

Child Safe Standards 1- 11



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this, please contact the school on 9393 5800

Ministerial Order 1359 – outlines how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply to schools

The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) are compulsory minimum standards for all Victorian schools to ensure they are well prepared to keep children and young people safe and protect them from abuse. [Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools \(PDF\)](#) provides the framework for child safety in schools.

Victorian schools can continue to build on their existing child safety strategies, policies and practices to strengthen their culture of child safety and protect children and young people from abuse.

The Child Safe Standards include requirements to keep children, young people and students safe, including:

- involvement of families and students in child safety
- schools' focus on safety for Aboriginal students
- better management of child abuse risks in online environments
- governance, systems and processes for keeping students safe.

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority is responsible for regulating the compliance of schools with the Standards. Schools are required to comply with the Standards as part of the prescribed minimum standards for registration.

Child Safe Standard 1 |

Culturally safe environments

- in which the following occurs:
 - the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
 - a child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
 - strategies are embedded within the school which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.
 - measures are adopted by the school to ensure racism within the school is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.
 - the school actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
 - all of the school's policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families.



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Child Safe Standard 2 |

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

- in which the following occurs:
 - o child safety and wellbeing are embedded in school leadership, governance and culture.
 - o a child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the school from the top down and bottom up.
 - o governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels.
 - o a Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.
 - o risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.
 - o schools understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping

Child Safe Standard 3 |

Child and student empowerment

- in which the following occurs:
 - o children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
 - o children and young people are informed about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation.
 - o the importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated.
 - o where relevant to the setting or context, children and young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age appropriate way.
 - o schools are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.
 - o schools have strategies in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people.
 - o schools provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement.

Child Safe Standard 4 |

Family engagement

- in which the following occurs:
 - o families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
 - o families participate in decisions affecting their child.
 - o the school engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
 - o families and communities have a say in the development and review of the school's policies and practices.
 - o families, carers and the community are informed about the school's operations and governance.



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Child Safe Standard 5 |

Diversity and equity

- in which the following occurs:
 - o equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
 - o the school, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people's diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.
 - o children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.
 - o the school pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.
 - o the school pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them.

Child Safe Standard 6 |

Suitable staff and volunteers

- in which the following occurs:
 - o people working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
 - o recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasise child safety and wellbeing.
 - o relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children clearances or equivalent background checks.
 - o all staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.
 - o ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.

Child Safe Standard 7 |

Complaints process

- in which the following occurs:
 - o processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.
 - o the school has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report.
 - o effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, families, staff and volunteers, and are culturally safe.
 - o complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
 - o the school has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.
 - o reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.



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Child Safe Standard 8 |

Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness

- in which the following occurs:
 - schools are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
 - Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the school's child safety and wellbeing policy.
 - Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people.
 - staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.
 - staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.

Child Safe Standard 9 |

Child safety in physical and online environments

- in which the following occurs:
 - schools promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
 - schools identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
 - the online environment is used in accordance with the school's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.
 - risk management plans consider risks posed by school settings, activities, and the physical environment.
 - schools that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people

Child Safe Standard 10 |

Review child safety practices

- in which the following occurs:
 - the implementation of Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
 - the school regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.
 - complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.
 - the school reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families and children and young people.

Child Safe Standard 11 |

Implementation of child safety practices

- in which the following occurs:
 - policies and procedures document how the school is safe for children and young people.



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- policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.
- policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.
- best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures.
- leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
- staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.

