



South Gippsland Specialist School

Child Safety Officer POLICY

Rationale:

A school leader for child safety should have sufficient status and authority, including leadership support and the ability to direct other staff, to undertake the role effectively.

Broad areas of the role are to:

Provide authoritative advice:

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.
- Liaise with school council and school leaders to maintain the visibility of child safety.
- Lead the development of the school's child safety culture, including being a child safety champion and providing coordination in communicating, implementing, monitoring, enhancing and reporting on strategies to embed a culture of child safety.
- Ensure that staff employed at South Gippsland Specialist School are suitable for engaging in work with children. (referee checks, checking for current VIT and/or WWCC)

Raise awareness:

- Ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately.
- Ensure the school's child safety policy is reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Be alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Encourage among all staff a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures to protect them.
- Enable students to feel safe and confident to approach staff by ensuring the cultural safety of vulnerable populations within the school.

Train:

Being authoritative in providing advice by:

- Keeping their skills up to date with appropriate training carried out every two years
- Having a working knowledge of how the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Community Service Organisations conduct a child protection case conference to be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.

- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child safety policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest DHHS and DET policies and guidance.
- Keeping accurate records of staff who have completed the required online learning modules, and scheduling reminders to ensure staff training is kept up to date.

Implementation:

At South Gippsland Specialist School the Child Safety Officer will be the Principal. The Child Safety Officer will undertake the role for a period of 2 years and will be reviewed bi-annually at the beginning of each school year. The Student Welfare Officer or Officer in Charge will fill the Safety Officer's role if the Principal is unable to.

Evaluation:

This policy was reviewed in October 2019 will be reviewed annually or in the event of an incident