



## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Revised July 2016  
Review July 2017

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_

TARA PRITCHARD

## Child Protection Policy & Procedures

|               |  |  |
|---------------|--|--|
| Purpose:      | Nhill Lutheran School has zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse.   |  |
| Scope:        | Students and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at Nhill Lutheran Primary School and covers information about the reporting of harm and abuse   |  |
| Status:       | Current  | Date of Approval: 19 <sup>th</sup> July 2016 |
| Approved by:  | School Council Chairperson   | Kim Croot                                    |
| References:   | <p>Legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#"><u>Ministerial Order No.870</u></a></li> </ul> <p>Related School Policies / Procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nhill Lutheran Primary School <i>Working with Children Check</i></li> <li>• Nhill Lutheran Primary School Workplace Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Nhill Lutheran Primary School Student Behaviour Management Policy</li> <li>• Nhill Lutheran School Child Protection and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Nhill Lutheran School Child Safety Code of Conduct</li> <li>• Nhill Lutheran School Pastoral Care Policy</li> <li>• Nhill Lutheran School Complaints Handling Policy</li> <li>• Nhill Lutheran School Protective Practices for Staff</li> <li>• Nhill Lutheran School Visitors Code of Conduct</li> </ul> |  |
| Review Date:  | Annually   | Next Review Date: July 2017                  |
| Policy Owner: | School Council   |  |



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ABN 12 126 972 331  
2 Mackay Street, Nhill 3418

Phone: (03) 5391 2144  
Fax: (03) 5391 1220  
email: admin@nhills.vic.edu.au  
www.nhills.vic.edu.au

## Definitions

A full list of definitions for Ministerial Order No. 870 is available at [www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes](http://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 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 contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is intermediary)



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ABN 12 126 972 331  
2 Mackay Street, Nhill 3418

Phone: (03) 5391 2144  
Fax: (03) 5391 1220  
email: admin@nhills.vic.edu.au  
www.nhills.vic.edu.au

- A minister of religion
- **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 a 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.*

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

## Health and Safety

The school has written processes in place about the health and safety of its staff and students in accordance with relevant workplace health and safety legislation.

## Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse.

Child abuse can take many forms. The abuser may be a parent, carer, staff member, volunteer, another adult or even another child. Unfortunately the nature of child abuse is complex. The abuse may occur over time and potential risk indicators are often difficult to detect. Even our legal obligations for reporting allegations of child abuse can vary depending on the circumstances of the incident.

The School will take appropriate, prompt action in response to **all** allegations or disclosures of abuse, neglect, inappropriate behaviour or concerns about child safety by reporting all matters to the Victorian Child Protection Service or the Police, depending on the allegation or disclosure made.

Nhill Lutheran School has established simple and accessible procedures for anyone to report a child abuse concern internally to one of the School's Child Protection Officers.

Nhill Lutheran School has developed and implemented procedures for Council members, staff and volunteers for responding to allegations and disclosures of child abuse, or suspected child abuse, including procedures for support following a disclosure by a student.



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ABN 12 126 972 331  
2 Mackay Street, Nhill 3418

Phone: (03) 5391 2144  
Fax: (03) 5391 1220  
email: [admin@nhills.vic.edu.au](mailto:admin@nhills.vic.edu.au)  
[www.nhills.vic.edu.au](http://www.nhills.vic.edu.au)

Reporting procedures for third party contractors, external education providers, parents/carers and other community members are also included in our Child Protection and Safety Policy which is available on our public website.

Age appropriate reporting procedures for students are developed through our pastoral care program.

## Responding to Reports of Harm

The incident reporting template (Appendix 1) should be completed and forwarded to the relevant staff member best placed to deal with such reports. If in doubt, the appropriate person to receive the report is the school's Principal. In instances where the Principal is the person alleged to have caused the harm, the report should be forwarded to a member of the school's governing body.

## Reporting Template

A reporting template which is compliant with the relevant Regulations is attached as Appendix 1.

## Awareness and Accessibility of the Policy and Procedures

The school will inform staff, students and parents of its procedures relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students in written communications to them and it will publish these procedures for their access on its website and in hard copy format at the school office.

## Training

The school will train its staff in procedures relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students on their induction and will refresh training annually. A record of attendance by staff in induction training and annual refresher sessions will be maintained by the school.

## Implementing the Policy and Procedures

The school will ensure it is implementing procedures relating to the health, safety and conduct of staff and students by auditing compliance with the procedures annually.

## Important Contact Details

Victoria Police Service 000 (in emergency)

Department of Health and Human Services [www.dhs.vic.gov.au](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au)  
1300 650 172



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ABN 12 126 972 331  
2 Mackay Street, Nhill 3418

Phone: (03) 5391 2144  
Fax: (03) 5391 1220  
email: admin@nhills.vic.edu.au  
www.nhills.vic.edu.au

## Appendix 1 - Private and Confidential

# Incident Report

## Child safe standards

The child safe standards require organisations that provide services for children<sup>1</sup> to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.<sup>2</sup> You can provide this resource to a child or their family if they disclose an allegation of abuse or safety concern in your organisation. Your staff can also use this resource to record disclosures.

All incident reports must be stored securely.

### Incident details

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Date of incident:                    |  |
| Time of incident:                    |  |
| Location of incident:                |  |
| Name(s) of child/children involved:  |  |
| Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved: |  |

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

### Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

No  Yes, Aboriginal  Yes, Torres Strait Islander

### Please categorise the incident

|  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Physical violence                        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sexual offence                           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Serious emotional or psychological abuse | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Serious neglect                          | <input type="checkbox"/> |



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ABN 12 126 972 331  
2 Mackay Street, Nhill 3418

Phone: (03) 5391 2144  
Fax: (03) 5391 1220  
email: admin@nhills.vic.edu.au  
www.nhills.vic.edu.au

## Please describe the incident

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| When did it take place? |  |
| Who was involved?       |  |
| What did you see?       |  |
| Other information       |  |

## Parent/carer/child use

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Date of incident:                    |  |
| Time of incident:                    |  |
| Location of incident:                |  |
| Name(s) of child/children involved:  |  |
| Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved: |  |

## Office use:

|                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Date incident report received:  |  |
| Staff member managing incident: |  |
| Follow-up date:                 |  |
| Incident ref. number:           |  |

## Has the incident been reported?

|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Child protection                      |  |
| Police                                |  |
| Another third party (please specify): |  |

## Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Yes

No



## CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY

Nhill Lutheran School has developed the following Child Protection and Safety Policy. This policy is an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse. It is designed to be communicated through our public website as well as through other mediums such as newsletters and in induction and welcome packs for School Council members, staff and volunteers.

**ATTENTION: THE FOLLOWING IS A CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY POLICY THAT MEETS THE GUIDELINES SET OUT IN STANDARD 2 OF THE VICTORIAN CHILD SAFE STANDARDS. THIS POLICY MUST BE REVIEWED AND AMENDED IN LIGHT OF THE SCHOOL'S SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS.**

### Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's expose to family violence. Nhill Lutheran School is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Protection Program designed to keep children safe.

At Nhill Lutheran School we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in the 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 of appropriate behaviour with the children are established in our Child Safety 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, volunteers, third party contractors \*\* and external education providers, as all are involved in child-connected work.
8. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
9. Child protection training is mandatory for all School Council \*members/directors\*, staff and 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. All children, especially those who are vulnerable for whatever reason, have a right to care and support.



12. 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.
13. Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.

*\*\*There may be some specific circumstances where a third party contractor may not be screened by the school. If this occurs specific processes will be out in place to ensure that the un-screened contractor will not be left unsupervised in the school grounds at any time when students are expected to be present.*

## 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 children protection culture;
- ✓ The promotion and open discussion of child protection issues within the School; and
- ✓ Complying with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Victoria.

## Child Protection Program

Nhill Lutheran School 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, third party contractors, external education providers, parents and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters
- ✓ Procedures for recruiting and screening School Council members, staff and volunteers
- ✓ Pastoral care 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 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



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ABN 12 126 972 331  
2 Mackay Street, Nhill 3418

Phone: (03) 5391 2144

Fax: (03) 5391 1220

email: [admin@nhills.vic.edu.au](mailto:admin@nhills.vic.edu.au)

[www.nhills.vic.edu.au](http://www.nhills.vic.edu.au)

As part of Nhill Lutheran School'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.

All staff, volunteers and School Council members are provided with additional, ongoing child protection training at least annually.

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

## Responsibilities

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. At Nhill Lutheran School all members of the School Council and staff, as well as 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 Protection and Safety Policy and the Child Protection Program are to be effectively implanted within the School and are responsible for holding the Principal and \*management/executive\* team accountable for effective implantation.

### The Principal

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

### The School's Child Protection Officers

A number of senior staff members are 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 issues.

### Staff Members

All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program and 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.

### Volunteers

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



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ABN 12 126 972 331  
2 Mackay Street, Nhill 3418

Phone: (03) 5391 2144

Fax: (03) 5391 1220

email: [admin@nhills.vic.edu.au](mailto:admin@nhills.vic.edu.au)

[www.nhills.vic.edu.au](http://www.nhills.vic.edu.au)

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.

### **Third Party Contractors**

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

All service providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program.

The School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the service provider.

### **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 a 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 Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program.

Nhill Lutheran School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the external education provider.

### **Reporting Concerns**

Our Child Protection Program provides detailed guidance for members of the School Council, staff and 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.

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

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

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



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ABN 12 126 972 331  
2 Mackay Street, Nhill 3418

Phone: (03) 5391 2144

Fax: (03) 5391 1220

email: [admin@nhills.vic.edu.au](mailto:admin@nhills.vic.edu.au)  
[www.nhills.vic.edu.au](http://www.nhills.vic.edu.au)

## Policy and Program Review

Nhill Lutheran School 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.

DATE: June 2016

FOR REVIEW: June 2017

## CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

A Child Safety Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships. For more detailed guidance refer to the School's Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.

When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is educated about the Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the School environment becomes much more transparent and people are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safety Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct set out below is designed to stand alone. It can also be incorporated in whole or part into broader Codes of Conduct that are developed within the School, including other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular staff at the School. The Code is made available to all staff, volunteers, families and students.

**ATTENTION: The following is a Child Safety code of Conduct that meets the requirements set out in Standard 3 of the Victorian Child Safe Standards. This Code of Conduct is designed to stand alone or to be integrated into the Codes of Conduct published by the School. In either case, this Code of Conduct must be reviewed and amended in light of the School's specific requirements.**

### OUR CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

This Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards students. The Code serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote child safety in the School environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. Where a staff member breaches the Code, Nhill Lutheran School may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal. The School, revises the Code annually.

Nhill Lutheran School has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our School community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, Council members, volunteers, third party contractors, external education providers and parents/carers.

#### DO:

- ✓ Behave as a positive role model to students.
- ✓ Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all students.
- ✓ Be vigilant and proactive with regard to student safety and child protection issues.
- ✓ Provide age appropriate supervision for students.
- ✓ Comply with guidelines published by the School with respect to child protection.
- ✓ Treat all students with respect.
- ✓ Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- ✓ Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students.

- ✓ Use positive and affirming language towards students.
- ✓ Encourage students to 'have a say' and then listen to them with respect.
- ✓ Respect all differences, especially (but not limited to) cultural, religious and political differences.
- ✓ Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact, and socialise.
- ✓ Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way.
- ✓ Report any breaches of this Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- ✓ Report concerns about child safety to one of the School's Child Protection Officers and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met.
- ✓ Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe.
- ✓ Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety.
- ✓ Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

#### **DO NOT:**

- ✓ Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour.
- ✓ Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with students.
- ✓ Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of the students or discriminate against any student based on culture, race ethnicity or disability.
- ✓ Engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of students.
- ✓ Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a student including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material.
- ✓ Engage in inappropriate or unnecessary physical conduct or behaviours including doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- ✓ Engage in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriately rough physical play.
- ✓ Use physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student.
- ✓ Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm.
- ✓ Develop 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- ✓ Engage in undisclosed private meetings with a student that is not your own child.
- ✓ Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- ✓ Take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent.
- ✓ Post online any information about a student that may identify them such as their: full name; age; e-mail address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group they may attend.
- ✓ Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

Our Child Protection Program includes a Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy that provides detailed guidance for all staff and volunteers on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults at Nhill Lutheran School.



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

ABN 12 126 972 331  
2 Mackay Street, Nhill 3418

Phone: (03) 5391 2144

Fax: (03) 5391 1220

email: [admin@nhills.vic.edu.au](mailto:admin@nhills.vic.edu.au)

[www.nhills.vic.edu.au](http://www.nhills.vic.edu.au)

## Report any concerns

The Program also includes information for members of the School Council, staff and 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 relevant to authorities.

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

Communications will be treated on a 'need to know' basis.

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

DATE: JUNE 2016

FOR REVIEW: JUNE 2017