

# Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

## 1. Policy Statement

Port School is committed to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and our policy, procedures, values and culture foster child safety and wellbeing. The School is firmly committed to providing a child-safe environment, safeguarding all students and promoting practices that provide for the care, safety and protection of the students. Port School explicitly forbids any form of child abuse, corporal punishment, or other degrading punishment, as defined in this below.

This policy informs all members of the Port School community of their responsibility in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students. Further details contained in specific policies, procedures relating to activities which involve, result, or relate to contact with students, may be obtained from associated documents listed under point 6 of this policy (Associated Port School Policies and Documents).

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, governing body members, practicum students, regular volunteers and contractors, when undertaking school-related activities resulting in contact with students, both on and off the school grounds.

## 3. Definitions

### Child

A person who is under 18 years of age, as defined by the *Children and Community Services Act 2001 (WA)*.

### Child abuse

Physical abuse occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or a caregiver.

Sexual abuse occurs when a child is exposed to, or involved in, sexual activity that is inappropriate to the child's age and development level. This includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:

- The child is the subject of bribery, coercion, threat, violence or exploitation.
- The child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour.
- There is a significant disparity between the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

Emotional abuse includes:

- Psychological abuse.
- Being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.

Neglect is when children do not receive adequate food or shelter, medical treatment, supervision, care or nurturance to such an extent that their development is damaged, or they are injured. Neglect may be acute, episodic or chronic.

- Adequate care for the child.
- Effective medical, therapeutic or remedial treatment for the child.

### Corporal punishment

Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; it can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm.

### Cultural Safety

An environment which is spiritually, socially, emotionally and physically safe; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of one's identity, of who one is and what one needs.

## Degrading punishment

Any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.

## Mandatory Reporter

In Western Australia, the mandatory reporters of child sexual abuse are the following professions in both the government and non-government sectors:

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Midwives
- Teachers
- Boarding supervisors
- Police officers

## Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

The legislation requiring specific people or professions, to report concerns of child abuse to child protection agencies. In Western Australia, the legislation covering mandatory reporting of child sexual abuse is the *Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008*.

Mandatory Reporting means making a written report to the Department of Communities – Child Protection and Family Support (DC-CPFS) - if a belief of sexual abuse is formed, based on reasonable grounds, whilst a teacher is working in their role as a teacher, either in a paid or voluntary capacity. If a belief of sexual abuse is formed outside of working hours, when not working as a teacher, then there is no legal requirement to report. However, as a concerned citizen, a report could be made voluntarily.

## Wellbeing

A state of wellbeing is described by the World Health Organisation as “enabling people to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, form positive relationships with others and meaningfully contribute to the community”.

## 4. Responsibilities

The Port School Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring the Principles for Child Safe Organisations are adhered to and the rights of young people are upheld.
- Setting and reviewing the School’s mission, strategy and values which underpin its commitment to the providing a child-safe environment, safeguarding all students and promoting practices that provide for safety and wellbeing of students.
- Overseeing and endorsing policies under which the Principal manages the School.
- Ensuring an appropriate risk-management framework, program and mitigation strategies are in place.
- Ensuring the School observes all registration standards and complies with all legislative requirements.
- Undertaking professional training covering the Port School Code of Conduct and Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse, Child Protection and Grooming upon joining the Board.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring:

- The Principles for Child Safe Organisations are adhered to and the rights of young people are upheld.
- Port School provides a child-safe environment, safeguarding all students and promoting practices that provide for safety and wellbeing of students.
- School policies and procedures relating to child safety and wellbeing are child focused and culturally safe.
- School grounds and equipment are safe for student use.
- Staff have access to relevant school policies and procedures.
- Staff understand and comply with all policies and procedures.

- Appropriately qualified staff are recruited for all areas of the School.
- Rigorous recruitment processes, including all applicants being screened and holding a valid Working with Children Check and National Police Clearance (or proof of application) which are verified prior to commencement.
- All teaching staff hold a current Teacher Registration Board of Western Australia (TRBWA) registration.
- TRBWA registrations and Working with Children Checks are annually verified.
- New staff receive an induction program including, but not limited to, the Port School Code of Conduct, duty of care, emergency procedures, child protection reporting requirements, as soon as practicable after commencing.
- All newly recruited staff have read, understood and signed the Port School Code of Conduct.
- All staff undertake professional training annually including, but not limited to, the Port School Code of Conduct and Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse, Child Protection and Grooming.
- Regular volunteers and trainees receive an induction including the Port School Code of Conduct and emergency procedures before commencing.
- All student records are secured against inappropriate access.
- Parents/guardians are given the opportunity to update essential contact information.
- Information regarding student health and wellbeing is collected.
- First Aid treatment is provided in the event of an accident.
- An anaphylaxis management procedure is provided.
- Prescribed medication is only administered as requested by, and limited to, Parental Consent Forms.

Port School Management Team is responsible for ensuring:

- Port School provides a child-safe environment, safeguarding all students and promoting practices that provide for safety and wellbeing of students.
- The Principles for Child Safe Organisations are adhered to and the rights of young people are upheld.
- Adherence to the Port School Code of Conduct.
- Policies and procedures covering student safety, security and on-site medical care are in place.
- Staff have access to relevant school policies and procedures.
- Staff understand and comply with all policies and procedures.
- New staff in their team receive an induction program including, but not limited to, the Port School Code of Conduct, duty of care, emergency procedures, child protection reporting requirements, as soon as practicable after commencing.
- Regular volunteers and trainees receive an induction including the Port School Code of Conduct and emergency procedures before commencing.
- All newly recruited staff, regular volunteers and trainees have read, understood and signed the Port School Code of Conduct.
- Relevant risk assessments are completed for planned student activities.
- School grounds and equipment are safe for student use.
- Student records are secured against inappropriate access.
- Parents/guardians/carers are given the opportunity to update essential contact information.
- Information regarding student health and wellbeing is collected.
- First Aid treatment is provided in the event of an accident.
- An anaphylaxis management procedure is provided.
- Prescribed medication is only administered as requested by and limited to Parental Consent Forms.

All Port School staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of and implementing all school policies and procedures.
- Knowing where to access information relating to the School's policies and procedures.

- Adhering to the Principles for Child Safe Organisations and to uphold the rights of young people.
- Completing an induction including, but not limited to, the Port School Code of Conduct, duty of care, emergency procedures, child protection reporting requirements, as soon as practicable after commencing.
- Submitting a signed copy of the Port School Code of Conduct.
- Providing adequate supervision to students.
- Completing relevant risk assessments when planning activities for students.
- Ensuring grounds and equipment are safe for student use.
- Providing appropriate medical assistance if required.

## 5. Legislation and Standards

Port School policies and procedures relating to its duty of care and the safety and wellbeing of students take account of the following relevant legislation:

- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 1984 (WA)
- Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 1996
- School Education Act 1999 (WA)
- School Education Regulations 2000 (WA)
- Registration Standards for Non-Government School (January 2020)
- Volunteers (Protection from Liability) Act 2002 (WA)
- Children and Community Services Act 2004
- Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008
- Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA)
- Civil Liability Act 2002
- Occupiers Liability Act 1985
- Criminal Code Act (1913)
- Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006
- Criminal Law Amendment (Intimate Images) Act 2018 (WA)

## 6. Associated Port School Policies and Documents

- Port School Code of Conduct.
- Duty of Care Policy and Guidelines.
- Pastoral Care Policy
- First Aid Policy.
- Medication Policy.
- Anaphylaxis Policy.
- Emergency Evacuation and Lockdown Procedures.
- Excursion Policy.
- Staff Orientation Checklist.
- Staff Handbook.
- Maintenance Schedule.
- Improvement Schedule.
- Port School Risk Assessments (for school premises, excursions, camps and activities).
- MSDS Register and procedures.
- Staff Appropriate Use of ICT Policy.
- Acceptable Student Use of ICT Policy.
- Privacy Policy.
- Gender and Sexual Diversity Policy.



- Child Protection Policy and Guidelines.
- Concerns, Complaints and Disputes Policy.
- Critical and Emergency Incident Management Policy.
- Record Keeping Policy.

## **7. Implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations**

Port School is committed to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and our policies, procedures, values and culture foster child safety and wellbeing. The School is firmly committed to providing a child-safe environment, to safeguarding all students and to promoting practices that provide for the care, safety and protection of the students.

The 10 National Principles are embedded in Port School's daily practices as outlined below.

### **Principle 1**

#### **Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.**

- The Port School Board and Principal are fully committed to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and ensure these Principles are fully integrated in to the School's daily practices.
- Annual in-house and on-line training is undertaken with all staff and Board members, volunteers and regular contractors (where relevant). This includes:
  - Port School Code of Conduct.
  - National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
  - Mandatory Reporting, Grooming and Preventing Child Abuse.
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing.
- The Port School Management Team oversees and reviews staff performance, implementation and commitment to the Principles.
- An annual self-assessment and reflection on the implementation of the Principles is undertaken.
- The Keeping Safe:Child Protection Curriculum is delivered to all students.
- Extensive Student Support Services are provided which include support to access:
  - Lifeline.
  - Housing and crisis accommodation.
  - Centrelink allowances.
  - Emergency food hampers.
  - Welfare organisations.
  - Student access on campus to substantially-subsidised meals at recess and lunchtime on school days and free breakfasts.
- Support to access medical services is provided, which includes:
  - Immunisations.
  - Hearing tests via the EarBus Foundation.
  - Speech pathology.
  - Access to medical and dental services.
  - The provision of prescription spectacles (in some cases).

### **Principle 2**

#### **Children and young people are informed about their right and participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.**

- Students are encouraged to give their feedback and to share any concerns or complaints via a range of methods including:
  - Speaking with any member of staff they trust, and with whom they feel safe, about their concerns.

- Writing down their feelings or concerns and giving them to a staff member they trust and with whom they feel safe.
- Via the student comment box (anonymous or otherwise).
- The School consults with students on a range of matters which impact on them (eg: Student Dress Code, Student Code of Conduct etc.).
- Leadership opportunities for students in the form of school-based traineeships are offered (fitness gym, kitchen, teaching assistant).
- Port School practises:
  - Conflict resolution.
  - Restorative justice.

### **Principle 3**

#### **Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.**

- Port School's policies, procedures and practices are child-focused, and the interests and safety of the students are foremost.
- The School informs the school community about child-safe practices including cyber safety and the delivery of the Keeping Safe:Child Protection Curriculum via:
  - The Port School Website.
  - Correspondence to parents/guardians (via letter, email and SMS).
  - The Port School Handbook.
  - The Port School's termly Newsletter.
- Relevant school policies are available on the Port School website.

### **Principle 4**

#### **Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.**

- Diversity is one of Port School's four core Values, and this is practised by giving students access to a variety of educational settings and programs that cater for:
  - Ethnicity.
  - Gender and gender diversity.
  - Cultural diversity.
  - Mental health differences.
- Programs include:
  - Port School Mobile Classroom.
  - Port Outreach Program.
  - Individual and modified timetables.
  - Access to a diverse range of courses.

### **Principle 5**

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

- Port School ensures all people working with students are suitable by:
  - Implementing rigorous recruitment processes which include:
    - Only employing appropriately qualified staff in all areas of the School.
    - Requesting all applicants to submit:
      - A current CV.
      - Certified copies of all qualifications achieved, and training completed.
      - A National Police Clearance.
      - Names of at least two referees.

- Confirmation of any registration (eg: TRBWA, counsellor, psychologist, registered nurse etc.)
- Ensuring all staff, volunteers and regular contractors are compliant with requirements of:
  - Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004.
  - Teacher Registration Act 2012 (where relevant).
- Port School ensures all people working with students are supported by conducting a thorough induction and training (as soon as practicable) including:
  - Port School Code of Conduct.
  - National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
  - Mandatory Reporting, Grooming and Preventing Child Abuse.
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing.
  - Trauma-informed practice.
  - OHS policies and procedures.

## **Principle 6**

### **Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused.**

- Port School is committed to providing a child-friendly complaints process, one which is child-focused and upholds the rights of young people. The School ensures this by:
  - Encouraging open and honest dialogue throughout the School and school community.
  - Practising our commitment to an open-door policy.
  - Forging strong, inclusive relationships with students and their families and carers which are based on trust, mutual respect, honesty and understanding.
- Giving students a voice which they know will be listened to by:
  - Ensuring the School's open-door policy is practised and maintained.
  - Listening to students, respecting their right, and taking their comments and concerns seriously.
  - Responding to any concerns or complaints raised by students or the school community.
  - Creating a safe environment for students and staff where all voices are heard, and concerns and opinions are taken seriously.

## **Principle 7**

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

- Port School arranges annual (or as required) PD for staff including, but not restricted to:
  - Port School Code of Conduct
  - Mandatory Reporting, Grooming and Preventing Child Abuse.
  - Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum.
  - Providing First Aid (HLTAID003).
  - Providing CPR (HLTAID001).
- Further in-house PD is arranged on scheduled Staff PD days and after school, covering a range of topics including but not limited to:
  - Domestic violence.
  - Positive Psychology.
  - Trauma-informed practice.
  - National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
  - Anaphylaxis Training.
  - Understanding and Managing Epilepsy Training (Epilepsy Smart School Program).
- Daily "Kids' Talk" meetings for all staff focusing on the health, wellbeing, behaviour and education of students using SBAR (Situation, Background, Action and Response).

- All staff and volunteers are responsible to report any identified risks or maintenance issues immediately, thus keeping students safe from risks when engaging in their education, training and activities both on and off the school campus. A safe physical environment is maintained by:
  - Regular maintenance and upkeep of the physical environment.
  - Risk assessments of all campus areas and facilities.
  - Risk assessments of all off-campus activities.
  - OHS policies and procedures which mitigate risk and protect students and staff.

## **Principle 8**

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

- Port School's physical environment is maintained to a high standard, ensuring students are safe from risks when engaging in their education, training and activities. This is achieved by:
  - Regular maintenance and upkeep of the physical environment.
  - Adjustments to existing infrastructure.
  - Risk assessments of all campus areas and facilities.
  - Risk assessments of all off-campus activities.
  - OHS policies and procedures which mitigate risk and protect students and staff.
- Port School promotes online safety and wellbeing by:
  - The delivery of the Keeping Safe:Child Protection Curriculum.
  - Presentations on "Intimate Images" following the introduction of the Criminal Law Amendment (Intimate Images) Act 2018 (WA).
  - Addressing guidelines for safe and appropriate online activity in the:
    - Student Code of Conduct
    - Port School Handbook.
    - Acceptable Use of Student ICT Policy.
    - Port School Code of Conduct.
    - Staff Appropriate Use of ICT Policy.
    - Staff Social Media Policy.
    - Port School website.
  - Not permitting student use of mobile phones and devices during school hours.

## **Principle 9**

### **Implementation of the National Child Safe Principles is regularly reviewed and improved.**

Port School regularly reviews and reflects on the manner in which it implements the National Child Safe Principles by:

- Undertaking an annual self-assessment and reflection on the implementation.
- Seeking and incorporating school community feedback into the review process via the parent/guardian/carer school survey and regular two-way dialogue with members of the school community.
- Reviewing and improving operational policies to ensure the Principles are embedded in everything we do.

## **Principle 10**

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

- Principle 10 is reflected in Port School's Purpose:
  - Port School creates and uncovers pathways to a meaningful life by providing experiences that enable student potential. The School supports attainment of its vision through an environment that:
    - Is safe, nurturing and inclusive.



- Fosters confidence, personal best and respect for self and others.
  - Inspires students to live purposeful lives.
- Evidence of Port School's Purpose can be seen in:
    - The School's policies and procedures which reflect its commitment to the Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
    - Port School's IEP process.
    - The level of adjustments made to reflect individual requirements.
    - How the National Child Safe Principles are embedded in Port School's daily practice.