

CHILD SAFETY STANDARDS COMPLIANCE SELF-ASSESSMENT AND ACTION PLAN

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Introduction

Registered schools have an important responsibility for keeping children safe.

Schools have to meet a minimum standard for the care, safety and welfare of students. In order to achieve a **zero-tolerance approach to child abuse**, from 1 August 2016 they also need to meet child safety standards as specified by Ministerial Order No. 870.

The *Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Other Requirements for Registration of Schools Including Those Offering Senior Secondary Courses* are available from www.vrqa.vic.gov.au. The guidelines were recently updated to reflect the new requirements for managing the risk of child abuse.

Child Safety Standards Compliance Self-Assessment and Action Plan

This child safety standards compliance self-assessment and action plan will assist schools to assess how well they currently meet the child safe standards, and what gaps may need to be addressed.

Before you begin

Schools already do much to protect children. Prior to completing the self-assessment, it is a good idea to review the school's existing policies and procedures, for example policies that relate to the care, safety and wellbeing of students. Existing arrangements within the school may meet aspects of the child safety standards or could be amended to do so.

Reviewing the child safe standards information sheets available at www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes is also a good idea prior to completing the self-assessment.

Minimum Standards for a Child Safe Environment (from Ministerial Order No. 870)

Note: the words in bold italics are defined terms within the Ministerial Order - please refer to it for clarification of their meaning

Clause 5. Schools to meet minimum child safety standards

The school must implement the following minimum child safety standards:

- strategies to embed an organisational culture of **child safety** in accordance with clause 7
- a **child safety** policy or a statement of commitment to **child safety** in accordance with clause 8
- a **child safety** code of conduct in accordance with clause 9
- screening, supervision, training, and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of **child abuse** in accordance with clause 10
- procedures for responding to and reporting suspected **child abuse** in accordance with clause 11
- strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of **child abuse** in accordance with clause 12
- strategies to promote child participation and empowerment in accordance with clause 13.

Ministerial Order No. 870 Clause 6. Principle of inclusion (all standards)

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
<p>In implementing the minimum <i>child safety</i> standards in accordance with this Order, <i>school governing authorities</i> must:</p> <p>(a) take account of the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable; and</p>	Y	<p>As stated in;</p> <p>Enrolment Policy, Child safe policy, Disability and special needs policy</p>			current	Principal
<p>(b) make reasonable efforts to accommodate the matters referred to in clause 6(a).</p>	Y	<p>Disability and special needs policy articulates how we do this.</p> <p>Child safe has a statement re 'our Children'</p> <p>Indigenous action plan</p>	document "indigenous offerings/cultural days/scholarships"		Current	Principal

Child Safe Standards Compliance Self-Assessment and Action Plan – 23 May 2016

Information sheets are regularly reviewed and refined based on stakeholder feedback. To provide feedback, email vrqa.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au.

Ministerial Order No. 870 Clause 7. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety (standard one)

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(1) The school governing authority must:						
(a) develop strategies to embed a culture of <i>child safety</i> at the school;	Y	Strategic plan plan, this document, email signature		Ongoing review,	Complete	Principal
(b) allocate roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies;	Y	This document		Ongoing review	Current	Principal
(c) inform the school community about the strategies, and allocated roles and responsibilities;	Y	This document communicates these points		Put on this plan, CS policy, On the website	Complete	Principal
(d) put the strategies into practice, and inform the school community about these practices; and	Y	Put this doc on web page		Put this doc on the web	30/04/20	Principal

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(e) periodically review the effectiveness of the strategies put into practice and, if considered appropriate, revise those strategies.	Y			Add questions to student survey, Report to board on outcomes	Complete	Principal

Ministerial Order No. 870 Clause 8. A child safety policy or a statement of commitment to child safety (standard two)

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(1) The <i>school governing authority</i> must ensure that the school has a <i>child safety</i> policy or statement of commitment to <i>child safety</i> that details:						
(a) the values and principles that will guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe <i>school environment</i> , and	Y	Child Safety Policy		None at this time	Current	Principal

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(b) the actions the school proposes to take to:						

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(i) demonstrate its commitment to <i>child safety</i> and monitor the school's adherence to its <i>child safety</i> policy or statement of commitment;	How do we monitor adherence? 4.2 in CS policy -T4 annual RA by venue -T1 mand reporting/IWD/induction -T2 empowerment/Mens Health -T3 catering for diversity/RR day -report annual to board re breaches/or lack thereof -questions added to 2019 survey Regional Agenda, Admin agenda, board agenda/Principals report and agenda	Policy, meeting minutes (Board) Training Schedule, Principal class agenda			Current	Principal

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(ii) support, encourage and enable <i>school staff</i> , parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss and report <i>child safety</i> matters; and	Y	Policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(iii) support or assist children who disclose <i>child abuse</i> , or are otherwise linked to suspected <i>child abuse</i> .	Y	Policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(2) The <i>school governing authority</i> must inform the school community about the policy or statement, and make the policy or statement publicly available.	Y	Policy is available to school community and is on website			Current	Principal

Ministerial Order No. 870 Clause 9. A child safety code of conduct (standard three)

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(1) The <i>school governing authority</i> must develop, endorse, and make publicly available a code of conduct that:	Y	Policy on website		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(a) has the objective of promoting <i>child safety</i> in the <i>school environment</i> ;	Y	Policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(b) sets standards about the ways in which <i>school staff</i> are expected to behave with children;	Y	Policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(c) takes into account the interests of <i>school staff</i> (including other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular <i>school staff</i>), and the needs of all children; and	Y	Policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(d) is consistent with the school's <i>child safety</i> strategies, policies and procedures as revised from time to time.	Y	Policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal

Ministerial Order No. 870 Clause 10. School staff selection, supervision and management practices for a child-safe environment (standard four)

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(1) Subject to the requirements of the ETR Act, the <i>school governing authority</i> must ensure that the school implements practices for a <i>child-safe</i> environment in accordance with this clause.	Y					
(2) Each job or category of jobs for <i>school staff</i> that involves <i>child-connected work</i> must have a clear statement that sets out:						
(a) the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding <i>child safety</i> , and	Y	Position descriptions		None at this stage	Current	HR Advisor
(b) the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to <i>child safety</i> .	Y	Position descriptions		None at this stage	Current	HR Advisor

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(3) All applicants for jobs that involve <i>child-connected work</i> for the school must be informed about the school's <i>child safety</i> practices (including the code of conduct).	Y	Induction Process, signing of agreements		None at this stage	Current	HR Advisor
(4) In accordance with any applicable legal requirement ¹ or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform <i>child-connected work</i> .	Y	Pre-employment checklist		None at this stage	Current	HR Advisor
(a) Working with Children Check status, or similar check;	Y	Pre-employment checklist		None at this stage	Current	HR Advisor
(b) proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;	Y	Pre-employment checklist		None at this stage	Current	HR Advisor

¹ Please refer to the *Working With Children Act 2005* which establishes a process to screen persons engaging or intending to engage in child-related work through a working with children check, and also sets out exemptions from that requirement for volunteers, parents and others.

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(c) the person's history of work involving children; and	Y	Pre-employment checklist/ reference check Proforma		None at this stage	Current	HR Advisor
(d) references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.	Y	Pre-employment checklist/ reference check Proforma		None at this stage	Current	HR Advisor
(5) The school need not comply with the requirements in clause 10(4) if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information set out in clauses 10(4)(a) to 10(4)(d) about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.	Y					

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(6) The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:						
(a) the induction of new <i>school staff</i> into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing <i>child safety</i> and <i>child-connected work</i> , and	Y	Induction/Probation checklists		None at this stage	Current	HR advisor
(b) monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for <i>child-connected work</i> .	Y	Cycle of WWCC & VIT renewal annual performance review standing item RM agenda. Ensure staff are informed of their obligations		None at this stage	Current	Principal

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(7) The school must implement practices that enable the <i>school governing authority</i> to be satisfied that people engaged in <i>child-connected work</i> perform appropriately in relation to <i>child safety</i> .	Y	Compliance part of Principals report		None at this stage	current	Principal

Explanatory note: To be “satisfied”, it is not necessary that the school governing authority make each decision about the selection and supervision of school staff engaged in child-connected work. The school governing authority needs to be satisfied about the appropriateness of the school's arrangements that would regulate or guide other people who make such decisions for or on behalf of the school about child safety matters and child-connected work.

Ministerial Order No. 870 Clause 11. Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse (standard five)

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(1) The <i>school governing authority</i> must have a clear procedure or set of procedures for responding to allegations of suspected <i>child abuse</i> in accordance with this clause and other legal obligations.	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(2) The <i>school governing authority</i> must ensure that the procedure is:						
(a) sensitive to the diversity characteristics of the school community;	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(b) made publicly available; and	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(c) accessible to children, <i>school staff</i> , and the wider community.	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(3) The procedure must:						
(a) cover all forms of ' <i>child abuse</i> ' as defined in the ETR Act;	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(b) apply to allegations or disclosures of <i>child abuse</i> made by or in relation to a child, <i>school staff</i> , visitors, or other persons while connected to a <i>school environment</i> ;	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(c) identify the positions of the person or people who are responsible for:						
(i) promptly managing the school's response to an allegation or disclosure of <i>child abuse</i> , and ensuring that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously;	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(ii) responding appropriately to a <i>child</i> who makes or is affected by an allegation of <i>child abuse</i> ;	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(iii) monitoring overall school compliance with this procedure; and	Y	Annual training child safe is reported to board		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(iv) managing an alternative procedure for responding to an allegation or disclosure if the person allocated responsibility under clause 11(3)(c)(i) cannot perform his or her role;	Y	Policy nominates multiple people		None at this stage	Current	Principal

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(d) include a statement that fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in the procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a <i>child</i> is at risk of <i>child abuse</i> ,	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(e) clearly describe the actions the school will take to respond to an allegation of <i>child abuse</i> , including actions to:		Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(i) inform appropriate authorities about the allegation (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(ii) protect any <i>child</i> connected to the alleged <i>child abuse</i> until the allegation is resolved; and	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal

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MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(iii) make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of <i>child abuse</i> and the school's response to it.	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(4) The procedure must not:						
(a) prohibit or discourage <i>school staff</i> from reporting an allegation of <i>child abuse</i> to a person external to the school;	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(b) state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation;	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(c) require <i>staff</i> to make a judgment about the truth of the allegation of <i>child abuse</i> , or	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal
(d) prohibit <i>staff</i> from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of <i>child abuse</i> .	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal

Ministerial Order No. 870 Clause 12. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse (standard six)

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(1) The <i>school governing authority</i> must develop and implement risk management strategies regarding <i>child safety</i> in <i>school environments</i> .	Y	Child safety RA for each registered venue and excursion approval documentation		None at this stage	Current	Assistant Principal Operations
(2) The school's risk management strategies regarding <i>child safety</i> must identify and mitigate the risk(s) of <i>child abuse</i> in <i>school environments</i> by taking into account the nature of each <i>school environment</i> , the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.	Y	Child safety RA for each registered venue. progressively assesses all excursion sites		None at this stage	Current and ongoing	Assistant Principal Operations

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(3) If the <i>school governing authority</i> identifies risks of <i>child abuse</i> occurring in one or more <i>school environments</i> the authority must make a record of those risks and specify the action(s) the school will take to reduce or remove the risks (risk controls).	Y	Child safety RA for each registered venue excursion approval documentation		None at this stage	current	Assistant Principal Operations
(4) As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the <i>school governing authority</i> must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.	Y	Child safety RA for each registered venue		None at this stage	current	Assistant Principal Operations

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(5) At least annually, the <i>school governing authority</i> must ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to the individual members of the <i>school governing authority</i> and <i>school staff</i> about:				None at this stage	current	
(a) individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of <i>child abuse</i> ,	Y	Board Minutes, board induction process, Child safety online training.		None at this stage	current	Risk and Compliance Manager
(b) <i>child abuse</i> risks in the <i>school environment</i> , and	Y	Board Minutes, board induction process, Child safety online training.		None at this stage	current	Risk and Compliance Manager
(c) the school's current <i>child safety</i> standards.	Y	Board Minutes, board induction process, Child safety online training.		None at this stage	current	Risk and Compliance Manager

Explanatory note: Different risk controls may be necessary for particular groups of children depending on the nature of the risk and the diversity characteristics of children affected by the risk.

Ministerial Order No. 870 Clause 13. Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation (standard seven)

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(1) The <i>school governing authority</i> must develop strategies to deliver appropriate education about::						
(a) standards of behaviour for students attending the school;	Y	Discipline policy, harassment policy, student Induction, Code of conduct, MySEDA task		None at this stage	Current	Assistant Principal Education
(b) healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality);	Y	Key days, IWD, MH, RR		None at this stage	Current	Assistant Principal Education
(c) resilience; and	Y	Curric/speakers/diary/app		None at this stage	Current	Assistant Principal Education
(d) <i>child abuse</i> awareness and prevention.		Student Venue induction Email signature		None at this stage	Current	Assistant Principal Education

MO No. 870 requirement	Done (Y/N)	Existing document	Document to be created or updated	Action proposed	Completion date	Responsibility
(2) The <i>school governing authority</i> must promote the <i>child safety standards</i> required by this Order in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.	Y	Child safe and Mandatory reporting policy		None at this stage	Current	Principal

Further information

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority

Child safe standards website (all schools): www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe

Government Schools

Website: www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/childsafestandards

Email: child.safe.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au

Catholic Schools

CECV Industrial Relations (03) 9267 0228

Catholic Education Melbourne, Student Wellbeing Information Line (03) 9267 0228

Catholic Education Office Ballarat, Child Safety (03) 5337 7135

Catholic Education Office Sale, Child Protection Officer (03) 5622 6600

Catholic Education Office Sandhurst, Child Safe Officer (03) 5443 2377

Website: www.cecv.catholic.edu.au

Seventh-day Adventist Schools

Adventist Schools Victoria Office (03) 9264 7730

Website: www.asv.adventist.edu.au

Lutheran Schools

Contact the regional office via phone (03) 9236 1250 or email operations@levnt.edu.au.

Independent Schools that are members of Independent Schools Victoria

Telephone: (03) 9825 7200

Email: enquiries@is.vic.edu.au

Website: www.is.vic.edu.au

The Victorian Institute of Teaching

For *Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics* and information about employer responsibilities to report action taken against registered teachers in response to allegations and concerns about registered teachers.

Website: www.vit.edu.au

Definitions

A full list of definitions for Ministerial Order No. 870 is available at www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes.

Child abuse includes—

- any act committed against a child involving—
 - a sexual offence or
 - an offence under section 49B(2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming)
- the infliction, on a child, of—
 - physical violence or
 - serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work means work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

School staff means:

- in a government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:
 - employed under Part 2.4 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (ETR Act) in the government teaching service or
 - employed under a contract of service by the council of the school under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act or
 - a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).
- in a non-government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:
 - directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
 - a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary)
 - a minister of religion².
- **school governing authority** means:
 - the proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor; or
 - the governing body for a school (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of a school or the ETR Act; or
 - the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the ETR Act.

Explanatory note: There is a wide variety of school governance arrangements. Depending on the way a school is constituted and operated, the governing body for a school may be the school board, the school council, or some other person or entity. The school governing authorities may share or assign responsibility for discharging the requirements imposed by this Order, in accordance with the school's internal governance arrangements.

²**minister of religion** has the same meaning as in the *Working with Children Act 2005*.