



GUTHRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

STANDARD 4

HUMAN RESOURCE, TRAINING, INDUCTION AND REVIEW PRACTICES THAT REDUCE THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE

DESCRIPTION

Guthridge Primary School will foster a culture of openness and inclusiveness. Guthridge Primary School has strong human resources practices to help protect children from abuse. Human resources practices include the recruitment, training and supervision of all personnel.

To achieve this, Guthridge Primary School will 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.

DESIGNATED PERSONS

Employees and volunteers will be supported through the **Principal and / or Assistant Principal**, who are the designated persons to hear or be informed about all allegations or concerns, and provide support to other personnel. In the absence of the Principal and Assistant Principal, the **Student wellbeing Officer and/or the Child Safety Officer** are the designated persons to hear or be informed about all allegations or concerns, and provide support to other personnel. This will assist **Guthridge Primary 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 legal requirements, school policies / statements and procedures.

The designated persons also provide contact for children, parents and employees/volunteers to seek advice and support regarding the safety and wellbeing of children associated with **Guthridge Primary 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 be supported and informed when they begin their new role.

Training and support also promote 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 that our staff commit to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children, for example by signing our school's code of conduct. Training should enhance the skills and knowledge of our employees and volunteers, and reduce exposure to risks. Employees and volunteers working with children will receive training in the following areas:

- identifying, assessing and reducing or removing child abuse risks
- understanding our policies and procedures (including the Code of Conduct and Child Safe Policy)
- knowledge of legislative requirements, such as obligations to report child abuse¹, reduce and remove known risks of child abuse², and to hold Working with Children Checks³ where required
- how to handle a disclosure or suspicion of abuse, including DET's reporting guidelines
- cultural awareness training
- The additional supervision of children with disabilities, as required

Training can be formal such as:

- higher education training and accreditation
- training offered by external organisations
- training developed and delivered internally
- online 'Mandatory Reporting' unit

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. 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 the school's internal reporting procedures, such as the Principal and/or Assistant Principal, the Department of Health and Human Services (Child Protection), or police if a child is believed to be at imminent risk.

Failure to disclose

The failure to disclose criminal offence requires adults in Victoria to report to police a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed against a child. More information about failure to disclose is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation website. Failure to disclose does not change mandatory reporting obligations. Certain professionals are mandatory reporters, meaning they are required to report to the Department of Health and Human Services if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical and sexual abuse.

The failure to protect criminal offence applies to people within organisations who knew of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and had the authority to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so. More information about failure to protect is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation website.

For more information about Working with Children checks visit the working with children website.

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 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 the school's standards of conduct and care to ensure that employees and volunteers meet expected outcomes. These standards will align with those of the Code of Conduct, Child Safety Policy and VIT Code of Conduct, so that everyone can be aware of the expectations of our school and appropriate behaviour.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Guthridge Primary School has a code of conduct that outlines expected standards of appropriate behaviour with and in the company of children. Employees and volunteers should be aware of reporting procedures and how to communicate concerns regarding the improper behaviour of any person within the school.

The Code of Conduct also ensures that members of our school community are 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.

Guthridge Primary School's Code of Conduct will be publicly available via our school website. Children and their families, as well as members of our school community, will be encouraged to raise any concerns about the behaviour of any person, and can expect to be listened to and supported.

EVALUATION

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years.
Last Reviewed: August 2019