

Croydon Community School & OPTIONS

Commitment to Child Safety

(Standards 1 & 2)



Croydon Community School and OPTIONS is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

Every person involved in the school has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she 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.

We are committed to the safety, happiness, participation and empowerment of all children.

The school has **zero tolerance for child abuse** and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently within the school's policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously. We are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing those risks.

We are committed to following Departmental practices regarding Human Resources and recruitment for all staff and volunteers. Our school also is committed to, as well as obligated to, regularly training and educating staff, volunteers and visitors on child abuse risks.

We are committed and obligated 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 the safety, empowerment and participation of students from diverse backgrounds including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, children in Out of Home Care, as well as the safety, empowerment and participation of children with a disability and special needs.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our Leadership Team, staff, volunteers and visitors to achieve these commitments.

The Child Safe Standards are listed below and can be found on the school's website:

- Standard 1- Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including thorough effective leadership arrangements
- Standard 2- A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
- Standard 3- A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- Standard 4- Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- Standard 5- Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- Standard 6- Strategies to identify and reduce or remove the risk of abuse
- Standard 7- Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

If you have concerns about the Safety of Children please contact one of our child safety officers:

Bronwyn Harcourt (Principal), Mark Heuston (Assistant Principal) Tahlia MacNab (Wellbeing Coordinator).

IMPLEMENTATION

This policy is intended for School Leadership, all other staff and School Council.

The safety and wellbeing of children is the highest priority for Croydon Community School and OPTIONS.

In its planning, decision making and operations, the 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;
- Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices 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 have 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 such issues;
- Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
- Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
- Value the input and communicate regularly with families and carers.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Creating a Child Safe Organisation Guide

Child Safe Standards Toolkit

Protect – Identifying All Forms of Child Abuse in Victorian Schools April 2018

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/Principals/spag/safety/Pages/childsafestandards.aspx

www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/child safe

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-safe-standards/policy>

REVIEW CYCLE

This Standard, first developed in this format in March 2019, will be reviewed every two years as part of the VRQA requirements, if an incident occurs or if guidelines change (latest PROTECT update 11 April 2018). It is scheduled for review in March 2021.

**This Commitment to Child Safety was endorsed by the
Croydon Community School & OPTIONS staff at a Staff Meeting
on 29th May, 2019.**

**This Commitment to Child Safety was endorsed/approved by the
Croydon Community School & OPTIONS Council
on 7th September 2020.
(Change of Principal)**