

Korowa Child Safe Policy

This policy is an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse. The Policy forms the foundation of Korowa's procedures, practices, decision-making processes and ultimately Korowa's culture with respect to child safety. It is designed to be published on our public website as well as communicated through other mediums such as newsletters, our annual report and in induction and welcome packs for School Council members, Staff, External Education providers, Contractors and Volunteers. Korowa's Child Safe Policy has been approved and endorsed by the School Council and is regularly reviewed by the School Council.

Our Child Safe Policy

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Korowa is committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

At Korowa we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The School regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture.

Child Safe Principles

The School's commitment to child safety is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.

1. All children have the right to be safe.
2. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
3. The views of the child and a child's privacy must be respected.
4. Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in our Child Safe Code of Conduct and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.
5. The safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture.
6. Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within our School community.

7. Procedures are in place to screen all staff, Direct Contact Volunteers*, third party contractors and external education providers who have direct contact with children.
8. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
9. Child protection training is mandatory for all School Council members, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers.
10. Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of the School community.
11. Children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
12. Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.

**Direct Contact Volunteers are those volunteers that are involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and could potentially have direct contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.*

The Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) defines 'direct contact' as any contact between a person and a child (aged under 18) that involves:

- physical contact
- face to face contact
- contact by post or other written communication
- contact by telephone or other oral communication
- contact by email or other electronic communication

Examples of Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include volunteers involved in School camps and excursions, guest speakers, exam invigilators or assisting in learning activities.

All staff employed by Korowa are required to have a valid Employee Working With Children Check.

Objectives

This policy provides the framework for:

- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection within the School
- the creation of a positive and robust child protection culture
- the promotion and open discussion of child protection issues within the School
- complying with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Victoria

Child Protection Program

Korowa is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Protection Program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated.

We adopt a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors including the nature of our School's activities, physical and online environments and the characteristics of the student body.

Our Child Protection Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse. It includes:

- clear information as to what constitutes child abuse and associated key risk indicators
- clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse
- strategies to support, encourage and enable staff, volunteers (direct and indirect), third party contractors, external education providers, parents/guardians and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters
- procedures for recruiting and screening School Council members, staff, Direct Contact Volunteers, Contractors and External Education Providers
- procedures for reporting reportable conduct and/or misconduct
- student wellbeing strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe
- policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities
- a child protection training program
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist children
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards)
- a system for continuous improvement and review

As a part of Korowa's induction process, all staff and Direct Contact Volunteers are required to complete a selection of training modules on the content of our Child Protection Program.

Additional, ongoing child protection training is provided at least annually.

Staff, volunteers (direct and indirect), third party contractors and external education providers are supported and supervised by the **School's Child Protection Officers** to ensure that they are compliant with the School's approach to child protection.

Responsibilities

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. At Korowa all members of the School Council and staff, as well as direct and indirect volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:

School Council

Each member of the School Council is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to allow the School's Child Safe Policy and the Child Protection Program to be effectively implemented within the School and are responsible for holding the Principal and School Executive accountable for effective implementation.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Safe Policy and the School's Child Protection Program are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the School.

The School's Child Protection Officers

The Head of Senior School, the Head of Junior School, the School Chaplain, the School Counsellor and the Risk and Compliance Coordinator have been nominated as the School's Child Protection Officers. Our Child Protection Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child protection issues. They are the first point of contact for raising child protection concerns within the School. They are also responsible for championing child protection within the School and assisting in coordinating responses to child protection incidents.

Staff Members

All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safe Policy, our Child Safe Code of Conduct and our Child Protection Program as well as their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Protection Officers.

Direct Contact Volunteers

All Direct Contact Volunteers, as defined in this policy, are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection Program, particularly this Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Code of Conduct as well as their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse.



It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Protection Officers.

Indirect Contact Volunteers

Indirect Contact Volunteers are those volunteers who are involved in providing support and services whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students.

All Indirect Contact Volunteers are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

All Indirect Contact Volunteers are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Examples of Indirect Contact Volunteer activities may include assisting with School administrative functions or guest speakers.

Third Party Contractors

All Third-Party Contractors engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

Third Party Contractors include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches, guest speakers, exam invigilators, and school cleaners.

This also includes music teachers and other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the School, but have an agreement with the School to use the School's facilities.

The School only uses Third Party Contractors that have undergone an extensive due diligence process which includes provision of our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct and a requirement that they are familiar with their contents.

Korowa may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the Third-Party Contractor.

External Education Providers

An external education provider is any organisation that the School has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the School.

The delivery of such a course may take place on School premises or elsewhere.

All external education providers engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.



All external education providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Safe Policy, our Child Safe Code of Conduct and our Child Protection Program. Korowa may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the external education provider.

Reporting Child Abuse Concerns

Our Child Protection Program provides detailed guidance for the School Council, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our School's nominated Child Protection Officers. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Staff, Third party contractors, external education providers, indirect contact volunteers, students, parents/guardians or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse or grooming are asked to contact one of the School's Child Protection Officers.

Our Child Protection Officers may be contacted via the Main School Reception on 8808 8888.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a "need to know basis" and all Personal Information will be dealt with in accordance with the School's Privacy Policy.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.

Policy and Program Review

Korowa is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Protection Program. The Program is regularly reviewed for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection related laws, regulations and standards.

This Policy will be reviewed in September 2022.

Related Policies and Procedures

- Risk Management Program
- Compliance Program
- Human Resources Program
- Student Duty of Care Program
- Occupational Health & Safety Program
- Child Protection Staff Training
- Recruitment & Selection Procedures