



# Noble Park English Language School

## CHILD SAFE STRATEGY DOCUMENT

V1.0 2023



# Noble Park English Language School

## Introduction

The protection of children and young persons is the responsibility of everyone who works at Noble Park English Language School (NPELS), including all staff, contractors, external agency workers, parents and volunteers. We all share responsibility for promoting the wellbeing and safety of children.

Noble Park English Language School has zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to acting in the best interest of children and keeping them safe at all times. NPELS and its School Council are committed to implementing the minimum child safe standards.

The eleven new Child Safe Standards (Standards) will replace Victoria's current seven standards and principles.

## Key changes include new requirements:

- to involve families and communities in organisations' efforts to keep children and young people safe
- for a greater focus on safety for Aboriginal children and young people
- to manage the risk of child abuse in online environments
- for greater clarity on the governance, systems and processes to keep children and young people safe.

Changes have been made to support greater national consistency, reflecting the National Principles for a Child Safe Organisation developed following the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

There will be some unique features in the new Standards. A new standard focuses on cultural safety for Aboriginal children and young people and was recommended by Justin Mohamed, Commissioner for Aboriginal Children and Young People, after undertaking an Aboriginal-led development process.

## New Child Safe Standards:

**Standard 1:** Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

**Standard 2:** Child Safety and Wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

**Standard 3:** Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

**Standard 4:** Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

**Standard 5:** Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

**Standard 6:** People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

**Standard 7:** Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.



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**Standard 8:** Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

**Standard 9:** Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

**Standard 10:** Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

**Standard 11:** Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

This Child Safe Strategy is a comprehensive and overarching document that provides an overview of the key elements of NPELS' approach to creating a child safe organisation and to embed child safe practices into our school culture. It is dynamic, multifaceted, and ongoing developmental process of learning, monitoring and reviewing. NPELS will incorporate annual review information, compliance with Standards, training, policy updates and mandatory reporting requirements in the School's annual report.

**Standard 1:** Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

- Begin events and meetings with a Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country as a standing agenda item.
- Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on school grounds.
- Display plaques and signs to Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners.
- Make students aware of the Aboriginal culture through classroom programs.
- Speak with respect and confidence about Aboriginal culture, knowledge systems and people.
- Build schoolwide knowledge of Aboriginal histories, cultures, perspectives, values, and attitudes.
- Invite Aboriginal groups to talk about their culture.
- Provide a prayer room for Muslim students when requested.
- The school acknowledges and celebrates different cultural events, e.g. Chinese New Year, the end of Ramadan etc.
- The school employs Multicultural Aides to be the bridge between the school and families.
- The school provides multilingual dictionaries and books.
- The school is inclusive of students' cultures and incorporates students' experiences from their countries in classroom programs.
- The school communicates with families by sending notices in different languages.
- Plurilingual strategies are employed in the classroom.
- A Harmony Day is celebrated every year.
- 'Welcome' posters in different languages are displayed.

**Actively address racism:**

- Express zero tolerance of racism in your statement of commitment to child safety included in your Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and other documents.



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- Address racism from students, staff, volunteers or visitors directly. Make sure racist speech or actions are always dealt with, and the culture of the school works to prevent incidents from occurring.
- Teachers discuss racism and work to address unconscious bias and racism in their classes.

## Guide and train staff and volunteers:

- Train staff and volunteers to understand the importance of Aboriginal culture to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal students. – CUST Training.

## Build knowledge of Aboriginal culture in school planning and curriculum:

- Find out about the Traditional Owners of the land/s where the school is situated at the Map of Indigenous Australia and learn about the importance of acknowledging Traditional Owners.
- Include Aboriginal history and culture in professional learning for staff and volunteers and in curriculum planning for students.
- Develop a resource bank of digital, hardcopy print and other artefacts that support the inclusion of Aboriginal content across the curriculum.

## Partner with Aboriginal communities:

- Visit an Aboriginal cultural learning centre, such as
  - Koorie Heritage Trust (Melbourne)
  - Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre (Melbourne)

## **Standard 2: Child Safety and Wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.**

### Establish expectations and promote child safety:

- Promote the school's child safety policies at assemblies, meetings, welcome packs and regular communications.
- Create child-friendly versions of the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct with student input and make these versions publicly available.
- Use the Child Safety and Wellbeing policy to promote the school's commitment to child safety.
- Display your commitment to child safety prominently at reception and around the school grounds. Also include the statement in enrolment packages.
- Communicate and demonstrate that mistreatment of students and racism is not tolerated in any way and that students who speak out are listened to and taken seriously.
- Promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings, parent group sessions, and school council meetings.

### Assign responsibility:

- The Wellbeing and leadership team to lead the school's child safety approach.
- The Wellbeing and OHS teams to review and update the Child Safety Risk Register annually.



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## Seek input:

- Ask students what matters to them, what makes them feel safe and whether the school's child safety strategies are meeting their needs, through focus groups and regular class discussions.
- Seek input from staff, volunteers, families and the school community. Ask what the school does well, and what can be improved.
- Consult with people external to the school who have additional expertise, such as mainstream schools and other external agencies.

## Oversee implementation:

- Assess if the school has all the policies it needs for effective practice and compliance.
- Review child safety practices and any emerging risks.
- Provide regular reports to the school council or governing authority on child safety improvements.
- Support students, families, staff and volunteers to safely disclose any child safety concerns or complaints. Report back to complainants about actions taken as a result
- Ensure visitors are appropriately supervised on site in line with the Visitors in Schools policy.

## Align governance and recordkeeping with best practices:

- Require that staff disclose any potential conflicts of interest and manage relationships and situations to reduce risks arising from conflict of interest.
- Control access to records of complaints to ensure only appropriate people see details.
- Ensure the school uses the relevant Public Record Office Victoria Retention and Disposal Authorities (RDA), including the RDA for Records of Organisational Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Incidents and Allegations to retain records for the correct period.

## **Standard 3: Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.**

### Inform students of their rights:

- Provide age appropriate and accessible information to students such as information about:
  - the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct.
  - the Charter of Commitment under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
  - the work of the Commission for Children and Young People
  - how the adults in the school should behave.
- Inform students of their rights and special protections including the right to:
  - live and grow up healthy
  - have a say about decisions affecting them
  - get information that is important to them
  - be safe and not harmed by anyone.
- When sharing information under the information sharing schemes:
  - work to build trust by being open and transparent about information sharing and keep the child and family informed each time their information is shared if it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so



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- seek and consider the views of the child (or the relevant family members) about sharing their confidential information if it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so
- Provide information through the curriculum via relevant subject areas to promote:
  - Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships
  - Safe Schools
  - Bully Stoppers
  - Vic SRC's Introduction to Student Voice
  - eSmart.

### Empower students to contribute to school life:

- Display visually engaging and easy-to-read posters promoting student voice and agency.
- Invite SRC and focus groups to provide feedback on school-wide decisions and take their views into account in school decision-making.
- Document student participation in activities that contribute to the life of the school.
- Involve students in consultation processes and inform them of their impact on decision-making.
- Demonstrate that the school takes students seriously by acting on their concerns, noting that what might seem unimportant to an adult may be important to a young person.
- Provide students who find it harder to speak up or be heard with multiple avenues for communicating, including writing, drawing, or physical forms of communication.

### Empower students to raise their concerns:

- Provide students with information about complaints processes.
- Give students a variety of ways to raise concerns. For example:
  - Encourage students to speak to Multicultural Aides in their first language regarding any concerns and opinions
  - display information about the adults who students can talk to if they have a concern.

### Strengthen peer support for safety and wellbeing:

- Display posters acknowledging sexuality and gender diversity and identify safe spaces where students can go if they need support.
- Use the Bully Stoppers survey tool to assess bullying in your school.
- Establish Student Action Teams to investigate issues of inclusion and exclusion.
- Discuss healthy boundaries for friendships. Point out that the risk of harm can occur in child-to-child interactions, as well as adult-to-child interactions.
- Use school transition programs to mainstream schools through the transition staff support .
- Provide buddying programs for new students transitioning to the school

### Establish protective factors:

- Teach students practical protective strategies, including:
  - what to do when they feel unsafe
  - phrases they can use to raise an objection
  - pathways for raising safety concerns, and
  - online safety behaviours.
- Provide contact information for independent child and youth advocacy services or helplines.



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- Provide a range of age-appropriate picture books, fiction and non-fiction that include:
  - children's rights
  - cultural and linguistic diversity
  - people with disability
  - diversity in sexual orientation and gender.
- Support all students to identify trusted adults and friends they can talk to about a concern at school, at home or in the community.
- Deliver age-appropriate curriculum content about respectful relationships, sexuality, consent and sexual abuse prevention through the Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships teaching and learning materials as part of implementing the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships.
- Use the School's Mental Health Menu to support students in your school.
- Empower students with the knowledge that adults are accountable and that students have a right to safety.

## Communicate in a respectful and age-appropriate way

- Educate staff to uphold Aboriginal cultural safety and be respectful of identity and culture.
- Train staff and volunteers to facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.
- Educate staff and volunteers about children's rights, including the 4 guiding principles in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## Use sensitivity and build trust

- Provide training to staff and volunteers to be attuned to signs of harm and risk factors in students.
- Remind staff and volunteers to recognise that students might communicate in different ways, including through verbal and non-verbal cues, play, body language, facial expressions, drawings or behaviours.
- Follow through on your commitments – show students that the leadership team and staff are trustworthy and take their worries or concerns seriously.

## **Standard 4: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing**

### Create a welcoming environment

- Enrolment Officers provide induction materials and school transition packs.
- Provide new enrolments with family welcome packs that include information about child safety, the school's complaints processes and how to raise concerns.
- Create a welcoming environment at school reception so community members and families feel respected, included and safe to come onto school grounds.
- Invite parents to celebrate international days, special events and assemblies.
- Conduct a regular parent program.



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## Engage families and communities in building a child safe organisation

- Ask parents and carers about their children. This can be in formal settings like parent/teacher interviews, or during chance meetings at pick-up and drop-off.
- Provide parents and carers with information about children's rights via parent information sessions.
- Regularly engage with parents, carers and students and discuss the needs of students through parent/teacher interviews.
- Have processes in place to manage disclosures if they arise.

## Provide regular opportunities to communicate

- Provide opportunities for parents and carers to engage with staff to discuss their children's experiences at school. It can be done through phone calls and parent meetings.
- Organise interpreters and translations to engage families from non-English speaking backgrounds in conversations about the school's child safety strategies.
- Ask families and carers about their preferred methods of communication, including email, social media, meetings and workshops and use their responses to inform your communications approach.
- Incorporate child safety questions in parent and carer surveys to measure awareness and confidence in the school's child safety approach and to support ongoing improvement.
- Remind the school community about the shared roles of parents, carers and school staff in creating a positive environment for learning by promoting the Respectful Behaviours in the School Community Policy.
- Consider hosting community workshops on child safety and wellbeing topics, for example, respectful relationships or online safety. Provide families with take-home information to help them to talk to their children about safety and wellbeing at home.
- Communicate with and appropriately involve families at all stages of the process if a concern is raised or complaint is made.

## Reflect the diversity of the school community

- Make newsletters and communications inclusive. Normalise a diversity of family profiles and reflect the characteristics of your school community.
- Select meeting venues that are physically accessible, welcoming and culturally safe.
- Encourage volunteer positions from families from diverse backgrounds, including people with a disability, Aboriginal people, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

## Provide inclusive and accessible information

- Display the PROTECT poster (PDF, 203KB) in shared areas that are accessible to parents and the community.
- Make sure child safety information is easy to read
- Check that the students, school staff, and members of the school community know who to contact if they have a concern about child safety. Keep this information up to date and accessible, and review it regularly.
- Translate child safety information into multiple languages to reflect your school community.





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## Build family and community involvement in child safety into business as usual

- Make child safety a standing item at school governing authority meetings.
- Report on the outcomes of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and students to show transparency and accountability.
- Promote the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships and Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships education to families.
- Acknowledge the important role that families and communities play in monitoring children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to disclose concerns.
- Communicate with and appropriately involve families at all stages of the process if a concern or complaint is raised.

## Standard 5: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

### Recognise the diverse backgrounds, needs and circumstances of students:

- Recognise the range of diverse student and family attributes. Pay attention to:
  - the needs of students with disability and responses to disability
  - the needs of students from diverse religious and cultural communities
  - the needs of very young students and children
  - the impact of prior trauma
  - gender differences
  - the experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) students
  - challenges for students who are in foster care, out of home care, living away from home or international students
  - students experiencing pregnancy or who are young parents
  - socio-economic factors (experiencing family homelessness, insecure employment or accommodation, individual or family contact with the justice system, poverty, addiction, low educational attainment, remote or regional isolation).
- Pay attention to diverse student cohorts and individuals in your community, recognising that they may have higher risk of harm.
- Use contemporary, culturally sensitive and inclusive examples when discussing families, relationships or professions and vocations.

### Identify and address challenges that students experience due to their diverse attributes:

- Communicate that discrimination and bullying are not tolerated – if incidents of bullying or discrimination occur, address the incident in line with school policy.
- Let students know they can raise concerns or report incidents that occurred at school and outside the school.
- Check in with vulnerable students and their families to confirm their needs are being met. This can occur at pick-up or drop-off, at parent teacher interviews or through informal discussions.
- Engage genuinely with students. Find out what matters to them, what they know and don't know about safety, and what they need to be safe and feel safe.
- Validate students' feelings. Students may feel that they have not been listened to or believed in the past.
- Offer buddying and mentoring for students who are at risk of social isolation.



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- Discuss how students feel about discussing their personal circumstances and respect their wishes. Note that where staff or volunteers have formed a reasonable belief that sharing information is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to an individual's life, health, safety or welfare, they may be required to share information despite the wishes of the student that their information remain confidential.
- Take a holistic approach when responding to family violence.
- Respond to family violence in a way that is accessible, culturally responsive, safe, child-centred, inclusive and non-discriminatory.

### Put in place policies and strategies to help meet the diverse needs of students:

- Ensure school environments are welcoming and inclusive. For example:
  - display flags representing different cultures
  - provide materials in different languages
  - decorate the school with artistic expressions from students and young people.
- Provide child safety information in accessible, child-friendly language and formats.
- Accompany child safety information with the support materials needed to help students and families interpret it.
- Anticipate the needs of students from diverse backgrounds and life circumstances. Don't expect all students to be equally empowered to ask for what they need.
- Provide staff and volunteers with training to identify and address racism, bullying and discrimination.
- Create opportunities to remind staff and volunteers about student diversity and accommodating students and young people's needs.
- Seek out expert advice as needed to support inclusion, such as an occupational therapist, speech pathologist, provision planning.

### Support diversity through school planning and resources:

- Recognise dates that connect with your school community, for example:
  - Cultural Diversity Week (March)
  - National Reconciliation Week (27 May–3 June)
- Compile a range of age-appropriate instructional materials for exploring differences and similarities in class and across the whole school community including:
  - Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships resources
  - Books, and resources that reflect diverse views and perspectives
  - Speech and drama scripts that explore themes around diversity.
- Use images of students with diverse characteristics in school publications to reflect the school community.

### Standard 6: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

#### Robust recruitment and screening:

##### *Advertising*

- Ensure recruitment advertisements for staff in child connected work contain:
  - the job's requirements, including expected knowledge of child development appropriate to the role



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- an outline of duties and responsibilities regarding child safety and wellbeing
  - essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety and wellbeing.
- Provide all job applicants with the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct and links to child safety resources.

### *Screening*

- Include selection criteria relevant to the role, such as:
  - experience working with children, or particular groups of children, including children with a disability
  - engaging with families
  - child safety experience
  - cultural safety in their work.
- Screen all staff, volunteers, leaders and school governing board members for their suitability during recruitment.

### *Interviews*

- Think carefully about who will be on the interview panel and ensure panel members have the right skills, experience and information to perform their role.
- Develop questions about child safety in job interviews.
- Seek referees for both staff and volunteers as appropriate, including their last employer, and overseas referees if they've worked overseas.
- Ask referees about the person's character and experience in working directly with children and young people.

### *Supervision and people management focused on child safety and wellbeing:*

- Undertake a risk assessment (refer to Standard 9) to determine what level of ongoing supervision and management is necessary to ensure staff and volunteers perform their role in a way that promotes child safety and wellbeing.
- Give people managers guidance on steps to take when managing a staff member whose behaviour raises child safety concerns, and when to escalate concerns about staff behaviour.
- Communicate regularly with staff and volunteers about the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct in supervision meetings, at staff meetings, in newsletters and staff updates.
- Provide refresher child safe training for staff and volunteers.
- Include child safety and wellbeing as a regular agenda item for staff meetings at all levels of the organisation.
- Staff undertake Mandatory Reporting PD annually.

### *Training and support to uphold child safety:*

- Include Child safety in the induction program.
- Provide induction that covers:
  - the Child Safety Policy
  - the Child Safety Code of Conduct
  - how to contribute to identifying, removing or reducing risks



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- recordkeeping and information sharing requirements
  - school values and philosophy
  - procedures for managing complaints
  - privacy and reporting protocols.
- Train all staff and volunteers as appropriate to their roles, on topics such as:
  - child safety (including family violence)
  - mandatory reporting
  - responding to student sexual offending
  - human rights and the rights of children
  - diversity and inclusion
  - harassment and bullying
  - cultural safety
  - privacy and information sharing.
- Cover important topics in your child safety training, including:
  - risk factors and signs of harm, including intentional and unintentional harm, physical or emotional harm, bullying or cyberbullying, abuse and neglect
  - how to identify and respond to child safety risks, especially for vulnerable students
  - how to facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision making and raise concerns
  - how to engage with families to support student's safety and wellbeing
  - how to appropriately handle or share sensitive information relating to a child's wellbeing health or safety.
- Deliver regular child safety briefings for all staff, for example through staff meetings and Compass posts.
- Inform staff and volunteers, as appropriate, of their responsibilities under the information sharing and family violence reforms.

### Make child safety a key part of recruitment processes:

- Provide role descriptions for staff and volunteers to clearly outline their duties and responsibilities regarding supervision, child safety and wellbeing, and diversity and inclusion. This may involve revising existing role descriptions.
- Make sure all staff, particularly those with mandatory reporting responsibilities, are aware of the up-to-date processes for making a report.
- Provide child safety champion/s with information to support their function relating to child safety, family violence and information sharing.
- Put a process in place to check staff and volunteers' working with children clearance status or equivalent background check on at least an annual basis.
- Include child safety in ongoing staff support, supervision and performance management processes.
- Align complaints processes with best practice, including the PROTECT Four Critical Actions and Reportable Conduct requirements.
- Declare and manage any potential conflicts of interest, such as family or business relationships or close friendships.
- Provide clear avenues for staff to report concerns.
- Involve staff in after-action reviews when a child safety incident has occurred.

### **Standard 7: Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.**



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## Develop complaints processes to be child-centred and empowering:

- Encourage students to raise concerns with a trusted adult if anything makes them feel uncomfortable or unsafe.
- Facilitate student discussions about what would help them speak up when they have concerns.
- Ask students about their experiences making complaints and act on feedback from students in your policies and the complaints process.
- Make sure it is easy for students, families, staff and volunteers to access and understand the complaints process.
- The complaint's policy and the process will be placed on the school's website.
- Include information to students and their families about:
  - how to make a complaint
  - what to expect the school to do when responding to a complaint
  - how the school will support complainants.
- Support students to develop the skills to make complaints and raise concerns by implementing the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships and using teaching and learning materials like the Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships materials.
- Let students know that they can make a complaint about any kind of harm, perpetrated at school, outside school, by an adult or by other children, including bullying or cyberbullying and all forms of abuse.
- Advertise assistance and support services for students, families, staff and volunteers who wish to raise concerns, including the availability of translating and interpreting services.
- Receive complaints thoughtfully, taking care to validate students' experiences – what may seem small to an adult might not be to a child.
- Ensure complaint handling systems and processes are confidential, and that only authorised staff can access complaint records.
- Commit to making improvements following a complaint to address the source of the problem and follow through on the commitment.

## Be transparent and open about the steps in the complaints process:

- Name multiple people or positions that students and families can approach to raise concerns.
- Be transparent and open about the steps in the complaints process.
- Let students know that they can bring a support person of their choice to any interviews or meetings related to the complaint.
- Explain what happens next and check that complainants understand the proposed action.
- Ensure that students understand who will be told about their complaints.
- Report back to complainants to close the loop, where appropriate.
- Offer counselling or support services to complainants as appropriate.
- Refer to the National Office for Child Safety Complaint Handling Guide for processes.

## Be transparent and open about procedures for responding to child abuse:

- Set out actions when the complaint is about a staff member, volunteer, parent or another adult in line with the school's Complaints Policy, the PROTECT Four Critical Actions (PDF, 215KB) and Reportable Conduct obligations.



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- Set out approaches for responding to harm caused to children by other children, including children displaying potentially harmful sexual behaviours and sexual offending.
- Display the PROTECT Four Critical Actions (PDF, 215KB) poster in the staff room.
- Specify the steps that need to be taken to make sure the process is fair for all people involved in a complaint.
- Name the types of behaviour that must be reported to police, child protection authorities and other government agencies or regulatory bodies in line with PROTECT Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse.

### Support staff and volunteers to participate in building a child-focused environment:

- Outline the responsibilities school leaders have to act on complaints and concerns related to child safety and wellbeing, including the responsibilities of the wellbeing team and leadership. Staff should have:
  - a detailed understanding of the complaints process
  - investigative or interviewing skills, or authorisation to engage people with these skills
  - high levels of rapport and engagement with students
  - ability to respond to students with diverse needs
  - willingness to work with police and child protection authorities
  - information on support services for people affected by complaints.
- Train staff and volunteers to recognise the different ways students express concerns or distress, such as changing their behaviours or demeanour.
- Encourage staff to maintain an approachable, professional standard to help students feel confident and supported to raise issues at any time.
- Ensure staff and volunteers understand the complaints policy, the Four Critical Actions, failure to report and failure to protect offences, grooming, child abuse and family violence, mandatory reporting and their roles in the process.
- Empower all staff and volunteers to act on concerns about behaviour and report their concerns, complaints or breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct to school leadership or the regional office.
- Make sure that the school meets all recordkeeping, information sharing, privacy and employment law obligations.
- Encourage staff and volunteers to contribute to the development and review of complaints policies and processes.

### **Standard 8:** Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

#### Induct new staff and volunteers to child safety requirements:

- Nominate a child safety champion and support them to facilitate the induction and training programs for staff and volunteers.
- Provide an induction for new staff, volunteers and new school council members on child safety, appropriate to the person's role that covers:
  - the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
  - the Child Safety Code of Conduct



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- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (incl. mandatory Reporting) policy and procedures
- signs of harm and risk factors caused by peers or adults (including grooming and family violence) and the different ways young people express concerns or disclose harm
- building culturally safe environments
- privacy, information sharing and recordkeeping obligations

### Provide ongoing education and training:

- Deliver regular child safety briefings for all staff, for example through staff meetings. Require all staff with Mandatory Reporting obligations to refresh their Protecting Children – Reporting and Other Legal Obligations (Mandatory Reporting) training at least once a year.
- Inform staff and volunteers (as appropriate) of their responsibilities under the information sharing and family violence reforms. These reforms support staff to meet their child safety obligations by enabling them to:
- Maintain records of annual child safety programs including presentation materials, agenda, minutes and list of attendees.
- Identify staff to attend information sharing and family violence reforms training, available as online webinars or eLearning modules.
- Offer further training appropriate to staff and volunteers' level of involvement in the school community, on topics such as:
  - child safety (including family violence)
  - mandatory reporting
  - responding to student sexual offending
  - human rights and the rights of children
  - diversity and inclusion
  - harassment and bullying
  - cultural safety
  - privacy and information sharing.
- Offer a range of optional and compulsory education and training activities, including:
  - Staffroom briefings
  - Professional Learning Communities
  - Peer discussions, scenarios and worked examples
  - Presentations, seminars or webinars
  - Training days
  - E-learning modules, for example the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations modules.
- Remind staff regularly that they need to be alert for signs of harm and risk factors and aware of physical and online risks to child safety.
- Maintain a school register with up-to-date contact details for local support services for students and families.
- Consider staff needs when designing training, such as:
  - Cultural sensitivity for staff and volunteers who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
  - Inclusivity of gender diversity and sexuality
  - Accessibility for those with a disability, including individuals mobility, visual or hearing impaired



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## Plan to resource and prioritise child safety training:

- Develop and communicate your Child Safe Code of Conduct, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, and Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy.
- Include child safety improvement and training in school planning.
- Provide time-release for teachers, non-teaching and auxiliary staff to undertake child safety and related training.
- Direct staff to PROTECT for guidance on:
  - information to assist them to recognise indicators and risk factor of child harm, including harm caused by other children and young people
  - the processes to follow if a concern is raised.
- Keep a record of all staff and volunteers who complete child safety training to ensure all are appropriately trained and training is refreshed as required.

## **Standard 9: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.**

### Promote a culture of online and physical safety for all students:

- Supervise students properly in all settings, including the playground, excursions and camps.
- Give particular attention to the safety, diverse needs and vulnerabilities of students in each activity or setting. Consider whether there are any barriers that might prevent students from raising concerns.
- Inform students and their families about appropriate use of the school's technology, safety tools and how to seek help and report concerns including cyberbullying and online grooming.
- Keep up to date with current online safety issues and expert information from specialist government and non-government bodies including the Office of the e-Safety Commissioner, and eSmart Schools.

### Manage risk in physical spaces:

- Identify and document the school's child safety risks in the school's risk register or equivalent and ensure strategies are in place to manage those risks.
- Inform staff, volunteers and students where appropriate of identified risks and risk management strategies.
- Keep records of risk management activities, including risk assessments for camps and excursions.

### Supervise appropriately:

- Nominate ratios of staff and volunteers to students for different types of activities.
- Keep records of any court orders in place regarding access or intervention orders and communicate to staff who can collect students in these circumstances.
- Let students know how to raise concerns and where to go if they need help.
- Keep records of incidents that occur, including accidents and medical events.





# Noble Park English Language School

## Promote student safety online:

- Give students opportunities to learn, play, create, entertain, make new friends and stay connected.
- Inform students about online safety risks, including:
  - cyberbullying
  - invasion of privacy or digital surveillance
  - inappropriate sharing of images
  - offensive images and messages
  - age-inappropriate online content
  - impersonation/catfishing
  - grooming

## Promote acceptable behaviour by staff and volunteers:

- Outline acceptable use of personal devices for students.
- Use filtering software on school-based devices.
- Encourage parents to use parental controls on personal devices.
- Advise students on how they can seek help from a trusted adult if they are exposed to inappropriate imagery or content that upsets them.
- Monitor online activity and respond to breaches of the online policies and procedures with appropriate consequences.
- Uphold policies and report breaches in accordance with the school's complaints handling processes and Code of Conduct.
- Provide avenues for students, families, carers, communities and staff to report online issues or concerns.
- Protect student privacy by supporting students to limit the amount of information provided online.

## Consider procurement and third parties:

- Undertake child safety due diligence when engaging third parties. A new vendor presents new risks.
- Require vendors to provide evidence of compliance with the Child Safe Standards when establishing contracts to deliver services to students.
- Ask contractors to provide their Working with Children Clearance upon entry to the school.
- Provide contractors with a copy of the Child Safety Code of Conduct and Child Safety Policy.
- Nominate a staff member who is responsible for collecting child safety compliance information about third party providers.
- Keep records of due diligence processes.
- If a vendor is found to be non-compliant with the Child Safe Standards:
  - cease all activities with the vendor until the issue is resolved
  - if appropriate, inform the vendor of the non-compliance and provide an opportunity to rectify the problem, or
  - if the issue is serious, contact the relevant authorities.

**Standard 10: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.**



# Noble Park English Language School

## Create and update child-safe policies:

- Develop a register of existing child safe standard policies, noting the date the policy was approved, and schedule a review date every 2 years.
- When required, develop a work plan and establish a working group led by the child safety champion, to review and update policies and procedures.
- Monitor and manage child safety risks using a risk register.
- Determine the causes of child safety incidents and monitor for repeat issues or systemic failures.
- Use complaints and incidents as a learning opportunity to inform continuous improvement.
- Identify ways to involve staff, volunteers, students, families and community members in review processes. Refer to Child Safe Standard 4 for actions on how to engage families and communities.

## Implement current child safe policies and procedures:

- Keep records of documentation, such as board meeting papers and minutes, outlining recommendations on how child safe practices can be improved and implemented.
- Inform the school community of any child safety policy where relevant or applicable.

## **Standard 11: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.**

### Make policies and procedures easily accessible:

- Publish your child safety policies in an easily accessible, public-facing location, such as the school website.
- Integrate child safety into induction processes, ongoing education, training and supervision for all staff and volunteers.
- Provide copies of your child safety policies in welcome packs and transition resources.

### Ensure policies are easy to understand:

- Use plain language in written materials.
- Use visual representations to accompany discussions with students and their families, as needed to aid understanding.
- Display easy-to-read posters in various locations around the school.

### Nominate a child safety champion:

- Nominate one or more child safety champions to promote, monitor and report on the implementation of the school's child safety strategies
- Support the child safety champions by empowering them to investigate child safety issues and allocate time for child safety.

### Build a culture of ongoing monitoring and reviewing:

- Highlight child safety in recruitment processes.



## Noble Park English Language School

- Have child-focused complaints policies and procedures.
- Review recordkeeping of child safety complaints to make sure it captures all relevant information.
- Manage child safety risks relating to child abuse using the Child Safety Risk Register template.
- Consider using the Child Safety Risk Register to include other child safety risks, or use another register or format to record these risks

### Champion and model compliance with policies and procedures:

- Allocate regular time for a child safety agenda item for all-staff or faculty meetings.
- Schedule child safety briefings at information evenings and orientation days.
- Include a regular child safety item in parent information sessions and Compass posts to communicate to families.

### Use best-practice models and stakeholder consultation:

- Seek feedback on policies and procedures from the school community, staff, families, and students.
- Be aware of emerging legislation, research and resources in child safety and wellbeing and ensure that policies and procedures are informed by any new developments.

### Integrate child safety into policies, procedures and practices:

- Nominate child safety champions to support school leaders in effectively implementing and monitoring the child safe policies and practices.
- Document the school's policies, procedures and statements required across all 11 Child Safe Standards.
- Seek feedback from students, families, staff and volunteers on whether the policies and procedures are easy to understand. Make any relevant improvements.
- Produce child safety material in different formats. Use child-friendly and plain language and translated versions.
- Maintain high visibility of child safety and wellbeing. Discuss child safety at staff and parent meetings, and school assemblies. Display posters on child safety topics.
- Train staff and volunteers on school policies and their responsibilities. Create regular opportunities to discuss and reinforce understandings.
- Identify formal and informal ways to monitor policy implementation. Analyse whether current processes achieve the outcomes for each child's safe standard.
- Monitor how staff and volunteers contribute to child safety through supervision, discussions, staff meetings and surveys.

### 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](#)



# Noble Park English Language School

- [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](#)

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in staff handbook
- Discussed at annual staff briefings/meetings
- Included in enrolment packs
- Discussed at parent information sessions
- School Council

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2023
Approved by	School Council 24/3/2023
Next scheduled review date	March 2025