

LANDSBOROUGH PRIMARY SCHOOL

OHSC Child Protection Policy

Purpose:

The aim of this policy is to:

- Protect children from harm, protect their rights and promote their development.
- Build an understanding regarding the protocols in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect.
- Enable staff to recognise abuse or neglect and understand their professional responsibility.
- Enable an understanding of duty of care.

Rationale:

Landsborough Primary School advocates the national framework for protecting Australian Children (2009) and understands it is everyone's responsibility, parents, communities, governments and business to improve the safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children within our community.

Scope:

Registered staff have a significant role to play in protecting children from harm due to their daily contact with the children and their families, allowing the opportunity to observe when a child appears at risk.

Protocol/Procedure:

Registered staff have a duty of care to act immediately to protect and preserve the safety and wellbeing of children in their care.

Duty of care

Licensed Children Services staff have a duty of care to support and protect the children who they are professionally involved with.

When staff members form a reasonable belief that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, they are ethically bound to take action to protect the safety and wellbeing of that child.

Mandatory reporting

A number of professionals are prescribed as mandatory reporters under section 182 of CYFA. They are primary and secondary school teachers and principals, registered medical practitioners, nurses and police.

Although Landsborough Primary School staff are not mandated, Landsborough Primary School requires staff to inform the Principal of any concerns they may have about children. Landsborough Primary School staff are also aware of the 'Failure to Disclose' rules introduced in 2015 where adults who for a reasonable belief that a child a victim of sexual abuse or grooming are required by law to report that belief. Staff are required to form a brief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection after becoming aware that a child's health and/or safety is at risk and the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child.

There may be reasonable grounds for forming such beliefs if:

- A child states they have been physically or sexually abused
- A child states they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused
- Someone who knows the child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused
- A child shows signs of being physically or sexually abused
- A staff member is aware of family violence, parent substance misuse, psychiatric illness or intellectual disability that impacts on the child's safety, stability or development
- A staff member observes signs or indications of abuse
- A child's action or behaviour may place them at risk of significant harm and the parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child

All reports made are confidential.

Landsborough Primary School staff shall:

- Meet all legislative requirements regarding the protection of children.
- Educate and support families regarding safety, health and wellbeing of children.
- Educate families regarding Landsborough Primary School Child Protection policy.
- Educate staff regarding child protection reporting protocols.
- Assist staff in understanding the local community and significant cultures within the community in establishing culturally appropriate responses.

Landsborough Primary School staff shall:

- Observe and record any concerns about children in their care.
- Address concerns with the Principal and produce recorded information for discussion.

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Follow guidelines from Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People. A joint protocol for the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children Services and Victorian Schools 2010 assessment by the Coordinator whether observations recorded need to be referred to Child First referral or Child Protection.

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Landsborough Primary School staff shall:

- Gather all information and ensure all documentation is secure.
- Refer low to moderate impact of the child's safety to Child First who supports vulnerable families.
- Refer to the Department of Human Services Child Protection if the following is recorded:
 - The harm or risk of harm is present and is likely to have serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development.
 - The child's parents cannot or will not protect the child or young person from harm

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Related Policy

References/Legislation

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Children's Services Act 1996

- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- National Framework for Protecting Children 2009
- Children, Youth and Family Act 2005
- Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and Young People. A joint protocol for the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children Services and Victorian Schools 2010
- 'Failure to Protect' legislation

<http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/new-criminal-offences-to-improve-responses-to-child-sexual-abuse>

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Ratified:

For review 29/8/2019

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