

Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) Child Safe Environment Procedures & Policy

AIM

That Loch Primary School Outside of School Hours Care (OSHC) complies with Child Safety Standards and requirements in order to provide services that ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people.

PURPOSE

To make clear the expected behaviour of all Loch Primary School OSHC employees and volunteers to keep children safe from abuse.

Loch Primary School OSHC is committed to:

- The safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. All Loch Primary School OSHC employees and volunteers have a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make. Loch Primary School OSHC has a zero tolerance for child abuse and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.
- We are committed to the participation and empowerment of all children and young people.
- We support and respect all children, employees and volunteers and have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, and we follow these obligations rigorously.
- Loch Primary School OSHC is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks
- Loch Primary School OSHC complies with Child Safe recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers
- Loch Primary School OSHC is committed to regularly training and educating our employees and volunteers on Child Safe Standards, as per Regulation 84 of the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (National Regulations)
- We value diversity and do not tolerate any discriminatory practices

- We are committed to the cultural safety of all children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- We ensure that children with a disability are provided with a safe environment
- We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, employees, and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) are compulsory minimum standards for all organisations that provide services to children. Loch Primary School OSHC has a responsibility to uphold all the below listed Child Safe Standards, which are current as of April 2021:

Standard 1

Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

Standard 2

A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

Standard 3

A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

Standard 4

Screening, supervision, training, and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

Standard 5

Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

Standard 6

Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

Standard 7

Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

Loch Primary School OSHC must ensure that policies and practice remain up to date with any changes in the Child Safe Standards by regularly reviewing the Standards.

CHILDREN

This policy is intended as a basis to empower children who are vital and active participants in our organisation. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our OSHC and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular, we:

- Promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent
- Promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Ensure that children with a disability are safe, have a voice and can participate equally

- Ensure gender diversity, and that Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender and/or Intersex (LGBTI+) students & family's needs are reflected throughout this document.

EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS

This policy guides our employees and volunteers on how to behave with children in our organisation.

All employees and volunteers must agree to abide by our Code of Conduct (refer to the OSHC Governance and Management Policy) which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All employees and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the Code of Conduct.

TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

The School Council aims for all employees and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our employees and volunteers through ongoing supervision to:

- develop their skills to protect children from abuse;
- promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children;
- promote the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, gender diversity and LGBTI+ student safety, and promote the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to this Loch Primary School code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

PRIVACY

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be employees, volunteers, parents, or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety (as per the OSHC Confidentiality and Record Keeping Policy). Loch Primary School OSHC has safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it and who will have access to it.

REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME

As an Approved Provider, the Loch Primary School Council will fulfil the legal obligations as required by the Reportable Conduct Scheme, i.e., reporting behavior that causes significant emotional or psychological harm or significant neglect. This is conduct that encompasses physical harm, sexual offences, and sexual misconduct.

Employees working with children with disability and in the early years are required to notify Victoria Police if they have immediate concerns for a child's safety. In relation to responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse they should follow the PROTECT guidelines for reporting such incidents.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risks always exist for children. As an organisation we undertake to do all that is in our power to reduce the risk of children being harmed e.g., rigorous recruiting practices and checks, examining activities and services and making them as safe as possible and being proactive to reduce the likelihood of risk.

REFERENCES

LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

- [PROTECT](#) Guidelines for reporting
- [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#)
- Quality Assessment and Regulations Division ([QARD](#))
- [The Commission for Children and Young People](#)

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The Policy will be reviewed every 12 months. The ongoing monitoring and compliance to this policy will be overseen by Nominated Supervisor, Loch Primary School OSHC and Person with Management or Control of the Service where practical. Feedback from Quality Assessment and Regulation Division (QARD), received through the assessment and rating process and/or compliance visits will inform this policy review. Feedback from stakeholders, e.g., parents, school community etc. will also inform policy updates and review. The review must also consider any changes to the Child Safe Standards are reflected within the policy.

This policy was last reviewed and updated by both School Council and OSHC staff on **27th March 2023** and is scheduled for review in **March 2024**.

STAFF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I acknowledge:

- receiving the Child Safe Environment Policy;
- that I will comply with the policy; and
- that dependent on the seriousness of any breach there may be disciplinary consequences if I fail to comply, which may result in the termination of my employment.

Your Name:		
Signed:		
Date:		
Loch OSHC sign off:		Date: