



# Sherbourne PS Child Safe Process Document

## - Human Resources Practices

### OVERVIEW

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

Our school will foster a culture of openness and inclusiveness, as well as be aware that people who may wish to harm children could target specific organisations. 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, our school needs to provide 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.

Our commitment to child safety is reinforced by recognising the good work and practices of employees and volunteers in keeping children safe and protected.

### CHILD SAFETY OFFICER

Employees and volunteers will be supported through the appointment of an individual child safety officer 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. A designated child safety officer 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 our school.

### 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 will 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 the school meets its duty of care when providing services to children.

It is essential our staff commit to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children. Training should enhance the skills and knowledge of our employees and volunteers, and reduce exposure to risks.

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

- identifying, assessing and reducing or removing child abuse risks
- our organisation's 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 your organisation's 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 should 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 may require additional supervision.

As a matter of good practice, new employees and volunteers should 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 school’s internal reporting procedures (eg 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 should 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 should be measured against the organisation’s 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 can be aware of the expectations of our school and appropriate behaviour.

## CODE OF CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The 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 should 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 should 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.

Our code of conduct will be publicly available on our school website and displayed in the school office at entry. Children and their families should be encouraged to raise any concerns about the behaviour of any person, and can expect to be listened to and supported.

Our school’s disciplinary procedures 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. **REVIEW**

This document was endorsed by School Council	June 2018
Due for review:	June 2019