



#### Help for Non-English Speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Kalinda Primary School on (03) 9876 3289.

## CHILD SAFE AND WELLBEING POLICY

### PURPOSE

The Kalinda Primary School (Kalinda PS) Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our school's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This policy provides an overview of our school's approach to implementing [Ministerial Order 1359](#) (PDF, 363KB) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safe and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

### Scope

This policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school council members where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by for a student's use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safe and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

### Definitions

The following terms in this policy have [specific definitions](#):

- child
- child safe
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school boarding environment
- school staff
- school boarding premises staff
- school governing authority
- school boarding premises governing authority
- student
- volunteer.



## **POLICY**

Kalinda PS is a Child Safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

### **Statement of Commitment to Child Safe**

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safe concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safe needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safe is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safe and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safe.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

#### **The Kalinda PS leadership team**

Our school leadership team (the Principal and Assistant Principal) is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

Principals and Assistant Principals will:

- ensure effective child safe and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safe, cultural safe and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safe issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safe, cultural safe, student wellbeing and prevention of responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safe complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.



### **The Kalinda PS Staff and Volunteers**

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safe and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education and Training, and always follow the school's child safe and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our Child Safe Code of Conduct [insert link]
- identify and raise concerns about child safe issues in accordance with our Child Safe Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures found on the Kalinda PS webpage under the Policies tab, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

### **The Kalinda PS Council**

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, Kalinda PS council members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safe is a regular agenda item at school council meetings
- undertake annual training on child safe,
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with the 'Child Safe Code of Conduct' to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members
- when hiring school council employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe
- delegate employment duties to the Principal who is bound by this policy.

#### **Note:**

It is not necessary to discuss child safe at every Kalinda PS council meeting, but child safe should be discussed at some meetings to ensure that a culture of child safe is being embedded and school council members are informed and understand the issues.

The Kalinda PS council can use the Child Safe Standards School Council Training slide presentation available on [PROTECT](#).

### **Specific Child Safe Officer Responsibilities**

Kalinda PS has nominated a Child Safe Officer (the Assistant Principal) to support the Principal and to implement our child safe policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training.

Our Principal and Child Safe Officer are the first point of contact for child safe concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safe incidents.

The responsibilities of the Child Safe Officer are outlined at [Guidance for child safe champions](#).

In addition to these roles, our Child Safe Officer is also responsible for:

- monitoring the school's compliance with the Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our school community should approach the Child Safe Officer if they have any concerns about the school's compliance with the Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy.
- informing the school community about this policy, and making it publicly available
- other specific roles and responsibilities that are named in other child safe policies and procedures, including the Child Safe Code of Conduct, Child Safe Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and Child Safe Risk Register.

Kalinda PS has also established a **Child Safe and Wellbeing Team** and a **Student Reference Group** on child safety. The Child Safe and Wellbeing Team meet regularly to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safe

and wellbeing. The Student Reference Group provides an opportunity for students to provide input into school strategies.

Our **Risk Management Committee** monitors the Child Safe Risk Register.

### Team Membership

#### **Child Safe and Wellbeing Team Members**

- Assistant Principal
- Kalinda PS Counsellor
- First Aid Officer
- Learning Specialist Student Wellbeing and Engagement

#### **Student Reference Group Team Members**

- Kalinda PS Captains
- Principal

#### **Risk Management Committee**

- Assistant Principal
- Learning Specialist Student Wellbeing and Engagement
- Wellbeing PLT Leader
- Staff OHS Officer

### **Managing Risks to Child Safe and Wellbeing**

At Kalinda PS we identify, assess and manage risks to child safe and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our Child Safe and Wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safe Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. The Kalinda PS team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safe Risk Register at least annually.

### **Child Safe Code of Conduct**

Our Child Safe Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

At Kalinda PS we ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

The **Child Safe Code of Conduct** also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

### **Establishing a Culturally Safe Environment**

At Kalinda PS we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safe and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

Kalinda PS has developed the following strategies to promote cultural safe in our school community:

- an **Inclusion and Diversity Policy** to promote cultural safe



- an **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Plan** outlines the measures we have in place to maintain an inclusive and culturally safe school for Aboriginal children and students.

### **Student Empowerment**

To support child safe and wellbeing at Kalinda PS, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safe approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging by implementing our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships, our student Code of Conduct, our school philosophy and school values.

We inform students of their rights through our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns at links on our Policies webpage or at school reception.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

To ensure that students are empowered at Kalinda PS we will:

- inform students about all their rights, including their rights to safe, information and participation
- recognise the importance of friendships and encourage support from peers, to help students feel safe and be less isolated
- make sure staff and volunteers:
  - are attuned to **signs of harm**
  - facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns
- to develop a culture that encourages participation and responds to what students say
- give students opportunities to participate, and respond to their contributions to strengthen confidence and engagement
- offer students access to sexual abuse prevention programs and related information in an age-appropriate way. School boarding premises are required to offer sexual abuse prevention programs and related information where it is relevant to the setting or context
- develop curriculum planning documents or other documentation that details how the school will address these requirements.

### **Family Engagement**

Kalinda PS families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safe and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Kalinda PS we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safe and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safe policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this by:

- seeking input from families and the community through:
  - the parent portal

- school website
- newsletters
- other communications
- the school council
- subcommittees of school council
- student, staff, and parent meetings.
- making all of our child safe policies and procedures available for students and parents on the Kalinda PS webpage Policies Link or at the school reception
- newsletters or Compass feeds will inform families and the school community about any significant updates to our child safe policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safe.
- PROTECT Child Safe posters will be displayed across the school.

To ensure that Kalinda PS families have further opportunities to be informed we will:

- make sure families participate in child safe and wellbeing decisions which affect their child
- engage and openly communicate with families and the school community about its child safe approach
- make child safe information accessible
- involve families and the school community in developing and reviewing child safe and wellbeing policies and practices
- inform families and carers about the school's governance and approach to child safe and wellbeing, including roles and responsibilities of school staff.

### **Diversity and Equity**

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all. Kalinda PS has an **Inclusion and Diversity Policy**.

At Kalinda PS we recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safe strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international students
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

Our **Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy** and our **Inclusion and Diversity Policy** provides more information about the measures we have in place to support diversity and equity.

To further protect our students and young people Kalinda PS has:

- developed and endorsed policies and curriculum documentation that details the strategies and actions it will take to uphold diversity and equity, that:
  - makes sure Kalinda PS staff and volunteers understand the diverse circumstances of students, and how to provide support, and respond to vulnerable students
  - gives students, staff, volunteers and the school community access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand
  - developed a culture that pays particular attention to the needs of:
    - students with disability
    - students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
    - students who are unable to live at home
    - international students

- lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) students
- Aboriginal students and provides and promotes a culturally safe environment for them.

### Suitable Staff and Volunteers

At Kalinda PS, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

### Staff Recruitment

When recruiting staff, we follow the Department of Education and Training's recruitment policies and guidelines, available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at:

- [Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)
- [School Council Employment](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management.](#)

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record:
  - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
  - the person's history of working with children
  - references that address suitability for the job and working with children
  - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

### Staff Induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our **Child Safe and Wellbeing Induction Program**. The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- the Child Safe Code of Conduct
- the Child Safe Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures and
- any other child safe and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

### Ongoing Supervision and Management of Staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done by regular performance reviews.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school and Department policies and our legal obligations. **Child safe and wellbeing will be paramount.**

To ensure that Kalinda PS is proactive in supervision and management of staff, we will:

- make sure job advertisements have clear statements about:
  - the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safe and wellbeing
  - the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safe and wellbeing.
- advise job applicants about the child safe practices of Kalinda PS, including the Code of Conduct
- make volunteers aware of the school's Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct
- screen school staff applicants:

- sight, verify and record a Working with Children clearance if they person is required to have one or any equivalent background checks such as Victorian Institute of Teaching registration
- collect and record proof of identify, qualifications, history of working with children and references
- screen volunteers:
  - sight, verify and record a Working with Children clearance if the person is required to have one
  - undertake equivalent background checks
  - consider the child safe risks relevant to the volunteer's role and collect and record proof of identify, qualifications, history of working with children and references
- provide an induction to staff, volunteers and contractors engaged in child-related work, regarding child safe and wellbeing that is appropriate to the nature of the role
- ensure that induction addresses the school's:
  - the Child Safe Code of Conduct
  - the Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy
  - procedures for managing complaints and concerns related to child abuse
- make sure staff, governing body members, and volunteers engaged in child-connected work, are aware of their responsibilities for:
  - children and students
  - information sharing and reporting obligations
  - recordkeeping obligations
- provide supervision and people management of staff and volunteers that focuses on child safe and wellbeing.

### **Suitability of Volunteers**

All volunteers are required to comply with our Visitors and Volunteers Policy, which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safe and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

### **Child Safe Knowledge, Skills and Awareness**

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safe and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safe and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safe and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school's child safe and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completing the [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#) online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safe and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safe and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safe and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

Kalinda PS will provide the following training and professional development opportunities:

- Child Safe training to staff engaged in child-connected work every year. This training should include:



- the Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and the Child Safe Code of Conduct
  - the procedures for responding to complaints and concerns about child abuse
  - guidance on recognising indicators of child harm, including harm caused by other children and students
  - guidance on responding effectively to issues of child safe and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
  - guidance on how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
  - guidance on their information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
  - guidance on how to identify and mitigate child safe and wellbeing risks in the school environment without compromising a child or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
- training and information to volunteers engaged in child-connected work that is appropriate to their role that will equip them with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe.
  - further support to staff and volunteers to implement the Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and the Child Safe Code of Conduct where these policies apply to their role and responsibilities.

### School Council Training and Education

To ensure our school council is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safe and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safe and wellbeing risks in our school environment, the council is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safe and wellbeing risks in our school environment
- Kalinda PS Child Safe and Wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

### Complaints and Reporting Processes

Kalinda PS fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's **Complaint and Grievances Policy**. The **Complaints and Grievances Policy** can be found on the school website under the Policies tab.

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including school council employees and homestay providers) must follow our **Child Safe Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures** found on the school website under the Policies tab.

Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.

As soon as any immediate health and safe concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- the [Four Critical Actions](#) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Our **Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy** and **Bullying, Cyberbullying and Harassment Prevention Policy** found on the school website under the Policies tab cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

## COMMUNICATIONS

Kalinda PS is committed to communicating our child safe strategies to the school community through:

- ensuring that key child safe and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the **Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy** (this document), **Child Safe Code of Conduct**, and the **Child Safe Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy** and Procedure
- displaying PROTECT posters around the school
- updates in our school newsletter, Compass and the parent portal
- ensuring that child safe is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings.

### Privacy and Information Sharing

Kalinda PS collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to: [Schools' Privacy Policy](#).

### Records Management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safe and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the Department of Education and Training's policy: [Records Management – School Records](#)

### Review of Child Safe Practices

At Kalinda PS we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

To ensure review of Child Safe Policies and Procedures Kalinda PS will:

- review and improve our policy every 2 years or after any significant child safe incident
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community.
- review and evaluate the DET [Child Safe and Wellbeing policies](#), procedures and practices after any significant child safe incident to keep currency with DET policy and procedures
- analyse complaints, concerns and safe incidents to identify causes and systemic failures and to inform continuous improvement
- report on the outcomes of relevant reviews to staff, volunteers, the community, families and students.

### RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Bullying, Cyberbullying and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Child Safe Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Digital Learning Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Visitors and Volunteers Policy

### RELATED DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING POLICIES

- [Bullying Prevention and Response Policy](#)
- [Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management Policy](#)
- [Digital Learning in Schools Policy](#)
- [Family Violence Support](#)

- [Protecting Children: Reporting Obligations Policy](#)
- [Policy and Guidelines for Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Policy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Supervision of Students Policy](#)
- [Visitors in Schools Policy](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools Policy](#)
- [Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)

#### OTHER RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](#)

#### POLICY STATUS, REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The Kalinda PS Principal and Assistant Principal are responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years.

The review will include input from students, staff, parents/carers and the Kalinda PS Council.

Policy created	March 2023
Consultation	Student representative groups, Consultative Committee, Parent groups, Kalinda PS council
Approved by	Principal - Shaun McClare
Date Approved	31 March 2023
Next scheduled review date	March 2025