



# Menzies Creek Primary School

## Child Safety Standard Five Child Safe Policy

Menzies Creek Primary School provides screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

### **Overview**

It is important for our school to have strong human resources practices to help protect children from abuse.

Menzies Creek Primary School fosters a culture of openness and inclusiveness, and is aware that people who wish to harm children could target specific organisations, such as us.

Robust human resources practices are a good way of reducing these risks. Human resources practices include the recruitment, training and supervision of all personnel.

To achieve this, Menzies Creek Primary School provides opportunities for employees and volunteers to develop and maintain skills to ensure child safety. This will support staff and volunteers to understand the importance of child safety and wellbeing, and enable them to consistently follow child safety policies and procedures.

Menzies Creek Primary School reinforces its "commitment to child safety by recognising the good work and practices of employees and volunteers in keeping children safe and protected.

### **Child safety officer**

Employees and volunteers are supported by the Principal and leadership team members who are individual child safety officers with specified 'child-safe' duties in their job description, including being the designated person to hear or be informed about all allegations or concerns, and providing support to other personnel.

This will assist our school in ensuring that child safety is prioritised, and that any allegations of abuse or safety concerns are recorded and responded to consistently and in line with our school's legal requirements and policies and procedures.

Designated child safety officers also provides a single contact for children, parents and employees/volunteers to seek advice and support regarding the safety and wellbeing of children associated with your organisation.

### **Training and induction**

Training and education is an important tool to help people understand that child safety is everyone's responsibility. Employees and volunteers (in addition to parents/guardians and children) need to be supported to discuss child protection issues and to detect signs of potential child abuse.

Staff should receive induction and ongoing training. New staff will need support and information when they begin their new role, and existing staff might need to develop new skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of their positions and expand their career options.

Training and support also promotes an awareness of the appropriate standards of care required to be met by employees and volunteers to ensure that we meet our duty of care when providing services to children.

It is essential that all staff commit to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children, for example by signing your organisation's code of conduct.

Training should enhance the skills and knowledge of your employees and volunteers, and reduce exposure to risks.



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Employees and volunteers working with children need to receive training in the following areas:

- identifying, assessing and reducing or removing child abuse risks
- Menzies Creek Primary School policies and procedures (including the code of conduct and child safe policy)
- legislative requirements, such as obligations to report child abuse, reduce and remove known risks of child abuse, and to hold Working with Children Checks where required
- how to handle a disclosure or suspicion of abuse, including our policy for reporting guidelines
- cultural awareness training.

Training can be formal such as:

- higher education training and accreditation
- training offered by external organisations
- training developed and delivered internally
- on-the-job training meeting key objectives.

Training can also be informal such as:

- inviting other professionals to speak at meetings or functions
- inviting local Aboriginal Elders, Aboriginal community controlled organisations and community members to speak at meetings and events
- inviting local culturally and/or linguistically diverse community members to speak at meetings and events
- internal mentoring and coaching.

### **Supervision**

Supervision of employees and volunteers will be managed in a way that protects children from abuse and improves accountability and performance, without being onerous or heavy-handed. For instance, where practical, two staff members should be present during activities with children. In particular, children with a disability July require additional supervision.

As a matter of good practice, new employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand their role and learn skills, as well as to check that their behaviour towards children is appropriate. Any warning signs should be reported through appropriate channels, including our internal reporting procedures (such as your child safety officer and leadership), the Department of Health and Human Services (child protection), or police if a child is believed to be at imminent risk.

### **Performance and development review**

A proactive performance development strategy will be used to improve employees and volunteers skills and knowledge on child safety. This is also an opportunity to improve knowledge and skills in working with children, as well as recognising and responding to suspected abuse.

Performance will be measured against our standards of conduct and care to ensure that employees and volunteers meet expected outcomes. These standards must align with those of the code of conduct and child safe policy so everyone is aware of the expectations and appropriate behaviour expected at Menzies Creek Primary School.



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### **Code of conduct and disciplinary procedures**

Menzies Creek Primary School's code of conduct outlines expected standards of appropriate behaviour with and in the company of children.

Disciplinary procedures will be accessible and transparent, and clearly demonstrate the consequences of breaches of the code of conduct. These procedures will be used if an allegation of child abuse is made, or a breach of the code of conduct is known or suspected.

Employees and volunteers will be aware of reporting and disciplinary procedures and how to communicate concerns regarding the improper behaviour of any person within the school. Members of our school will also be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the behaviour of any person who may present a risk of child abuse, without fear of repercussions.

Menzies Creek code of conduct will be publicly available. Children and their families will be encouraged to raise any concerns about the behaviour of any person, and can expect to be listened to and supported.

Our disciplinary procedures will clearly outline what employees or volunteers should do if they are concerned that their actions or words have been misunderstood, or they believe their concerns are not investigated in a timely manner.

**Principal:** Tanya Cooke

**School Council President:** Nicole Cashmore

Date ratified at School Council: July 2016

Three Year Cyclic Date for Review: July 2019