

Verney Road School

School Safety Officer Policy



SCHOOL CHILD SAFETY OFFICER - VERNEY RD. SCHOOL.

Rationale:

VRS is committed to providing a safe environment for all the children in its care, including children with a disability, aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and diverse backgrounds. To ensure children have every opportunity to grow into happy, respectful citizens we have a **zero tolerance of any form of child abuse**. This zero tolerance approach includes extensive safeguards and protections to ensure our school is free from the conditions under which child abuse could occur.

The Child Safety officer at VRS (the Social Worker), will always work concurrently with the Principal, Assistant Principal and Team Leaders.

Aims:

All students enrolled at VRS have a right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety. Every staff member at VRS has a role to ensure every student is safe.

Implementation:

The Child Safety Officer will provide authoritative advice.

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.
- Liaise with the principal and school leaders to maintain the visibility of child safety.
- Lead the development of the school's child safety culture, including being a child safety champion and providing coordination in communicating, implementing, monitoring, enhancing and reporting on strategies to embed a culture of child safety.

The Child Safety Officer will raise awareness.

- Ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately.
- Ensure the child protection policy is available publicly and parents are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- Be alert to the specific needs of individual children, understanding their backgrounds, disabilities and special educational needs.
- With the leadership team, encourage amongst all staff a culture of listening to children and taking account of their messages and feelings and the provision of positive measures to protect them.

The Child Safety Officer will support training.

- Being authoritative in providing advice by:
 - keeping staff skills up to date with appropriate training carried out every two years
 - having a working knowledge of how the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Community Service Organisations conduct a child protection case conference to be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.
- Ensure each member of staff has access to and understands the school's child safety policy and procedures, especially new and part time staff.
- Make sure staff are aware of training opportunities and the latest DHHS and DET policies and guidance.