



Little Yarra
STEINER SCHOOL

Student Care: Child Safety Policy

(March 2019)

All members of a community have a moral obligation to protect any child under their care and supervision from foreseeable harm. The Little Yarra Steiner School is committed to the development of policies, procedures, measures and practices in accordance with Ministerial Order No. 870 Child Safe Standards. We practise zero tolerance of Child Abuse. The Little Yarra Steiner School is a Child Safe School.

Governance arrangements are underpinned by a firm commitment from the Board of Directors, Management, College of Teachers and Faculty to our school values and standards. This is the foundation upon which we have built a culture of Child Safety.

We have strategies in place that seek to prevent harm and neglect (including physical, sexual, emotional, neglect, racial and cultural or religious abuse), which all contribute to a Child Safe Culture. Child Safety is part of the everyday thinking and practice of all within our school community. We maintain the momentum of our child safe culture by monitoring performance.

Child Safety is prominent in Board of Directors, Management, College of Teachers and Faculty meetings.

We recognise the diverse needs of children in the school. The Little Yarra Steiner School practises inclusivity. It is a culturally safe place for all children and parents.

Key people have the appropriate skills and capacity to undertake child safety roles and responsibilities. This includes teachers and school management and also extends to student support staff, student counsellors and business managers of contracted service providers who work with or near school children.

Roles and Responsibilities for achieving the strategies

School-based roles and responsibilities for child safety are known and understood across the school community. Students, school staff, and members of the school community know who to contact if they have a concern about child safety in the

school. Training is provided for all staff, with updates as required. Ongoing induction and training is available for all staff and volunteers in child safety including how to recognise and respond to child abuse. The Child Safe Officer is the Education Administrator, appointed by the Board of Directors.

Informing the Community regarding roles and responsibilities

Child Safety is a core part of the school's public and internal communication.

Our communication about our child safety strategies:

- Identifies key roles
- Covers the roles of all people in the school community
- Covers the range of school environments (eg on site, off site, online)
- Uses a mix of communication tools (verbal, online, print)

Standard 1 - Strategies to embed an organizational culture of Child Safety

Members of the school community (teachers, parents, students, visitors, contractors, volunteers) feel empowered to discuss child safety and raise any concerns about child abuse. Effective governance arrangements are in place to authorise and agree on strategies. Child safety is embedded in the vision, mission and strategic direction of the school.

Informing the Community about our Child Safe practices

The Little Yarra Steiner School updates the school community about changed strategies or new strategies, mainly through our newsletter, but also through other communication channels as appropriate. We encourage parent feedback and consider suggestions. We provide ongoing opportunities for staff, students, parents and the school community to engage with child safety issues. eg class meetings, school gatherings, parent interviews etc

Periodic review of effectiveness of all strategies and adjustment as needed.

Periodic review (including schedules, roles and reporting) of Child Safety related policies and practices is initiated by the Board of Directors and Management. This leads to consultation with staff and the wider school community to inform strategic decisions about child safety. There is a full review after a potential risk or report occurs in the school. Outcomes of any reviews are communicated to parents. Records are kept in Board of Directors minutes.

Role of the Child Safe Officer

The Education Administrator holds the role of Child Safe Officer at the Little Yarra Steiner School. The role of the Child Safe Officer includes, but is not restricted to:

Provide authoritative advice

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.
- Liaise with the management group and staff 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.

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.

Train

Being authoritative in providing advice by:

- keeping their skills up to date
- having a working knowledge of how the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Community Service Organisations operate.

Standard 2 - The Little Yarra Steiner School's commitment to Child Safety

The Little Yarra Steiner 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.

The Little Yarra Steiner School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

The Little Yarra Steiner 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.

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 The Little Yarra Steiner School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play 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.

In its planning, decision-making and operations The Little Yarra Steiner School will

- Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
- Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
- Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
- Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
- Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
- Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development

- 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

Sustaining and improving our commitment to Child Safety

- Our policies relating to Child Safety are incorporated in ongoing staff, volunteer and contractor induction processes. We maintain records of this process.
- We provide opportunities for professional learning and training of staff to build deeper understanding of child safety and prevention of abuse.
- We use the Statement of Commitment and related policies to shape school procedures and practice and to inform other child safe related policies in the school
- We ensure regular and consistent communication that models the values and principles articulated in this and other policies relating to Child Safety
- We review and update this policy in response to emerging thinking, evidence and practice about the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Standard 3. Our Child Safety Code of Conduct

Foundations for our Code of Conduct

The Little Yarra Steiner School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Board of Directors, Management and staff of The Little Yarra Steiner School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Board of Directors, Management and staff of The Little Yarra Steiner School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school excursions, camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work, we are individually responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's child safe policy, child protection policy and any other related policies.
- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities.
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds

- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to The Little Yarra Steiner School's Child Safety Officer, the Education Administrator.
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work, we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances,

related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter

- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

Definitions and further information can be found in the Child Protection Policy.

Public Availability

This Code of Conduct is widely disseminated and visible within the school community (e.g. school website, newsletters, included in staff, volunteer and contractor induction processes).

Embedding the Code of Conduct

All school staff (employees, contractors and volunteers) and parents are informed about the Code of Conduct and its implications on an ongoing basis.

- All school staff (employees, contractors and volunteers) are aware of the Code of Conduct and how it applies
- inclusion of the Code of Conduct as part of the induction for new school staff
- inclusion of the Code of Conduct as part of annual training for existing leadership members, employees, contractors and volunteers
- discussion of the Code of Conduct at Board of Directors, Management, College of Teachers and Faculty meetings.
- informing parent/ carers and other persons associated with the school of the expected behaviour for the school's leadership, staff, contractors and volunteers
- including the Code of Conduct in recruitment processes for prospective employees.
- communication of the Code of Conduct to students in an age appropriate way.

Reviewing the Code of Conduct

The school may review its Child Safety Code of Conduct on an as needs basis. As a minimum the Code of Conduct should be reviewed every 3 years.

Standard 4. School staff selection/supervision/management practices for a child – safe environment

The Little Yarra Steiner School has in place strong human resource practices that promote a child safe school environment and reduce the risk of child abuse.

- All applicants for positions at the school are informed about the school’s child safety policies and practices (including the Code of Conduct).
- In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school makes every effort to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:
 - a) Working with Children Check status, or similar check;
 - b) proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
 - c) the person’s history of work involving children; and
 - d) references that address the person’s suitability for the job and working with children.
- The Little Yarra Steiner School ensures that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:
 - a) the induction of new school staff into the school’s policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child connected work; and
 - b) monitoring and assessing a job occupant’s continuing suitability for child connected work.
- The school has implemented practices that enable the Board of Directors to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

Standard 5. Procedures for responding to/reporting allegations of suspected child abuse.

The Little Yarra Steiner School has a set of procedures for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse in accordance with Ministerial Order 870 and other relevant legal obligations. These are described by the school’s Child Protection Policy.

Standard 6. Strategies to Identify and Reduce or Remove Risk of Child Abuse

The Little Yarra Steiner School has in place procedures to monitor and evaluate risk management strategies to ensure child safety in the school environment:

The Board of Directors and Management have developed and implemented risk management strategies regarding child safety in school environments.

The school's risk management strategies regarding child safety identify and mitigate the risk of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of each school environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.

The school Management maintains a culture of risk awareness in all school environments. Any identified risk is immediately noted and the risk removed or mitigated. Any staff member may act to remove the risk. This must be immediately reported to Management for follow up.

Different risk controls may be necessary for particular groups of children depending on the nature of the risk and the diversity of characteristics of children affected by the risk.

As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the Board of Directors and Management monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls regularly.

Appropriate guidance and training is provided to the individual members of the school governing authority and school staff annually regarding individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse, child abuse risks in the school environment and the school's current child safety standards.



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Risk Event	Existing Risk Management Strategies	Likelihood	Consequence	Current Risk Rating	Additional Risk Management Strategies	Responsibility	Target Risk Rating
Decline in leadership monitoring and staff awareness	Child Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, other related policies. Strategies to develop culture of child safety. Regular review of policies and procedures by Management and Board of Directors. Relevant PD available for staff.	Unlikely	Severe	Medium	Additional awareness brought to briefings, memo, faculty meetings, College of Teachers meetings. Encourage staff to access relevant PD.	Board of Directors, Education Administrator, Management	Low
Inappropriate behaviour not reported or addressed	Child Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, other related policies. Strategies to develop culture of child safety. Regular review of policies and procedures. Performance management if necessary. Relevant PD available for staff.	Possible	Severe	Medium	Additional awareness brought to briefings, memo, faculty meetings, College of Teachers meetings. Encourage staff to access relevant PD.	Board of Directors, Education Administrator, Management	Low
Unquestioning trust of long term employees, parents, contractors.	Child Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, other related policies. Strategies to develop culture of child safety. Regular review of policies and procedures.	Possible	Major	Medium	Additional awareness brought to briefings, memo, faculty meetings, College of Teachers meetings. Encourage staff to access relevant PD.	Board of Directors, Education Administrator, Management	Low

	Performance management if necessary. Relevant PD available for staff.						
Recruitment of inappropriate staff member	Child Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, other related policies. Strategies to develop culture of child safety. VIT registration, reference checks, probationary appraisal. Induction and mentoring processes.	Unlikely	Major	Medium	Management monitoring and awareness of new staff.	Board of Directors, Education Administrator, Management	Low
Staff engagement with children online	Child Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, other related policies. Strategies to develop culture of child safety. Regular review of policies and procedures. Performance management if necessary. Relevant PD available for staff.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Additional awareness brought to briefings, memo, faculty meetings, College of Teachers meetings. Encourage staff to access relevant PD.	Board of Directors, Education Administrator, Management	Low
Unknown people and environments for excursions and camps	Child Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, other related policies. Strategies to develop culture of child safety. Regular review of policies and procedures. Risk assessment and planning prior to event. High level of supervision.	Possible	Moderate	Medium	Develop more camps and excursions where there is limited or no contact with members of the public eg. In selection of campsites or overnight facilities.	Board of Directors, Education Administrator, Management	Low

Ad hoc contractors on premises	Child Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, other related policies. Strategies to develop culture of child safety. Regular review of policies and procedures for visitors, contractors, volunteers. Sign in and monitoring processes.	Unlikely	Moderate	Medium	Develop relationships with trusted and known contractors.	Board of Directors, Education Administrator, Management	Low
Staff member alone with student	Child Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy, other related policies. Strategies to develop culture of child safety. Regular review of policies and procedures. Performance management if necessary. Relevant PD available for staff.	Possible	Major	Medium	Additional awareness brought to briefings, memo, faculty meetings, College of Teachers meetings. Encourage staff to access relevant PD.	Board of Directors, Education Administrator, Management	Low



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Standard 7. Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation

The Little Yarra Steiner School provides appropriate education about:

- Standards of behaviour for students through
 - Code of Conduct
 - Student Care and Welfare processes
 - Child Safe Officer
 - Teachers and support staff
 - Visiting Psychologists and other presenters
- Healthy and Respectful relationships through
 - Student Wellbeing Officer
 - Teachers and support staff
 - Visiting Psychologists and other presenters
- Resilience through
 - Student Wellbeing Officer
 - Teachers and support staff
 - Visiting Psychologists and other presenters
- Child abuse awareness and prevention through
 - Child Safe Officer
 - Information regarding safe behaviours and who to speak to about concerns delivered age appropriately by class teachers, student support staff, wellbeing officer and visiting presenters.

