

Commitment to Child Safety

Purpose

The child safe policy sets out the school's approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

Scope and Audience

The policy covers all staff, volunteers, contractors (whether they come into contact with children and applies to all school related activities including those beyond the school environment i.e. excursions, holiday programs etc.

Our commitment to child safety

Monash Children's Hospital School is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. **The school has zero tolerance for child abuse.** The school is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to cultural safety of Aboriginal children, young children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability or significant health condition.

Every person involved in the school has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role s/he plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision making and operations Monash Children's Hospital School will:

- take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
- value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
- foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children. This will be supported by all staff understanding their child safety role, being mindful of and building respectful and safe relationships between children and their teachers and other school staff;
- respect diversity in cultures and child rearing while keeping child safety paramount;
- provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
- engage only the most suitable people to work with children and high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
- ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise issues. Our school is structured around health conditions and will be based on the various paediatric wards and or mental health units and so all children will be able to forge respectful relationships in their paediatric wards/mental health units/day treatment units with multiple teachers thereby giving them opportunities to seek support from a number of significant others in their immediate day to day learning environment.

