



# PROVIDING A CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT

## RATIONALE:

The Child Safe Environments policy: sets out the school’s approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the school’s approach to the Child Safe Standards.

## SCOPE

All staff, volunteers and contractors, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people. across a range of school forums (e.g. camps, online) and outside of school hours.

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT & PRINCIPLES

Meeniy Primary School is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Our school 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.

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

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

In its planning, decision-making and operations Meeniy 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 paramount;
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.

## POLICY AND PROCEDURES

A child-safe culture	<p><i>The school’s culture encourages staff to raise, discuss and scrutinise concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.</i></p> <p><i>The school’s Child Safe policy and procedures can be found in the staff googledrive</i></p>
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	<i>folder (1.TVPS Staff folder\ADMIN-STAFF REFERENCE\1. TVPS APPROVED POLICIES\ACTIVE STUDENT WELLBEING\CHILD SAFE)</i>
Personnel understand their roles and responsibilities/ Code of conduct	<i>School leaders and managers will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school's Code of Conduct, follow procedures applicable to their role and clearly know what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.</i>
Human resources practices and training	<i>The school's practices and training applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. We will ensure that staff induction, education and training programs are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect. All prospective staff and volunteers are required to undergo a National Criminal History Records check and maintain a valid Working with Children Check</i>
Reporting a child safety concern or complaint	<i>The school has clear expectations for staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. Immediate action should include reporting their concerns to the DHHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The school will take action to respond to a complaint. The school's policy and procedures for reporting a child safety concern or complaint can be found in the staff googledrive folder (1.TVPS Staff folder\ADMIN-STAFF REFERENCE\1. TVPS APPROVED POLICIES\ACTIVE STUDENT WELLBEING\CHILD SAFE)</i>
Risk reduction and management	<i>The school believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes. The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures. The school's approach to Child Safety risk reduction and management can be found in the staff googledrive folder (1.TVPS Staff folder\ADMIN-STAFF REFERENCE\1. TVPS APPROVED POLICIES\ACTIVE STUDENT WELLBEING\CHILD SAFE)</i>
Listening to children	<i>The school has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities. When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with, or abuse of, a child the school will listen to the complainant's account of things and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (or their parents/carers) informed about progress.</i>
Confidentiality and Privacy	<i>This school collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the School Privacy Policy."</i>