Purpose

The child safe environments policy sets out the school's approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

Scope

All staff, volunteers, contractors and whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people. This policy will apply across a range of school forums (e.g. camps, online) and outside of school hours.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Frankston Primary School is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Frankston Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Frankston Primary School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

Every person involved in Frankston Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision-making and operations, Frankston Primary School will

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Policy and procedures	Policies and procedures outlining Frankston Primary School's approach to the Child Safe Standards are outlined below. For further information, please contact the school's Principal or Assistant Principal.

<u>A child-safe culture</u>	Frankston Primary School's culture encourages staff to raise, discuss and scrutinise concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden. The school's plan for creating a child safe culture can be found on the website www.frankstonps.vic.edu.au, the Recruitment Practices Policy and the Working with Children Check Policy.
<u>Personnel understand their roles and responsibilities/Code of Conduct</u>	School leaders and managers will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school's Code of Conduct. The school's Code of Conduct sets out clear awareness of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Refer to the Victorian Institute of Teaching, Victorian Teachers Professional Codes of Conduct and Ethics
<u>Human resources practices and training</u>	The school applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with them. We will ensure that staff indication, education and training programs are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect. All prospective staff and volunteers are required to undergo National Criminal History Records check and maintain a valid Working with Children Check. The school's approach to human resources practises that ensure child safety can be found on the website www.frankstops.vic.edu.au, under the Recruitment Practices Policy and the Working with Children Policy.
<u>Reporting a child safety concern or complaint</u>	The school has clear expectations for staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. Immediate action should include reporting their concerns to the DHHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The school will take action to respond to a complaint. The school's policy and procedure for reporting a child safety concern or complaint can be found on the website www.frankstonps.vic.edu.au under the Mandatory Responding and Reporting policy.
<u>Risk reduction and Management</u>	The school believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes. The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures. The school's approach to Child Safety Risk Reduction and Management can be found on the School's Child Safe Risk Assessment Matrix.
<u>Listening to children</u>	The school has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/care givers. We encourage child and parent/care giver involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/care givers to understand their rights and their responsibilities. When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with, or abuse of, a child the school will listen to the complainant's account of things and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (or their parents/carers) informed about progress.
<u>Confidentiality and</u>	This school collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the School Privacy Policy.

<u>Privacy</u>

<u>Breaches</u>	Breaches of Duty of Care and Mandatory Reporting Obligations are identified in the specific policies.
<u>Policy evaluation and review</u>	To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework. Where appropriate the review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

<u>Definitions</u>

A full list of definitions for Ministerial Order No. 870 is available at
www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe
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:
- 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 religion3

<u>Related school policies and Documents</u>

Student Engagement & Wellbeing Policy
Mandatory Reporting Policy
Visitors Policy
Code of Conduct
Duty of Care and Supervision Policy and Procedures
Working with Children Check Policy
eSmart Policy
Excursions and Incursions Policy
Student Welfare and Discipline Policy
Bullying and Harassment Policy
DET Child Wellbeing and Safety Framework

DEVELOPED	December 2018
PRINCIPAL	Reneé Kennedy
SCHOOL COUNCIL PRESIDENT	Chad Wilson
EVALUATION	This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle, or as required due to changes in relevant Acts, Laws, DET mandates, or should situations arise that require earlier consideration.