listless, pale, and thin
- aggressive behaviour
- delinquent acts, for example, vandalism, drug or alcohol abuse
- little positive interaction with parent/guardian
- appearing miserable or irritable
- poor socialising habits
- poor evidence of bonding, or little stranger anxiety
- indiscriminate with affection
- poor, irregular or non-attendance at school
- staying at school long hours
- self-destructive
- dropping out of school
- taking on an adult role of carrying for a parent
- misusing alcohol or drugs
- academic issues

Family Violence

In Victoria 'family violence' is a defined term under the Family Violence Protection Act 2008. It is a criminal offence.

When dealing with children it is important to remember that 'family violence' extends to behaviour that causes a child to hear, witness, or be exposed to the effects of 'family violence'.

As family violence can result in one or more forms of child abuse (being sexual offences, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm or serious neglect) the physical and behavioural indicators of these types of abuse may also be indicative of a family violence situation.

Standard 1 - Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, through effective leadership arrangements.

Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety

Working with children can be very rewarding, and it brings additional responsibilities.

All staff must act to protect children from abuse in our organisation, and build an environment where children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. This requires a culture of child safety to be embedded throughout our organisation so that child safety is part of everyone's everyday thinking and practice. Such a culture is achieved through proactive leadership in demonstrating the appropriate values, attitudes and behaviours of an organisation.

Our school fosters a culture of openness, inclusiveness and awareness. Children and adults should know what to do if they observe or are subject to abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

All staff and volunteers must consider the safety of all children, and recognise the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal children, safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

Governance in a child safe environment

Leadership will take preventative, proactive and participatory approaches to child safety issues. The safety and wellbeing of children in our school should be a paramount consideration when developing activities, policies and management practices.

Who is Responsible for Child Protection?

Society as a whole shares responsibility for promoting the safety and protection of children from abuse. In the School context, all members of the School community have their role to play – teachers, staff, administrators, parents/guardians, volunteers and students. That said, the School Executive Team is committed to leading from the front and engaging in a preventative and proactive approach to child protection issues.

Students are encouraged to take an active role in developing and maintaining a child safe environment at the School and are provided with opportunities to contribute and give feedback on the development of the School's policies and practices. Students are also made aware of the avenues available to them to report or disclose abuse or concerns for their safety or the safety of others.

In the Buninyong context, Key Child Protection Roles & Responsibilities include the following.

School Council

The School Council is required to approve the School's Child Safe Program and to ensure it is being effectively implemented. Each member must:

- acquire and keep up-to-date knowledge of child protection matters
- have an understanding of the nature of the School's operations and the child protection risks associated with these operations
- ensure that the School has appropriate resources to effectively implement its Child Safe Program
- ensure that the School has appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding child protection issues and is able to respond in a timely way to that information
- ensure that the school has, and implements processes to ensure that the School is complying with its legal and regulatory obligations with respect to child protection
- ensure that the School has, and implements processes to ensure ongoing monitoring to verify the provision and use of the resources that have been allocated to the management of child protection issues within the School and their effectiveness

Principal

The School Council delegates day-to-day management of the School to the Principal.

The Principal is ultimately responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that:

- the School's Child Safe Program is implemented effectively with available resources effectively deployed
- appropriate School Child Protection Officers are appointed and trained
- a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the School
- any child protection incidents arising are dealt with professionally and in a timely manner
- School Council receives regular reports with respect to child protection matters
- the School is complying with its legal and regulatory obligations with respect to child protection

School's Child Protection Officers

Four staff members are nominated as the School's Child Protection Officers. The names, positions, contact details and Child Protection Officer responsibilities for all School Child Protection Officers can be found on page 16.

In the event that one of the School's Child Protection Officers cannot perform their role, for example due to conflicts of interest or absence, these duties will be performed by the principal.

Staff

All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safe Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. All staff are required to complete training allocated to them to ensure their understanding of related roles and responsibilities.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Protection Officers and/or with external agencies where required.

Direct Contact Volunteers

Direct Contact Volunteers are those volunteers that are involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and could potentially have direct unsupervised contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

Examples of Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include volunteers involved in School camps or excursions, coaching sporting teams or assisting in learning activities.

All Direct Contact Volunteers are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safe Program.

They must also be aware that they too have legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Protection Officers and/or with external agencies where required.

Indirect Contact Volunteers

Indirect Contact Volunteers are not responsible for supervising students and would not have 'unsupervised' contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

Examples of Indirect Contact Volunteer activities may include assisting the School functions or the School canteen and fundraising barbeques.

All Indirect Contact Volunteers are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

All Indirect Contact Volunteers are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Safe Program.

Third Party Contractors

All Third Party Contractors (service providers) engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

All service providers engaged by the School must be taken through an induction process, which includes their child safe responsibilities.

External Education Providers

An External Education Provider is any organisation that the School has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the School.

The delivery of such a course may take place on School premises or elsewhere.

All External Education Providers engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

All External Education Providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Safe Program.

Buninyong may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Providers.

Code of Conduct

Our school has a code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct and care required when working and interacting with children.

Suitable employees and volunteers

Our school will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. This includes police record and identity checks, Working with Children Checks where required, face-to-face interviews and detailed reference checks from previous employers, including from the applicant's most recent line manager.

Support, train, supervise and enhance performance

Our school will ensure that volunteers and employees who work with children have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to help protect children from abuse. Leadership will be a point of contact for others who have questions or concerns or want to report an allegation of abuse.

Promote inclusion

Our school will be inclusive to all children and families. In particular, our school will establish a culture that supports:

- cultural safety for Aboriginal children, for example by working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal community controlled organisations

- cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, for example by using inclusive language and images in policy documents, and communications such as the website and newsletters
- the safety of children with a disability, for example by ensuring our school is accessible to everyone and ensuring appropriate training and supervision of staff and volunteers working with children with a disability

Empower and promote the participation of children in decision-making

Our school will promote the involvement and participation of children in developing and maintaining child safe environments. Opportunities for children to express their views on our child safe policy or code of conduct, may be sought as appropriate.

We must listen to children and take them seriously, particularly if they are disclosing abuse or concerns for their safety or the safety of other children.

The Department of Education and Training and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority will provide information and materials specifically for schools to assist with capacity building and compliance.

Buninyong's Child Protection Officers

Buninyong has appointed the people listed below as the School's Child Protection Officers. Each Child Protection Officer is available to answer any questions that you may have with respect to our Child Protection and Safety Policy and the Child Protection Program.

The School's Child Protection Officers are your first point of contact for reporting child protection issues within the School. They receive special training that allows them to deal with child protection concerns both sensitively and effectively.

If you have any concern that a child may be experiencing any form of abuse, whether or not you have formed a belief on reasonable grounds that the abuse has occurred, you should immediately raise your concerns with one of our Child Protection Officers.

The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount. *Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.*

Buninyong's Child Protection Officers:

Josh Ebbels
Deputy Principal
5341 3560

David Young
Deputy Principal
5341 3560

Shaun O'Loughlin
Scotsburn Campus Leader
5341 3496

Nicole Phillips
Prep Leader
5341 3560

Role Description

The Buninyong Child Protection Officers:

- act as one of the people that staff, parents/guardians and children contact to discuss a suspected abuse or child safety concern
- accurately record all relevant information and actions taken
- store all records and information in line with the School's Privacy policy
- assess how and when to report to the School Executive and authorities
- provide staff with a point of contact for discussion if they develop a belief that a mandatory report is required to be made.
- in conjunction with the Buninyong Wellbeing Team, instigate strategies to make people (adults and children) feel safe and comfortable in reporting suspected abuse
- in conjunction with the principal, publicise and make accessible for families and children, avenues for reporting incidents or concerns (ie: website)
- ensure that the procedures for responding to alleged abuse are fair and focus on child safety (recommend to the Principal the suspension of the alleged perpetrator and/or the provision of alternative duties pending investigation).

- are given direct access to the Chair of School Council in the event that an allegation of abuse has been made against the Principal
- provide support and comfort to a child reporting abuse or safety concerns, and never blame or interrogate a child
- contact parents/guardians as appropriate
- ensure processes for responding to suspected child abuse explicitly include culturally appropriate responses where suspected abuse involves an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child
- use effective and school sanctioned communication channels when making the required contact
- provide ongoing expertise to make referrals in support of alleged victims, their families and affected staff, such as helping them understand their rights and the process that will be followed in responding to allegations, and assistance in accessing counselling or other support as required
- provide contact details for internal and/or external expertise so that staff have access to advice when managing child safety incidents, including expertise relating to culturally and/or linguistically diverse children, and children with a disability
- in conjunction with the School Leadership Team, undertake timely reviews of child safe policies and procedures to be followed if child abuse occurs
- support the Principal in developing suitable statements or responses to staff, parents and students in the event of an incident of confirmed child abuse
- develop, in conjunction with the Principal, relevant media statements or responses in the event of an incident of confirmed child abuse that is made known to the wider public
- in conjunction with the HR Manager, ensure supervision requirements for staff and volunteers who work with children are enforced, maintained and regularly reviewed
- in conjunction with the Buninyong Student Wellbeing Team, gather feedback from children eg. surveys, focus groups and social media, about whether they would feel safe and taken seriously if they were to raise concerns, and implement improvements based on this feedback
- in conjunction with the School Leadership Team, include priorities and actions in operational plans that nurture and affirm the involvement of all children in the organisation's activities, and in particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability
- provide culturally safe environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

Standard 2 - Our Policy Commitment to Child Safety

BUNINYONG PS CHILD SAFETY POLICY

This policy was last ratified on

Buninyong Primary School is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Our organisation has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Our organisation is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Our children

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants in our organisation. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

Our staff and volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our organisation.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

Training and supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our organisational culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to Buninyong Primary School's code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. Through the selection process we clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our organisation understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

We welcome applications from Aboriginal peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check.

We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the recruitment process is complete. We do retain our own records (but not

the actual criminal record) if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision making process.

If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

Fair procedures for personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

Legislative responsibilities

Our organisation takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.
- **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.¹
- Any personnel who are **mandatory reporters** must comply with their duties.

Risk management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in organisations on social media).

¹ Further information about the failure to protect offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence>.

Regular review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

Allegations, concerns and complaints

Our organisation takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above).

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed²
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- observing suspicious behaviour.

² For example behaviour, please see [An Overview of the Victorian child safe standards:](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc)
<www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc>

Standard 3 – A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.

Child Safe Code of Conduct

A Child Safe Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships.

When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is educated about the Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the School environment becomes much more transparent and people are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safe Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm.

The Code of Conduct is made available to all staff, volunteers, families and students.

This Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards students. The Code serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote child safety in the School environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations.

The School reviews the Child Safe Code of Conduct every 2 years and it is due for review in November 2018.

Buninyong has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our School community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, School Council members, volunteers (direct and indirect), Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers and parents/guardians.

A child safe code of conduct statement for Buninyong PS staff appears on the following 2 pages. It is expected that those from the following categories will sign the code of conduct to indicate they understand and agree to abide by the school's Child Safe Standards.

- All staff
- School Council Members
- Pre-service teachers
- Volunteers who help out with:
 - Swimming
 - Camps
 - Back stage at the concert

BUNINYONG PS CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

This policy was last ratified on

All staff, volunteers and School Council Members of Buninyong Primary School are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of Buninyong Primary School are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to Buninyong Primary School's child safe policy at all times and upholding Buninyong Primary School's statement of commitment to child safety at all time
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any child safety concerns to Child Safety Officers/Leadership
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to Buninyong Primary School's Child Safety Officers/Leadership, and ensure any allegation to reported to the police or child protection
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them

Staff and volunteers must not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes

- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse

Staff and volunteers must be conscious of their child safe responsibilities with respect to:

- contact with a child or their family outside of the school and relevant professional responsibilities
- online contact with a child or their family

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to Buninyong Primary School’s Child Safety Officers

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Standard 4 – Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

Creating and Maintaining a Child Safe Environment

Child Safety Human Resources Practices

In addition to ensuring Working With Children Checks are completed in accordance with our legal obligations, Buninyong is committed to ensuring that newly recruited and existing staff, School Council Members and Direct Contact Volunteers understand the importance of child safety, are aware of all relevant policies and procedures, and are trained to minimise the risk of child abuse.

This is done through various human resources work systems, practices, policies and procedures designed to protect children from abuse and create a child safe culture. These include:

Child Safe Recruitment Practices for Buninyong Primary School

Recruitment checklist

At Buninyong PS we are committed to ensuring that our recruitment practices create a safe environment for our students. To this end we have established policies and procedures for recruiting employees and assessing their suitability to work with children. Our recruitment processes are also designed to discourage inappropriate people from seeking to work in our school.

When recruiting at Buninyong Primary School, we will work through the following steps, each with child safety in mind:

- development of selection criteria
- advertising vacancies
- [working with Children Checks](#)
- [police record checks and identity checks](#)
- reference checks over the telephone with recent line managers

Selection criteria

Developing appropriate selection criteria for the position is a valuable first step to reducing the risk of appointing someone who poses a child safety risk. It will also ensure that applicants have the specific knowledge and skills required for the position.

Selection criteria for teachers to include:

- Teaching Staff –
 - Demonstrated high level written and verbal communication skills and high level interpersonal skills including the capacity to develop constructive relationships with students, parents and other staff.
- ES Staff –
 - Demonstrated capacity to communicate effectively with members of the school community including students and the capacity to provide support and/or attendant care to students where necessary.
 - Capacity to work cooperatively with a range of people including teachers, education support, students and parents.

Advertising

Advertising for positions provides a good opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to safeguarding children and deter would-be offenders. All job advertisements to include the following statement:

Buninyong Primary School is committed to being a 'Child Safe' school with and expectation that all staff commit to our Child Safe policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct. Appropriate rigorous reference and background checking will be undertaken for this selection process, including a Working with Children Check and police record and identity check. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We are also committed to meeting the needs of all students, including those with a disability, our indigenous students and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Interviews

The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right people for Buninyong Primary School and in identifying any people who may pose a risk to children. We need to allow sufficient time to plan and prepare for the interview process, and form an interview panel with the right mix of experience and skills to carry out each interview, ensuring that all panel members are clear on what the position requires.

Where possible and relevant we should seek to include Aboriginal peoples, people from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background and people with a disability on the interview panel.

An open-ended style of behavioural-based questioning will give us insight into the applicant's values, attitudes and understanding of professional boundaries and accountability. Behavioural-based questions and questions about motives for wanting to work with children can be useful.

Interview panel members should take notice of their own thoughts and feelings when interacting with the applicant. Ask for more information if the applicant does not provide sufficient information in his or her responses.

Did you notice any warning signs such as:

- unexplained lengthy gaps in employment history
- the applicant is evasive or inconsistent in his or her answers
- the applicant says they do not value or 'need' supervision

Pre-employment screening

Screening applicants (including for paid and volunteer positions) is a good tool for helping to prevent people who may abuse children from entering our organisation.

Police checks

It is important to be upfront and ask the applicant if they have any criminal convictions, formal disciplinary action taken against them, or any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct. This could involve the applicant signing a declaration as part of an application form.

This can also be covered in a face-to-face interview. This may be challenging for the interview panel, particularly if the person is already known to the panel, but the applicant's response should demonstrate a sufficient level of professionalism as well as an understanding of our obligations. To help introduce this difficult topic, we could state that we you have some specific questions about child safety because our organisation takes child safety seriously.

- **Have we undertaken a police record check (which includes identity check)?**
- If addressed during a face-to-face interview, did we take notice of how the applicant responds to questions with regard to his or her words and body language?
- Have we included a question about whether the applicant has any criminal convictions, cautions, other legal or pending cases, including formal disciplinary action, which may affect their suitability to work with children?

Working with Children Check

Under the *Working with Children Act 2005*, people who are doing child-related work, and who are not exempt³, need a Working with Children Check. This applies to both paid and volunteer workers. Full details of the [Working with Children Check process](#) can be found on the Working with Children website <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>.

Does the applicant hold a valid Working with Children Check, if required? Have we [checked the validity of their Working with Children Check](#) (Business Manager) <https://online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu/checkstatus.doj> ?.

OR

- If the applicant does not hold a valid Working with Children Check, and it is required, has the applicant provided evidence that they have applied for a Working with Children Check, and does your organisation have processes to follow up pending applications?
- Has the applicant provided us with evidence of their Working with Children Check, or evidence of their application for a Working with Children Check?

³ For example, teachers and police officers are exempt because they undergo other thorough background checking.

Referee checks

The interview panel should always talk to at least two referees as this can provide insight into the applicant's character and skills. Line managers, particularly the most recent, are likely to provide you with the most accurate reference. Where possible, referees that can provide insights into the applicant's experience working with children should be contacted.

- Have we spoken to at least two of the referees by telephone? Did they confirm the name and position provided by the applicant?
- Has the applicant provided their most recent line manager as a referee? If not, have they provided us with a satisfactory reason?
- Do the referees provided by the applicant include line managers who can be objective, rather than colleagues or friends?

When speaking with the referees, we should seek to establish the referee's relationship with the applicant, including:

- how long the applicant and referee worked together
- the specifics of the position
- the applicant's perceived strengths and weaknesses
- whether the referee would hire the person again, particularly in a role working with children, and whether they have any concerns about the applicant working with children

The panel should ask referees directly about any concerns they may have about the applicant working with children.

The panel should take note of any pauses or gaps in the referee's responses.

Additional checks

Additional checks will confirm the identity of the applicant and that their responses have been truthful.

- viewing a certified copy of the applicant's qualifications (if required)
- viewing the applicant's driver's licence/passport to see that it has the same name they have provided us

Child Protection Training

Buninyong recognises that without training and education of our staff, School Council members and Direct Contact Volunteers, our policies and procedures will not operate to effectively keep our students safe and protect them from abuse.

Buninyong staff, School Council Members and Direct Contact Volunteers receive child protection training when they first commence their role at the School and are required to complete ongoing training on child protection issues at least annually.

All staff, School Council Members and Direct Contact Volunteers are required to undertake role-appropriate training through our Child Protection Training course which consists of the follows modules:

Module 1 – An overview of our Child Protection Program

Module 2 – The meaning of child abuse and its key risk indicators

Module 3 – Victorian Child Safe Standards

Module 4 – Our Child Protection and Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct

Module 5 – How to respond to a child protection incident

Module 6 – Child Protection reporting

The School's Child Protection Officers, and other selected staff may undertake additional training as considered appropriate to their roles.

Standard 5 – Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse at Buninyong Primary School

Buninyong Primary School is committed to embedding a child safe culture by implementing a range of strategies. This includes agreed processes for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse, which is outlined below.

If a child discloses an incident of abuse to a staff member

- try and separate them from the other children discreetly and listen to them carefully
- let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred
- reassure the child that you take what they are saying seriously, and it is not their fault and that they are doing the right thing
- explain to them that this information may need to be shared others, such as with their parent/carer, specific people in your organisation, or the police
- do not make promises to the child such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe
- do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them
- provide them with an incident report form (see page 33) to complete, or complete it together, if you think the child is able to do this
- as soon as possible after the disclosure, record the information using the child's words and report the disclosure to the principal or one of the nominated Child Protection Officers
- ensure the disclosure is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely

If a parent/carer says their child has been abused in your organisation or raises a concern

- explain that your organisation has processes to ensure all abuse allegations are taken very seriously
- ask about the wellbeing of the child
- allow the parent/carer to talk through the incident in their own words
- advise the parent/carer that you will take notes during the discussion to capture all details

- explain to them the information may need to be repeated to authorities or others, such as school leadership, the police or child protection
- do not make promises at this early stage, except that you will do your best to keep the child safe
- provide them with an incident report form to complete, or complete it together (see page 33)
- ask them what action they would like to take and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be
- ensure the report is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely

You need to be aware that some people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers in reporting allegations of abuse. For example, people from some cultures may experience anxiety when talking with police, and communicating in English may be a barrier for some. You need to be sensitive to these issues and meet people's needs where possible, such as having an interpreter present (who could be a friend or family member).

Some children with a disability may experience barriers disclosing an incident. For example, children with hearing or cognitive impairments may need support to help them explain the incident, including through sign language interpreters. Advice on [communicating with people with a disability](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/people-with-a-disability-in-the-community/communicate-and-consult-with-people-with-a-disability/communication-with-people-with-disabilities) can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-business-and-community/community-involvement/people-with-a-disability-in-the-community/communicate-and-consult-with-people-with-a-disability/communication-with-people-with-disabilities>.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Legal responsibilities

While the child safe standards focus on organisations, every adult who reasonably believes that a child has been abused, whether in their organisation or not, has an obligation to report that belief to authorities.

The **failure to disclose** criminal offence requires all adults (aged 18 and over) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 to disclose that information to police (unless they have a reasonable excuse not to, for example because they fear for their safety or the safety of another).

While failure to disclose only covers child sexual abuse, all adults should report other

forms of child abuse to authorities. Failure to disclose does not change mandatory reporting responsibilities.

Teachers and members of the principal class, as mandatory reporters must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

Child Abuse Incident Report

This form can be provided to a child or their family if they disclose an allegation of abuse or safety concern in your organisation. School staff can also use this resource to record disclosures.

Note: This incident report must be stored securely.

• Incident details

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

No Yes, Aboriginal Yes, Torres Strait Islander

Please categorise the incident

Physical violence

Sexual offence

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious neglect

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Please describe the incident

When did it take place?	
Who was involved?	

What did you see?	
Other information	

Parent/carer/child use

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

Office use:

Date incident report received:	
Staff member managing incident:	
Follow-up date:	
Incident ref. number:	

Has the incident been reported?

Child protection	
Police	
Another third party (please specify):	

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Yes No

Standard 6 – Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

Strategies implemented to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse at Buninyong Primary School

Buninyong Primary School is committed to embedding a child safe culture by implementing the following strategies.

School Council		
Strategy	Action	Responsibility
School Council communicates that it has zero tolerance of child abuse.	Statement of commitment to appear on the school website.	Principal & School Council President
	Statement made at the beginning of each year in the school newsletter.	Principal & School Council President
Child safety is a standing item for discussion at meetings of the school Council.	Child safety to be a standing agenda item on at least 4 occasions in a given year.	Principal & School Council President
Child safety strategies are developed and enhanced through ongoing review of the effectiveness of practice.	This statement to be reviewed every second year by School Council.	Principal & Child Protection Officers
An appropriate reporting process is in place for child abuse that includes overseeing outcomes.	Reporting process to be reviewed by School Council along with the complete Child Safe Program every second year.	Principal & Child Protection Officers
School Council oversees the implementation and improvement of child safety strategies.	Achieved through actions listed above.	All members of School Council
School Council communicates with the school community about the school's child safety strategies and their implementation.	Statement of commitment to child safety appears on the school website.	Principal & School Council President
	Statement made at the beginning of each year in the school newsletter.	Principal & School Council President
The school reports on child safety in its annual report.	Mention of child safety made in the 'wellbeing section' of the Annual Report.	Principal

School staff (includes contractors and volunteers)		
Strategy	Action	Responsibility
Ensuring awareness of the child safety strategies in place at our school and the allocated roles and responsibilities assigned to staff.	<p>Induction in child safety for all staff (including contractors & volunteers)</p> <p>Student Wellbeing Team to agenda student safety at least once each term.</p> <p>Leadership Team to agenda child safety as a standing item at each meeting.</p> <p>Child safety is a standing item for discussion at whole staff meetings at least once each term. In a calendar year this will include training with regards to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicating our whole school approach to child safety and the responsibilities of all staff in acting accordingly • detecting inappropriate behaviour • encouragement to report and the process for reporting inappropriate behaviour 	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing
Pre-employment reference checks that include checking for child safety through:	<p>Pre-employment checks to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • checking of identification for staff as part of recruitment • criminal history checks and confirming currency of Working with Children Check/Victorian Institute of Teaching registration • obtaining verified academic transcripts for staff as part of recruitment • query gaps in employment history • reference checks with previous employers and other relevant contacts 	Principal
Foster a culture of openness with approachable and supportive managers.	Leadership to always role model a willingness to listen and respond appropriately to all situations without favour or bias.	All principal class officers

Children		
Strategy	Action	Responsibility
Children are made aware of how to detect and report inappropriate behaviour. Children are encouraged to report inappropriate behaviour.	A protective behaviours program (or equivalent) is to be delivered across the school each year. The program will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • helping children identify situations that 'don't feel right' • informing children as to how they can report inappropriate behaviour • encouragement for children to report inappropriate behaviour 	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing
The school has nominated contact persons that children can approach in relation to child safety.	Four nominated Child Protection Officers are to be in place at any given time.	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing
The school has child safety reporting procedures.	Guidelines outlining child safety reporting procedures are developed and shared with staff and parents (as part of the Child Safe Program). This document to appear on the school website.	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing
The school provides counselling and other resources to support children.	Considered response is implemented in all cases where child safety concerns have been raised, including counselling for effected students.	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing

Environment		
Strategy	Action	Responsibility
The school has child safety strategies in place for all physical school environments.	<p>The school implements a Child Safe Program that includes strategies for managing physical environments. This will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ regularly reviewing the physical environment to ensure all risks are identified and managed ○ assessing new or changed physical environments for child safety risks ○ supervising or monitoring activities 	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing
The school has child safety strategies for its online environments (eg intranets, online learning systems, social media)	<p>The school implements a range of initiatives to guide the use online learning environments and keeping students safe when online. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ an ICT Acceptable Use Policy ○ an Internet & Network Usage Policy ○ the annual delivery of an eSmart program to students P-6 ○ clear boundaries of roles between staff and children ○ proactive strategies to detect inappropriate behaviour such as online searches (Google, Facebook etc). 	Principal, Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing and IT Leader
Visitors are appropriately screened and supervised.	<p>Strategies the school implements to minimise the risk to students from visitors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● visitors are asked to sign in at the general office ● there are a minimum of 5 yard duty teachers outside at break times and monitoring our boundaries is an important part of their role ● during class time, students are 	Principal and Assistant Principal in charge of student wellbeing

	<p>not permitted to move around the yard alone</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• when going to the toilet during class time, at least 2 of the same gender must go together	
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Standard 7 – Strategies to Promote Child Empowerment and Participation

Buninyong Primary School is committed to ensuring that children feel safe to report abuse and has processes in place to ensure that students are empowered to raise any child safety concerns. We are also committed to supporting students to develop appropriate knowledge and skills so that children can identify and communicate when they don't feel safe.

This is achieved in the through implementing the following strategies:

1. Delivering appropriate education about:
 - Standards of behaviour for students attending our school
 - Healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality)
 - Resilience
 - Child abuse awareness and prevention

2. School Council promoting the child safe standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand and user friendly to children.

Detail regarding strategies for each follows:

Delivering appropriate education about standards of behaviour for students attending our school

Buninyong PS has a Student Code of Conduct based on the school values, those being respect, honesty, optimism, compassion and commitment. This document is written in student friendly language with matching images. A copy of this document appears at the end of this section. The Student Code of Conduct is sent home with every child at the beginning of the school year with a space for the student and a parent to sign to indicate they have read through and discussed the document. The Student Code of Conduct and our school values are used on a regular basis to guide discussions with students regarding expectations.

Buninyong PS also has a Student Engagement policy which details:

- Strategies implemented to promote positive behaviours
- The rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community
- Expectations of students
- The approach taken to bullying
- How we respond when students have made poor decisions

This policy is to be reviewed annually and included on the school website.

Delivering appropriate education about:

- healthy and respectful relationships
- resilience
- Child abuse awareness and prevention

At Buninyong P.S we use our B+ Program to deliver education to our students, their families and the wider community. The B+ Program was developed using a variety of resources such as Positive Education, Growth Mindset, The Resilience Project, Flourish and Holding Hands. The Program addresses information on resilience, respectful relationships and Child Abuse awareness and prevention and involves fortnightly themes, weekly explicit lessons and family group activities delivered to students by their family group teacher. Each week our themes are communicated via our school newsletter to the Buninyong Community. The B+ Themes we deliver each year are listed below:

Respect	Empathy
Playing by the rules, Listening	Emotional Intelligence
Personal Best	Character Strengths
Optimism	Acceptance
Perseverance	Everyone has the right to feel safe
Manners	Body Awareness
	Protective Behaviours

Programs that we use to complement student learning beyond our B+ Program include:

- **Life Education** – The Life Education van is an annual aspect of our student’s education, focussing on all factors affecting their life and the life of others.
- **Health and Human Relations** – Our Grade 5-6 students are educated annually about Health and Human Relationships. There are aspects of understanding human anatomy, puberty and respectful relationships.
- **Cyber Safety** – Our ICT leader co-ordinates annual presentations with regard to online safety. We have an Internet and Network Usage Policy to support this, a copy of which can be found on our website.

Information relating to the Buninyong Primary School B+ Program can be found on our website.

Students with a Disability

The school has an obligation to students with a disability to both ensure that they are afforded the same level of educational and wellbeing care as any other student at the school, and consider how each policy and procedure the school establishes and implements may affect students with a disability.

Buninyong is committed to ensuring that we fulfil our legal obligations including those related to discrimination and disability standards.

The school recognises that students with a disability will not only require additional assistance to participate and engage in School activities in a safe and supportive manner, but also that there are specific child protection risks that arise in relation to students with a disability. This may include for example, stricter screening procedures and training for staff who assist students who require help with personal activities such as toileting or dressing.

Students with a disability at the school may also require varied reporting avenues or systems to students without a disability and the School has considered this when creating and implementing its Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse.

Cultural Diversity Policy

Children from culturally diverse backgrounds are children who identify as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis. They include children of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent that identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

Buninyong values and respects the racial and cultural diversity of our students and is committed to ensuring that the backgrounds of all students are sensitively recognised, catered for, celebrated and valued so that racial and cultural differences do not compromise a student's safety and wellbeing.

It is our policy that:

- we identify children from culturally diverse backgrounds when they are enrolled in the school
- we employ appropriate strategies to ensure the safety of these children as required
- we encourage participation and empowerment of these children in the development of these strategies as appropriate
- we consider these children when developing and implementing policies and procedures related to child protection at the school
- we educate our staff about these cultural differences and the strategies and procedures we have employed as required