

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to:

- Protect all children regardless of culture and background from harm, protect their rights and promote their development.
- Build an understanding regarding the protocol in cases of suspected child abuse or neglect.
- Enable staff to recognise abuse or neglect and understand their professional responsibility.
- Enable an understanding of duty of care.

Rationale

Ardmona Primary School advocates the national framework for 'Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people' protocol of the DHHS and DET, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools (2010) and Victorian Government Child safe standards November 2015 DHHS and understands it is everyone's responsibility, parents, communities, governments and businesses to improve safety and wellbeing of vulnerable children within our community.

Scope

Ardmona staff has a significant role to play in protecting children from harm due to their daily contact with the children and their families, allowing the opportunity to observe when a child appears at risk.

Protocol/Procedure

Ardmona Staff have a duty of care to act immediately to protect and preserve the safety and wellbeing of children in their care.

Duty of Care

Ardmona Staff have a duty of care to support and protect the children who they are professionally involved with.

When a staff member forms a reasonable belief that a child has been harmed or is at risk of harm, they are ethically bound to take action to protect the safety and wellbeing of that child.

Mandatory Reporting

A number of professionals are prescribed as mandatory reporters under section 182 of CYFA. They are primary and secondary school teachers and principals, registered medical practitioners, nurses and police.

Ardmona Primary School Teaching staff is mandated. Ardmona Primary School requires staff to inform the Principal of any concerns they may have about children. Staff are required to form a brief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection after becoming aware that a child's health and or safety is at risk and the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child.



There may be reasonable grounds for forming such beliefs if:

- A child states they have been physically or sexually abused
- A child states they know someone who has been physically abused
- Someone who knows the child, states that the child has been physically or sexually abused
- A child shows signs of being physically or sexually abused
- A staff member is aware of family violence, parent substance misuse, psychiatric illness or intellectual disability that impacts on the child's safety, stability or development
- A staff member observes signs or indications of abuse
- A child's action or behaviour may place them at risk of significant harm and the parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child

All reports made are confidential.

Ardmona Primary School Principal shall:

- Address concerns with the DET SSSO coordinator and produce recorded information for discussion
- Follow guidelines from Protecting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children and young People – Victorian Child Safe Standards, a joint protocol for the Department of Human Services Child Protection and Department of Education
- Educate families regarding Ardmona Primary School Child Protection Policy
- Educate staff regarding child protection reporting protocols
- Assist staff in understanding the local community and significant cultures such as that of ATSI within the community in establishing culturally appropriate responses

Ardmona Primary School Staff shall:

- Teachers and the Principal must be VIT registered and ES staff – acquire a flawless Working with Children Check meeting DET requirements
- Meet all legislative requirements regarding the safety and protection of children
- Educate and support families regarding safety, health and wellbeing of children
- All staff must ensure they are familiarised thoroughly with the schools Emergency Management Plan
- Observe and record any concerns about children in their care
- Conclude and act as per mandated requirement (Child First referral – 5823 7000 Shepparton) Child Protection 1300 360 391

Please read this policy in conjunction with the schools:

- Infection Control Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy

Related Policy

References/Legislation

- Children's Services Act 1996
- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006
- National Framework for 'Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people' protocol of the DHHS and DET, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools (2010)



580 Turnbull Road
Ardmona Vic 3629

Phone: 03 5829 0273

Fax: 03 5829 0421

Email: ardmona.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

www.ardmonaps.vic.gov.au

Keep up to date by following us on:



- Victorian Government Child safe standards November 2015, DHHS
- Children, Youth and Family Act 2005
- National Privacy Principles – www.privacy.gov.au/act/ndex/html
- **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS – MANAGING THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE IN SCHOOLS

Ministerial Order No. 870 December 2015 (JAMES MERLINO, MP Minister for Education)

Review Cycle

This policy was approved by School Council on the 15th of March 2022 and scheduled for review in March 2025.



580 Turnbull Road
Ardmona Vic 3629

Phone: 03 5829 0273

Fax: 03 5829 0421

Email: ardmona.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au

www.ardmonaps.vic.gov.au

Keep up to date by following us on:

