

Wantirna South Primary School

Roles and Responsibilities of the Child Safety Officer/Leader

Aim: to provide direction and support to the Child Safety Officer to undertake the role effectively ensuring continued communication and awareness of child safety to the staff, parents and wider community at Wantirna South Primary School.

Implementation:

The broad areas of the role of the Child Safety Officer are to:

PROVIDE AUTHORITATIVE ADVICE

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

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 proactive 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 members are aware of training opportunities and the latest DHHS and DET policies and guidance.

PROMOTE GOOD PRACTICE TOWARDS CHILD SAFETY:

- Ensure members of the school community (teachers, parents, students, etc) feel empowered to discuss child safety and raise any concerns about child abuse.
- Ensure teachers and school leaders, support staff, student counsellors, and business managers of contracted service providers who work with or near school children have appropriate skills and capacity to undertake child safety roles and responsibilities.
 - Make sure students, school staff, and members of the school community know who to contact if they have a concern about child safety in the school. Make sure this information is kept up to date, and is accessible to all.
 - Build capability by:
 - making training available in relation to key responsibilities
 - including responsibilities in position descriptions or as part of staff development processes
 - providing ongoing induction and training for all staff and volunteers in child safety including how to recognise and respond to child abuse.
- Ensure child safety is a core part of the school's public and internal communication.
- Ensure school-based roles and responsibilities for child safety are known and understood across the school community.
- Keep the school community updated about the school's progress in putting strategies into practice, changing strategies or developing new strategies.
- Proactively planning the school's approach to review, including governance oversight.
- Consult with staff, and the wider school community to inform strategic decisions about child safety.

SUPPORT ORGANISATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE:

- [A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST](#)
- [Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people](#)
- [Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations](#) - elearning module
- State of Victoria (2010) *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people: A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian School.*