



## Child Safe Officer

### **RATIONALE:**

A school leader for child safety should have sufficient status and authority, including leadership support and the ability to direct other staff (where appropriate), to undertake the role effectively.

The designated Child Safe Officer at Maffra Secondary College is the **College Wellbeing Leader**.

### **Broad areas of the role are to:**

#### ***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.

#### ***Receiving Reports and Managing Incidents***

- Act as the primary contact for students, parents, carers or the broader community, where there is need to report a child safety concern.
- Act immediately to any immediate or imminent threats to child safety.
- Immediately, or as soon as practicable, notify the principal (or person in charge for the time being) of the report.
- Following the Department of Education's "Four Critical Actions" process, notify DHHS and/or Victoria Police of the information available. **Do not** contact parents, potential witnesses or potential offenders, until the school has been cleared to do so by DHHS or Victoria Police.
- Provide support to all students, families and staff involved.

#### ***Raise awareness***

- Ensure the school's policies are known and used appropriately.
- Ensure the school's child safety policy is reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework.
- 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 children in need, those with special educational needs and young carers.
- Encourage among all staff a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings in any measures to protect them.

### ***Train***

- Being authoritative in providing advice by:
  - keeping their 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.

### **Implementation:**

The Child Safe Officer will be appointed by the principal. The Child Safe Officer will undertake the role for a period of 2 years and will be reviewed bi-annually at the beginning of each school year.