



CREST EDUCATION CHILD SAFE FRAMEWORK

August 23rd 2016

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From the Executive Principal

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Interim Report is looking at past and current child sexual abuse and related matters in organisations and institutions, and how institutions have responded to this abuse. The Commissioners will investigate where institutions and systems have failed and what the best practice is in responding to child sexual abuse. Crest Education awaits the final report of the Royal Commission and anticipates a wide range of recommendations which are practical and respond to contemporary issues in the protection of children.

As part of the Victorian Government's commitment to implementing the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust report, there is a new regulatory landscape surrounding child safety, underpinned by new Child Safe Standards. The abuse of children should not be tolerated in our community. Crest Education is fully supportive of the Victorian Government's adoption of mandatory Child Safe Standards.

Child safety is an ongoing key focus at Crest Education. Providing a safe and supportive environment for children has always been an important part of being a Christian School. Legislation and compliance now demands all schools in Victoria to take child safety much more seriously. We are committed as a school community to doing our part to protect the children under our care. A safe environment includes developing a culture of child safety in the school, including a zero tolerance of child abuse. We all have been entrusted with an obligation to do the best we possibly can to keep our children safe from harm. We have embraced the opportunity to strengthen the safety of our operations and aim to further develop a culture of child safety. We do not simply aim for compliance with the Child Safe standards; instead we seek to be a place of excellence where Child Safety is deeply embedded into the culture of the organisation.

The feedback and support of parents, staff, volunteers and contractors in continually developing a child safe culture is greatly valued. During 2016, a key focus has been the review of existing policies and practices around student safety and wellbeing. A number of key policy documents have been updated to ensure children's safety and wellbeing is a priority and that the College is implementing procedures compliant with legislation.

The Board has recently approved a Child Safe Policy. The Child Safe Policy is a comprehensive and overarching document that provides an overview of the key elements of Crest Education's approach to creating a child safe organisation. The purpose of this policy is:

- To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within Crest Education.
- To work towards an organisational culture of child safety.
- To prevent child abuse within Crest Education.
- To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and / or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
- To provide guidance to staff / volunteers / contractors as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the College.
- To provide a clear statement to staff /volunteers / contractors forbidding any such abuse.
- To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

It takes many components and ongoing vigilance to build a child safe organisation. A key objective for Crest Education is to embed child safety practices into our culture. The work that is involved in building a child safe organisation is never completed. It is a dynamic, multifaceted and ongoing developmental process of learning, monitoring and reviewing. Maintaining a child safe organisation is not a one-off task. It must become part of our school's ongoing processes and be embedded into our culture.

The Board and Leadership Team at Crest Education are committed to implementing the following minimum Child Safe standards:

- a) Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety;
- b) a Child Safe Policy;
- c) a Child Safe Code of Conduct;
- d) screening, supervision, training, and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse;
- e) procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse;
- f) strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse; and
- g) strategies to promote child participation and empowerment.

The widely quoted traditional African proverb states, “It takes a village to raise a child”. The “village” has never been more necessary than it is today. We look forward to working with you to protect the children in our community. Please do not hesitate to contact the College if you have any questions about our Child Safe Strategy Document.

I wish to remind our school community to please call the police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a child’s safety.

Mr Geoff Grace
Executive Principal/CEO
Crest Education

July 26th 2016

Vision/Mission/Philosophy and Connection to the Child Safe standards

Vision

The Vision of Crest Education is to be a leading provider of quality Christian Education delivered by Christian Staff, ensuring the Gospel message is an integral part of all we do.

Mission

The mission of Crest Education is to partner with parents and the wider community to help develop within each student the ability and desire to find and fulfil the will of God for their lives. Crest offers human and practical resources, a unique environment and opportunities to develop the gifts and talents God has given to each member of the College community. Specifically, each student will be encouraged to develop Christian faith and character as they pursue excellence at an academic, creative and practical level, all of which are valuable.

Philosophy

Crest Education offers students an educational opportunity established on a Christian foundation. The basis of this foundation is God (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) as Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer.

As students prepare to take their place as young adults in Australian society, the College seeks to instil in them high standards of Biblical morality, an understanding of social justice and respect for others. The acquisition of knowledge, understanding and wisdom, are desired spiritual and educational outcomes for each student. Our curriculum recognises the Lordship of Christ and the Bible as the inspired Word of God. The Scriptures reveal God's desire for everyone to be in a personal relationship with Him, developing their gifts and talents in service to Him as they grow in Christian character. This relationship is considered to be a model for all other relationships, and a basis for the building of self-esteem and a fulfilling way of life.

Connection

There are three profoundly important connections between Crest's Vision and Mission and a wholehearted commitment to Child Safety.

1. As a Christian organisation which holds firmly to the understanding that all humanity is created in the image of God, we hold to be an undeniable truth that all people - regardless of age, sex, religion, economic status, intellectual capacity or educational attainment – have an inherent dignity, not for what they can do but for who they are. As a result we reaffirm that we have zero tolerance for all forms of abuse and, in particular, child abuse in its various aberrations.
2. We recognise that there is a deep brokenness in us - individually and corporately - which can only be genuinely addressed through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died that our sins may be forgiven and that our relationship with God, ourselves and one another may be restored. Whilst we look to this being perfected beyond this present age, we know that we need to be vigilant as a community so that the wellbeing of one another – particularly the most vulnerable amongst us – will remain a top priority.
3. According to Crest's philosophy, 'As students prepare to take their place as young adults in Australian society, the College seeks to instil in them high standards of Biblical morality, an understanding of social justice and respect for others.' Clearly this needs to be modelled on a daily basis through precept and action so that the graduates from Crest have had opportunity from their education to deeply imbibe a profound sense of the importance of loving God and loving others – the two greatest commandments. We pray that this proactive focus will empower Crest students and families to not only reject abuse in all its forms but also to embrace that which is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy (Philippians 4:8).

Introduction to the Child Safe Standards

The Victorian Government introduced the Child Safe Standards to improve the way organisations that provide services for children prevent and respond to child abuse that may occur within their organisation.

The Commission for Children and Young People (2015, p. 6) documented that in April 2012, the Victorian Government initiated an inquiry into the handling of child abuse allegations within religious and other non-government organisations.

The inquiry's final report, *Betrayal of Trust*, made a number of recommendations that have been acted on by Victorian governments. These included:

- Criminal law reform – offences relating to grooming, failure to protect and failure to disclose.
- Creating child safe organisations – mandatory Child Safe Standards and a reportable conduct scheme. The standards are compulsory for all organisations working with children.
- Civil law reform – removal of the time limit on legal action. Legislation has removed the previous 12-year timeframe in which victims (including family members) needed to have commenced civil legal action for damages due to wrongful death (brought by dependants of a deceased victim) or personal injury resulting from child abuse. This reform applies to both past and future cases of child abuse.

The State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services (2015a, p.1) noted that the Child Safe Standards are compulsory for all organisations providing services to children. Furthermore, the Child Safe Standards aim to drive cultural change in organisations so that protecting children from abuse is embedded in the everyday thinking and practice of leaders, staff and volunteers. The Department highlighted that will assist organisations to:

- Prevent child abuse;
- Encourage reporting of any abuse that does occur;
- Improve responses to any allegations of child abuse.

The Department of Health and Human Services (2015a, p.1) also reported, “The Child Safe Standards are a central feature of the Victorian Government’s response to the Family and Community Development Committee of the Victorian Parliament’s *Betrayal of Trust: Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations* (*Betrayal of Trust Inquiry*).”

For more information about the *Betrayal of Trust* implementation, please refer to:

www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/betrayal+of+trust+implementation

Further information about the failure to disclose offence is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation website:

www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence

Further information about the failure to protect offence is available on the Department of Justice and Regulation website:

www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

- Crest Education is committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of children involved in its programs.

- All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.
- Crest Education has zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working at Crest Education is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse.
- Child protection is a shared responsibility between the Crest Education, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the Crest Education community.
- Crest Education will consider the opinions of children and use their opinions to develop child protection policies.
- Crest Education supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers. Crest Education is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability

Use of VRQA and Other Resources

At the commencement of the 2016 academic school year, the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) provided a Child Safe Readiness Tool, which allowed schools to assess their current level of readiness to comply with the new requirements. Individual respondents using the tool could not be identified. The responses helped the VRQA to understand how to assist schools to implement the standards and provided schools with an opportunity to self-assess their progress in preparation to implement the new Child Safe Standards. The specific actions that schools are required to take to meet the standards are set out in Ministerial Order No. 870. Registered schools must meet the standards from the 1st August 2016. Around that date, the VRQA will expect schools to self-assess and attest to their own compliance with the Ministerial Order requirements.

Crest Education completed the online readiness tool on Friday, 26th February 2016. The tool highlighted a number of areas where Crest needed to act in order to be compliant with Ministerial Order No. 870 and the Child Safe Standards.

Crest has acted on each of the key action areas highlighted following the completion of this readiness tool. Additional action items have been identified and included in this document in the Action Plan.

In addition to this survey tool, the following Information Sessions were attended:

- DHHS - 8th March
- ISV - 17th March
- VRQA - 6th June

These additional resources were also accessed and utilised:

- Moores Legal – Child Protection Toolkit
- Further VRQA online resources

Summary of Child Safe Standards

In complying with the child safe standards, Crest Education must include the following principles as part of each standard:

- Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability.

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an entity to which the standards apply must have:

- **Standard 1:** Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
- **Standard 2:** A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety

- **Standard 3:** A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- **Standard 4:** Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- **Standard 5:** Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- **Standard 6:** Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- **Standard 7:** Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children

Principles of Inclusion

Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children.

A child safe organisation respects cultural differences and variations in child rearing practices due to a family's personal, cultural or religious beliefs. The Commission for Children and Young People (2015, p. 12) highlighted, "Cultural diversity refers to people who identify with particular groups based on their birthplace, ethnicity, language, values, beliefs or views."

The Commission for Children and Young People (2015, p. 12) also stated, "... a child safe organisation recognises that these differences do not reduce a child's right to be safe or the organisation's responsibility to protect the child from harm." Furthermore, "The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Interim Report noted that some children are more vulnerable to abuse, based on various factors including age, gender, ethnicity, disability, and prior abuse or neglect" (p. 12).

Crest Education acknowledges the Commission for Children and Young People (2015, p. 12) who have noted that respecting diversity means:

- Valuing and respecting people's beliefs
- Building responsive relationships
- Communicating openly and honestly to find out how best to be inclusive and respect cultural needs
- Examining our personal ideas, customs and beliefs and respecting that the beliefs of one person may not be the same as another
- Acknowledging and respecting that others can hold different beliefs of equal significance

The State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services (2015a, p. 9) documented:

Aboriginal children are significantly over-represented in institutions including child protection, youth justice and out-of-home care systems. The reasons for this are complex and influenced by past policies like forced removals, the effects of lower socio-economic status and differences in child rearing practices and intergenerational trauma. Additionally, impacts of abuse are heightened for Aboriginal children who may not feel culturally safe enough to report abuse.

The Child Safe Standards require organisations to consider cultural safety of Aboriginal children across the implementation of all the standards. Crest Education is committed to developing and updating policies and procedures to consider cultural safety of Aboriginal children. This is also reflected in the Action Plan included in this Strategy Document.

For more information and resources addressing the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, please refer to: Australian Institute of Family Studies 'Child Protection and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children' CFCA Resource Sheet September 2015, <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/child-protection-and-aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-children>

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Bringing Them Home: The 'Stolen Generation' Report (1997): www.humanrights.gov.au/our-work/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-social-justice/publications/bringing-them-home-stolen

Promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds

The Child Safe Standards require organisations to consider cultural safety of culturally and / or linguistically diverse children across the implementation of all the standards. Crest Education will consider on an ongoing basis the needs of culturally and / or linguistically diverse children when reviewing a range of wellbeing policies.

The State of Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services (2015a, pp. 9-10) highlighted: 'There is a lack of data on the incidence of abuse of children from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds. However, it is understood that these children face unique risks leading to their involvement with child protection services, including distrust of social service providers. It has been reported that culturally and / or linguistically diverse children, particularly those from refugee or asylum seeker communities, are also more likely to have experienced trauma or displacement and loss (or have parents who have) before coming to Australia. Culturally and / or linguistically diverse children and families may also experience communication barriers when it comes to reporting abuse and knowing where to go for support.

The Commission for Children and Young People (2015, p. 14) documented a range of strategies that schools can implement to promote the cultural safety. Crest Education can promote the cultural safety of children from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds by:

- Ensuring our organisation clearly demonstrates a zero tolerance to discrimination;
- Being respectful, inclusive and welcoming of families from a range of backgrounds;
- Recognising times of importance to different cultures;
- Ensuring the physical environment has a positive image of a range of cultures, in terms of decoration and artwork;
- Employing staff that are representative of your local community;
- Actively seeking out and talking to families about how they would like to be involved
- Asking about the best way to provide information to children and families

Promoting the safety of children with a disability

At Crest Education, we acknowledge that people with a disability have the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the community and should be empowered to exercise those rights and responsibilities. In particular, people with a disability have the same rights as other members of the community to live free from abuse. The Child Safe Standards require organisations to consider the safety of children with a disability across the implementation of all the standards.

Education providers must comply with the Disability Standards for Education 2005 (the Standards) under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) (the Act). The Standards give students and prospective students with a disability the right to education and training opportunities on the same basis as students without a disability. Over 2014-2016, teaching staff at Crest Education have completed a suite of eLearning modules relating to the Disability Standards for Education 2005 developed by the University of Canberra.

The Department of Health and Human Services (2015a, p. 10) reported that: 'Children with a disability have an increased risk of being abused compared with children without a disability. A number of factors may contribute to the risk of abuse including physical impairments or difficulties with speech and communication, memory, literacy, vision and hearing impairments, and reliance on caregivers. People with a disability often

receive less sexual education than their peers. These factors may also contribute to poor recognition of abuse of children with a disability.

It was also noted by the Department of Health and Human Services (2015a, p. 10) that, “Children with a disability are also less likely to receive the protection and support they need if they have been abused. Children with a disability are very diverse, with a wide range of needs depending on the nature of their disability and the individual characteristics and circumstances of the child.”

Establishing child safe policies and procedures that recognise issues relating to disability helps to make these vulnerable children and their families safer.

It has been widely reported that children with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to bullying and may have limited communication and social skills to respond in such situations. Crest Education is committed to adopting a proactive approach to this risk, which has been documented in the Action Plan included in this Strategy Document.

The Commission for Children and Young People (2015, p. 15) have highlighted a range of strategies that schools can implement to promote the safety of children with a disability. Crest Education can promote the safety of children with a disability by:

- Acknowledging that children with a disability are particularly vulnerable and ensure our risk assessment processes considers their needs;
- Ensuring our school clearly demonstrates a zero tolerance to discrimination and actively welcomes all children;
- Making sure the environment does not pose access difficulties;
- Being responsive to families regarding specific measures that may be required to ensure the safe participation of a child with a disability;
- Supporting our staff, other children and their families to understand and be inclusive of people with a disability; and,
- Thinking about how we can encourage participation and feedback from children with a disability and their families.



Standard 1 - Strategies to Embed an Organisational Culture of Child Safety, including through Effective Leadership Arrangements

MO 870 states that:

The school governing authority must:

- a) develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school;
- b) allocate roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies;
- c) inform the school community about the strategies, and allocated roles and responsibilities;
- d) put the strategies into practice, and inform the school community about these practices; and
- e) periodically review the effectiveness of the strategies put into practice and, if considered appropriate, revise those strategies.

At the conclusion of the Victorian inquiry into institutionalised child abuse, the 'Betrayal of Trust' report was tabled. The Family and Community Development Committee stated that, "...the process for responding to suspected criminal child abuse needs to be part of an organisation's culture, leadership and internal practices. The culture and senior management of an organisation must actively support the reporting of suspicions or allegations of criminal child abuse to the police and relevant authorities. The organisation must also have an ongoing commitment to reviewing and continuously improving its processes."

In line with these comments, and the legislative provisions recently introduced in Victoria, Crest Education will approach the challenge of creating a best practice model with regards to being a child-safe organisation on the following four fronts.

1. FROM THE TOP DOWN

Creating the right culture in our organisation will not be possible unless the Board and senior leadership are conspicuously and explicitly committed to ensuring a child-safe organisation. It is the overarching responsibility of the Crest Board to ensure the organisation has the appropriate policies, procedures and culture in place to both safeguard children in our care and to respond to allegations and incidents involving the safety of children.

We acknowledge that it is the responsibility, under the direction of the Board, of senior leadership to ensure that all policies, practices and procedures are adhered to, such that Crest can consistently and reasonably demonstrate that the organisation will:

- Safeguard against the risk of child abuse; and
- Respond effectively if abuse is suspected or confirmed.

In its submission to the Federal Government's Royal Commission, the Australian Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ACCG) – a network that aims to promote and protect the safety, wellbeing and rights of children and young people in Australia – set out a series of actions which organisations can adopt in order to provide a child-safe environment. The principles provide a useful framework for the Crest Board and staff to assist with embedding a child-safe culture. They are:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Implement child safety policies and procedures which support ongoing assessment and amelioration of risk;

3. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
4. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children;
5. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
6. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
7. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
8. 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;
9. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
10. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
11. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

The Crest Board and senior staff will publicly commit to these principles and will ensure that the organisation's strategic plans, vision, and mission statements include specific consideration of child safety. In addition, the Directors of Crest Education will satisfy themselves that their organisation is adhering to all legislative requirements.

Policies and procedures

A Child-safe Policy and a Code of Conduct are two essential documents for any organisation whose volunteers, employees or contractors come into contact with children. The Crest Board will ensure the organisation has appropriate policies and procedures in place to promote child safety and reduce risk.

Child-safe policy

The Crest Education Child-safe Policy will be clearly worded and include, at a minimum:

- A statement expressing the organisation's commitment to child safety;
- A definition of what constitutes child abuse;
- Procedures and decision-making processes that surround the organisation's interactions and involvement with children;
- An outline of the organisation's recruitment and supervision processes;
- Processes for identifying and managing child abuse risks;
- Processes for reporting and handling child abuse concerns and complaints;
- Processes of managing communication about suspected or actual child abuse, both internally and externally;
- A description of the roles and responsibilities of personnel involved in protecting children, including the duty of care of the Board, management, staff and volunteers;
- A statement setting out Crest Education's commitment to honouring different cultural traditions when protecting children;
- A statement setting out Crest Education's commitment to the safety of children with a disability; and
- Information about how the policy is implemented, governed and reviewed.

Code of Conduct

The Crest Board will also ensure the organisation has an up-to-date Code of Conduct that includes:

- Clear expectations that an inherent requirement for Crest staff is that they profess their own personal faith in Jesus Christ and are willing to live in light of this faith commitment with integrity, honesty and accountability. We expect that this foundational expectation will provide the basis for all staff seeking to honour the Child Safe standards, policies and practices throughout the organisation.
- Clear and specific standards of conduct for working with children in different situations relevant to the organisation (e.g. where carers are looking after children with disabilities who may require soothing or restraining);

- Clear expectations of appropriate relationships with children for staff, volunteers and families (e.g. when it is appropriate for there to be physical contact, social media boundaries, etc.);
 - Instructions on how adults will respond to any risks adults may pose to children, or that children may pose to each other;
 - Guidance about how inappropriate conduct (or conduct that is not consistent with any legislation or code) will be reported;
 - Recognition of the needs of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds; and
 - Recognition of the needs of children with a disability and appropriate behaviour and relationships for personnel and children (e.g. appropriate ways to physically and emotionally assist a child with a disability).
- **A Crest Child Safe Policy will be created which will be signed off on an annual basis. Prior to this sign off, a formal review of Crest's Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct and practices will be completed by the Board, primarily through the Risk Sub-Committee.**

2. IMPLEMENTING CHILD-SAFE POLICIES/PROCEDURES

As the Victorian Inquiry's Betrayal of Trust report highlighted, merely having policies in place does not guarantee child safety. Organisations must ensure all relevant people (volunteers, contractors and staff) have the knowledge, skills and capability required to create, implement and follow appropriate systems and processes. It's generally not enough to communicate the existence of policies and procedures; training is required as well.

Crest Education needs to have in place processes for regularly reviewing and refining policies and procedures to ensure that our organisation is compliant with:

- All mandatory processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse;
 - Any new child safety standards (as this area is regularly evolving); and
 - Any other legislative changes surrounding child safety.
- **It is imperative that the training of staff is done systematically and effectively. We acknowledge that this will require time and effective resourcing and are committed to ensuring that the Crest community is a safe place for all, including children. In light of this, the Crest Cabinet will take the responsibility to review legislation in this area at least annually and update policies accordingly. This will be done in consultation with the HR/OHS Manager. These updates will be communicated clearly to the Board as part of its annual review of Crest's Child-safe Policy and Code of Conduct.**

3. EMPOWERING CHILDREN

Organisations where children and young adults feel free to question and speak up are the most child-safe organisations of all. Through Crest Education's policies, as well as the behaviour of its leaders and staff, children should be encouraged to come forward with questions or concerns about adult behaviour.

There are a number of ways to empower children within Crest Education to speak up about both child abuse and behaviour that might lead to child abuse. These steps include:

- Ensuring all relevant policies and procedures are written in plain English and are made publicly available online;
- Making sure children know that Crest Education cares about their feelings and safety – by exhibiting child-friendly posters and statements of our values, for example;

- Discussing with children under our organisation's care or supervision the relevant policies and procedures, and providing practical examples of situations which might/would be necessary for children to disclose;
- Making a strong commitment to children's participation (i.e. being inclusive of all children) and providing staff with resources that support participation;
- Building children's confidence and assisting them to develop skills for participation, such as communication skills;
- Matching participation methods to the age, capabilities and background of the children and being adaptive to their ways of working;
- Creating opportunities for children to be involved in policy and program development, implementation and review, including being honest with children about the extent of their involvement, and giving feedback on how their views have been actioned;
- Establishing pathways and mechanisms (e.g. an anonymous suggestion box, opportunities for children to communicate with and get to trust a variety of adults, etc.) which enable children to raise concerns safely and with confidence; and
- Using inclusive and empowering, child-friendly language in everyday activities and relevant written documents.

Education

Another key factor in empowering children is to provide sensitive education on appropriate adult behaviour and how to spot and respond to the signs of inappropriate conduct. Whilst adults within our organisation must be alert to the warning signs of grooming and child sexual abuse, providing children in the care of our organisation with appropriate education about their bodies and personal boundaries will further strengthen our organisation's child protection strategy.

Education may take place face to face (e.g. in a classroom setting) or via documented resources. It is recommended that an appropriately qualified individual (such as a child psychologist, nurse or child counsellor with training expertise) provide this type of education.

The sorts of topics usually covered in such training include:

- Naming body parts – encouraging children to use proper names for body parts and explaining that certain parts are private;
- Secrets – talking to children about the differences between a good secret and a bad secret, the importance of not keeping secrets from parents, how to be alert for tricks and bribes;
- Safe and not-safe touches – an explanation about the difference between 'safe touches' and touches to private parts or those that make a child feel mad, upset or confused;
- It's OK to tell – reinforcing to children that they will never get in trouble for telling trusted adults that someone touched them or did something that they were not comfortable about;
- Adults aren't always right – explaining to children that some adults can do wrong things and it's important they let another adult know if they are worried about something
- Feelings and instincts – helping children to identify and talk about their feelings, encouraging them to trust their instincts, and telling them how to get help;
- Trusted adults – ensuring that children know who they can go to when they have a question or concern (there should always be a number of nominated personnel specified); and
- Communication – encouraging open communication and discussions about experiences and feelings. Children should also be provided with education about cyber safety to protect them against online grooming by predatory individuals. For example, many organisations do not allow staff or volunteers to be 'friends' on Facebook or other social media with children in their care. As this is the case at Crest, this should be explained to students so that they can identify inappropriate behaviour if/as it arises. There should also be education provided to both adults and children about expected behaviours and boundaries in online interactions such as social media.

- **As a result of these commitments to educating the Crest community, the Cabinet will ensure that appropriate frameworks are established and embedded to ensure that Student Voice and all relevant practices are resourced and scheduled so that all students are empowered and equipped to help to maintain their own safety and those of others around them**

4. ENABLING DISCLOSURE

In line with the robust statements made by the federal Royal Commission and the Victorian inquiry, Crest Education will seek to foster a culture that encourages all children and adults to speak up about any concerns regarding a child's wellbeing. The following statement from the Royal Commission's interim report highlights this point: "It is apparent that perpetrators are more likely to offend when an institution lacks the appropriate culture and is not managed with the protection of children as a high priority." The Victorian Betrayal of Trust report echoed this point, saying:

"Although having a process that requires personnel to report allegations or suspicions to management is important, there is also a need to ensure that the culture of the organisation supports such disclosures."

Child-safe organisations are those that foster and demonstrate openness in multiple ways. This helps to create a culture whereby all persons (including staff/contractors, volunteers, parents/carers and children) feel confident and comfortable to disclose to management any of their child safety concerns. Strategies that help to create such a culture include:

- Having management lead by example and establish an honest two-way communication between themselves and others. Management should take the time to listen to others and encourage the expression of different viewpoints;
- Insisting that all interactions between staff, volunteers, parents/carers and children are respectful;
- Talking openly and honestly, where appropriate, about any past issues, alongside steps that have been taken to ensure those issues do not occur again;
- Treating personal information confidentially and respecting individuals' privacy; and
- Being open and transparent with parents and children about Crest Education's privacy practices. This might include informing children that their counselling records could be accessed by others in certain circumstances. As recommended by the Victorian Government, Crest Education will clearly communicate child safety policies and procedures to all staff, volunteers, children and families, and publish policies for child safety on our College websites.

Protection for reporters

Every state and territory has enacted legislation which protects individuals who make reports about suspected child abuse in good faith. 'Good faith' means the reporter has a valid and reasonable concern and is acting without malice or retaliation towards the alleged offender.

As recommended by the Victorian Government, Crest Education will promote a confidential reporting culture that respects individual privacy while maintaining adequate record keeping of child safety issues.

These protections ensure that the report:

- Cannot result in the reporter being seen as unprofessional or having breached professional ethics; and
 - Does not make the reporter liable for any disciplinary or legal action (including in cases that are not proven).
- **As a child-safe organisation Crest Education shall ensure that everyone (including Board members, managers, staff, volunteers, contractors, counsellors, youth workers, chaplains, carers, parents and children – everyone) is made aware of their rights to report any concerns that they have of**

inappropriate behaviour towards children, and that they will not suffer any professional or legal consequences so long as they report in good faith. Reports need to be made internally and externally in line with Crest Education's policies and procedures and the applicable state-based legislation. In addition, Crest will seek to appoint appropriately trained Child Safety officers across the organisation.

STANDARD 1 – COMMITMENTS TO GOOD PRACTICE

Crest Education will develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school

Indicator of good practice

- Members of the Crest community (teachers, parents, students, etc) will feel empowered to discuss child safety and raise any concerns about child abuse.

Good practices

- Effective governance arrangements are in place to authorise and agree on strategies.
- Embed the goal of child safety in school documentation to convey the vision, mission and strategic direction of the school in relation to child safety.
- Recognise the diverse needs of children across Crest. For example, it is important that schools are inclusive and culturally safe places for children and parents. Importantly, some children (e.g. young children, children with a disability) are at greater risk of abuse or exploitation and need greater levels of supervision and support.
- Include child safety as a standing item on Leadership Team and Staff Meeting agendas.

Crest Education will allocate roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies

Indicator of good practice

- Key people have appropriate skills and capacity to undertake child safety roles and responsibilities. This includes teachers and school leaders and also extends to support staff, student counsellors, business managers of contracted service providers who work with or near school children.

Good practices

- School-based roles and responsibilities for child safety are known and understood across the Crest community.
- Students, school staff, and members of the Crest community know who to contact if they have a concern about child safety in the school.
- Capability will be continuously built by
 - making training available in relation to key responsibilities
 - including responsibilities in position descriptions or as part of staff development processes
 - providing ongoing induction and training for all staff and volunteers in child safety including how to recognise and respond to child abuse.

Crest Education will inform the school community about the strategies and allocated roles and responsibilities

Indicator of good practice

- Child safety is a core part of Crest's public and internal communication.

Good practices

- Crest's communications about the child safe strategies:
 - identifies key people and roles
 - covers the roles of all people in the Crest community
 - covers the range of school environments (e.g. camps, online)

- uses a mix of communication tools (verbal, online, print).
- Provide opportunities for staff, students, parents and the Crest community to engage with child safety (e.g. community forums).

Crest Education will put the strategies into practice, and inform the school community about these practices.

Indicator of good practice:

- Keep the Crest community updated about progress in putting strategies into practice, changing strategies or developing new strategies.

Good practices:

- Child safety champions – one or more roles in the school with responsibility to promote, monitor and/or report on the implementation of Crest’s child safety strategies (with appropriate leadership support).
- Report progress to the Crest Board.
- Provide ongoing opportunities for staff, students, parents and the Crest community to engage with child safety issues (e.g. community forums).

Crest Education will periodically review the effectiveness of the strategies put into practice and, if considered appropriate, revise those strategies

Indicator of good practice:

- There is a system (including schedule, roles and reporting) for periodic review (e.g. every year) and improvement of child safety related policies and practices.

Good practices:

- Proactively planning Crest’s approach to review, including governance oversight.
- Consult with staff, and the wider school community to inform strategic decisions about child safety.
- Consider continuous improvement opportunities such as incorporating child safety questions in existing surveys to measure awareness and confidence in Crest’s approach.
- Conduct a review after a potential risk or report occurs in the school.
- Outcomes of all reviews are communicated.

Resources and References

- Victorian Government, Education & Reform Act 2006, Gazette No. S2, January 2016, *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools*, Ministerial Order No. 870.
- Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (2016) *Information Sheet. CHILD SAFETY STANDARD 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety.*
- Commission for Children and Young People (2015) *A Guide For Creating A Child Safe Organisation*, Version 2.0.
- A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST
- Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations - elearning module (log-in required)
- State of Victoria (2010) *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people: A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection*, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children’s Services and Victorian School



Standard 2 - Crest Child Protection Policy

INTRODUCTION

Crest Education is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

Everyone working and volunteering at Crest Education is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

MO 870 states that:

The school governing authority must ensure that the school has a child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety that details:

- (a) The values and principles that will guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe school environment; and
- (b) The actions the school proposes to take to:
 - (i) demonstrate its commitment to child safety and monitor the school's adherence to its child safety policy or statement of commitment
 - (ii) support, encourage and enable school staff, parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters; and
 - (iii) support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse.

The school governing authority must inform the school community about the policy or statement, and make the policy or statement publicly available.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is

1. To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within Crest Education.
2. To work towards an organisational culture of child safety.
3. To prevent child abuse within Crest Education.
4. To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
5. To provide guidance to staff/volunteers/contractors as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation.
6. To provide a clear statement to staff/volunteers/contractors forbidding any such abuse.
7. To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

POLICY

Crest Education is committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of children involved in its programs.

All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

Crest Education has zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working at Crest Education is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse.

Child protection is a shared responsibility between Crest Education, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the Crest Education community.

Crest Education will consider the opinions of children and use their opinions to develop child protection policies.

Crest Education supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers. Crest Education is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

AUTHORISATION

Mr Mathew Daniels
Board Chairman
Crest Education

July 2016

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Board** of Crest Education has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. The Board is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Protection Code of Conduct are in place.

The **Executive Principal/CEO** of Crest Education is responsible for:

- Dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct;
- Ensuring that all adults within the Crest Education community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures;
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety);
- Providing support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All **managers** must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate/minimise any risk to the extent possible;
- Educate employees about the prevention and detection of child abuse; and
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities.

Management should be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

All **staff/volunteers/contractors** share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:

- Familiarise themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and Crest Education's policies and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
- Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and/or the state-based child protection service) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters;
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their supervisor (or, if their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to a responsible person in the organisation); and
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

EMPLOYMENT OF NEW PERSONNEL

Crest Education undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all workers and volunteers which aims to:

- Promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation;
- Identify the safest and most suitable people who share Crest Education's values and commitment to protect children; and
- Prevent a person from working at Crest Education if they pose a risk to children.

Crest Education requires all workers/volunteers to pass through the organisation's recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with Crest Education.

For schools: Persons applying for a role as a teacher with either Hillcrest Christian College, Rivercrest Christian College or the Ayr Hill Equestrian Centre must be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

Crest Education may require applicants to provide a police check in accordance with the law and as appropriate, before they commence working at Crest Education and during their time with Crest Education at regular intervals.

Crest Education will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure. Once engaged, workers/volunteers must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Crest Education will ensure that child safety is a part of its overall risk management approach. Crest Education will have a risk and compliance sub-committee committed to identifying and managing risks at Crest Education. Risk and compliance sub-committee members will receive regular training in relation to child safety.

REPORTING

Any staff member, volunteer or contractor who has grounds to suspect abusive activity must immediately notify the appropriate child protection service or the police. They should also advise their supervisor about their concern.

In situations where the supervisor is suspected of involvement in the activity, or if the person having the suspicion does not believe that the matter is being appropriately addressed or dealt with, the matter should be reported to the next highest level of supervision.

Supervisors must report complaints of suspected abusive behaviour or misconduct to the CEO and also to any external regulatory body such as the police.

Legislation	Mandated Reporters	When must a report be made?	Who is a Child?
<i>Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)</i>	Any person 18 years or older	A mandated reporter must make a report if they form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child by another person of or over the age of 18 years. NB: exceptions may apply.	A person under 16 years old
<i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)</i>	Registered medical practitioners, midwives and registered nurses Teachers registered or granted permission to teach under the Education, Training and Reform Act 2006 Principals Police	A mandated reporter must make a report if: They form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse; The parents cannot or will not protect the child; and The belief is formed in the course of practising his/her position of employment. NB: exceptions may apply.	A person under 17 years old

INVESTIGATING

If the appropriate child protection service or the police decide to conduct an investigation of this report, all employees, contractors or volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation.

Whether or not the authorities decide to conduct an investigation, the CEO will consult with the authorities to determine whether an internal investigation is appropriate. If it is decided that such an investigation will

not conflict with any proceeding of the authorities, the CEO may decide to conduct such an investigation. All employees, contractors and volunteers must co-operate fully with the investigation. Any such investigation will be conducted according to the rules of natural justice.

The CEO will make every effort to keep any such investigation confidential; however, from time to time other members of staff may need to be consulted in conjunction with the investigation.

After an initial review and a determination that the suspected abuse warrants additional investigation, the CEO shall coordinate the investigation with the appropriate investigators and/or law enforcement officials. Internal or external legal representatives will be involved in the process, as deemed appropriate.

RESPONDING

If it is alleged that a member of staff, contractor or a volunteer may have committed an offence or have breached the organisation's policies or its Code of Conduct the person concerned may be stood down (with pay, where applicable) while an investigation is conducted.

If the investigation concludes that on the balance of probabilities an offence (or a breach of the organisation's policies or Code of Conduct) has occurred then disciplinary action may follow, up to and including dismissal or cessation of involvement with the organisation. The findings of the investigation will also be reported to any external body as required.

PRIVACY

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved unless there is a risk to someone's safety. Crest Education will have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.

Everyone is entitled to know how the personal information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will be able to access it.

REVIEWING

Every two years, and following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether the organisation's child protection policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children under the organisation's care.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- This policy must be read in conjunction with:
 - The law of the Commonwealth or of the relevant state or territory
 - Crest Education's Staff Code of Conduct
 - Crest Education's Child Safe Code of Conduct
 - Risk Management Policy
 - Staff Employment Policy
 - Whistleblower Policy

AUTHORISATION

Mr Geoff Grace
Executive Principal
Crest Education

July 2016



Standard 3 – Crest Child Safety Code of Conduct for Employees, Contractors and Volunteers Working with Children and Young People

MO870 states that:

The school governing authority must develop, endorse, and make publicly available a code of conduct that:

- a) has the objective of promoting child safety in the school environment;
- b) sets standards about the ways in which school staff are expected to behave with children;
- c) takes into account the interests of school staff (including other professional or occupational codes of
- d) conduct that regulate particular school staff), and the needs of all children; and
- e) is consistent with the school's child safety strategies, policies and procedures as revised from time to time.

All management, staff, volunteers and contractors at Crest Education are required to abide by this Code.

An inherent requirement for Crest staff is that they profess their own personal faith in Jesus Christ and are willing to live in light of this faith commitment with integrity, honesty and accountability, recognising that the welfare of all children in the organisation is everybody's responsibility. We expect that this faith foundation will provide the basis for all staff seeking to honour the Child Safe standards, policies and practices throughout the organisation. We also expect that this same behaviour will be exemplified by Contractors and Volunteers who work with and around children across Crest.

Under the Executive Principal, management will:

1. Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of staff and volunteers;
2. Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards staff and volunteers; and
3. Nominate Child Safety Officers to provide information and support to all staff, volunteers, children, young people and their carers regarding child safety matters.

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children.

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of Crest Education will:

1. Work towards ensuring the complete safety of all children at Crest;
2. Be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities in their area;
3. Maintain a duty of care towards others involved in these programs and activities;
4. Establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work;
5. Be fair, considerate and honest with others;
6. Treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas and opinions;
7. Act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people;
8. Be professional in their actions;
9. Maintain strict impartiality;
10. Comply with specific organisational guidelines on physical contact with children;
11. Respect the privacy of children, their families and teachers/carers, and only disclose information to people who have a need to know;

12. Treat students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities.
13. Maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people;
14. Operate within the policies and guidelines of Crest Education
15. Listen and respond to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
16. Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and students with a disability
17. Report any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the College's leadership and/or Child Safety Officers
18. Understand and comply with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
19. Ensure as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm, if child abuse is suspected.
20. Contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone 000).

No person shall:

1. Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people;
2. Unlawfully discriminate against any child;
3. Engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them;
4. Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context;
5. Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves;
6. Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily and for more than a very short time;
7. Develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs;
8. Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention;
9. Communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter;
10. Photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes;
11. Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
12. Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children;
13. Use inappropriate language in the presence of children;
14. Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse;
15. Ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate;
16. Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting;
17. Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.

More specific procedural provisions will be necessary to deal with particular circumstances and difficult situations – for example, sports coaching may legitimately involve some forms of physical contact. This information will be updated and communicated with relevant staff/volunteers/contractors on an 'as needs' basis.

What happens if you breach this Child Safe Code of Conduct

If you breach this Code of Conduct you will face disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment or cessation of engagement with Crest Education. At the discretion of the Crest Executive Principal, some matters may be deemed sufficiently serious to warrant referral to the Victoria Police.

AUTHORISATION

Mr Mathew Daniels
Board Chairman
Crest Education

July 2016



Standard 4 – Effective Human Resources Practices to Reduce Child Abuse by New and Existing Personnel

MO870 states that:

- (1) Subject to the requirements of the ETR Act, the school governing authority must ensure that the school implements practices for a child-safe environment in accordance with this clause.
- (2) Each job or category of jobs for school staff that involves child-connected work must have a clear statement that sets out:
 - (a) the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety; and
 - (b) the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.
- (3) All applicants for jobs that involve child-connected work for the school must be informed about the school's child safety practices (including the code of conduct).
- (4) In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child-connected work:
 - (a) Working with Children Check status, or similar check;
 - (b) Proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
 - (c) The person's history of work involving children; and
 - (d) References that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
- (5) The school need not comply with the requirements in Clause 10(4) if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information set out in Clauses 10(4)(a) to 10(4)(d) about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.
- (6) The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:
 - (a) the induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child-connected work; and
 - (b) monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for child-connected work.
- (7) The school must implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

Explanatory note: To be 'satisfied', it is not necessary that the school governing authority make each decision about the selection and supervision of school staff engaged in child-connected work. The school governing authority needs to be satisfied about the appropriateness of the school's arrangements that would regulate or guide other people who make such decisions for or on behalf of the school about child safety matters and child-connected work.

Please refer to the **Working with Children Act 2005** which establishes a process to screen persons engaging or intending to engage in child-related work through a Working with Children Check, and also sets out exemptions from that requirement for volunteers, parents and others.

Crest Education makes a commitment to having effective human resources practices which will seek to screen, induct, supervise, train and appraise potential and current staff and volunteers to reduce the risk of child abuse within the organisation.

OVERVIEW

It is important for organisations to have strong human resources practices to help protect children from abuse. Crest Education shall foster a culture of openness and inclusiveness, as well as be aware that people who may wish to harm children could target specific organisations. Robust human resources practices are a good way of reducing these risks. Human resources practices include the recruitment, training and supervision of all personnel.

To achieve this, Crest shall provide opportunities for employees and volunteers to develop and maintain skills to ensure child safety. This will support staff and volunteers to understand the importance of child safety and wellbeing, and enable them to consistently follow child safety policies and procedures.

CHILD SAFETY OFFICER

Employees and volunteers could be supported through the appointment of an individual Child Safety Officer with specified 'child-safe' duties in their job description, including being the designated person to hear or be informed about all allegations or concerns, and providing support to other personnel. This will assist Crest in ensuring that child safety is prioritised, and that any allegations of abuse or safety concerns are recorded and responded to consistently and in line with Crest's legal requirements and policies and procedures.

A designated Child Safety Officer also provides a single contact for children, parents and employees/volunteers to seek advice and support regarding the safety and wellbeing of children associated with your organisation.

TRAINING AND INDUCTION

Training and education is an important tool to help people understand that child safety is everyone's responsibility. Employees and volunteers (in addition to parents/guardians and children) need to be supported to discuss child protection issues and to detect signs of potential child abuse.

Staff should receive induction and ongoing training. New staff will need support and information when they begin their new role, and existing staff might need to develop new skills and knowledge to meet the requirements of their positions and expand their career options.

Training and support also promotes an awareness of the appropriate standards of care required to be met by employees and volunteers to ensure that the organisation meets its duty of care when providing services to children.

Crest staff and volunteers will be required to commit to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children, by signing Crest's Code of Conduct. Training will enhance the skills and knowledge of employees and volunteers, and reduce exposure to risks.

Employees and volunteers working with children need to receive training in the following areas:

- identifying, assessing and reducing or removing child abuse risks
- Crest's policies and procedures (including the Code of Conduct and Child Safe Policy)
- legislative requirements, such as obligations to report child abuse, reduce and remove known risks of child abuse, and to hold Working with Children Checks where required
- how to handle a disclosure or suspicion of abuse, including Crest's reporting guidelines
- cultural awareness training.

Training can be formal such as:

- higher education training and accreditation
- training offered by external organisations
- training developed and delivered internally
- on-the-job training meeting key objectives.

Training can also be informal such as:

- inviting other professionals to speak at meetings or functions
- inviting local culturally and/or linguistically diverse community members to speak at meetings and events
- internal mentoring and coaching.

SUPERVISION

Supervision of employees and volunteers should be managed in a way that protects children from abuse and improves accountability and performance, without being onerous or heavy-handed. For instance, where practical, two staff members should be present during activities with children. In particular, children with a disability may require additional supervision.

As a matter of good practice, new employees and volunteers should be supervised regularly to ensure they understand their role and learn skills, as well as to check that their behaviour towards children is appropriate. Any warning signs should be reported through appropriate channels, including Crest's internal reporting procedures (such as the Child Safety Officer and leadership), the Department of Health and Human Services (child protection), or police if a child is believed to be at imminent risk.

PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

A proactive performance development strategy will be used to improve employees' and volunteers' skills and knowledge on child safety. This is also an opportunity to improve knowledge and skills in working with children, as well as recognising and responding to suspected abuse.

Performance will be measured against Crest's standards of conduct and care to ensure that employees and volunteers meet expected outcomes. These standards must align with those of the Code of Conduct and Child Safe Policy so everyone can be aware of the expectations of your organisation and appropriate behaviour.

RECRUITMENT PRACTICES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS

RECRUITMENT CHECKLIST FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS

Robust recruitment processes help ensure the best applicants are employed. From advertising through to conducting interviews and checking the background of applicants, it is important that each step is done consistently and thoroughly.

This checklist will guide Crest through critical steps in the recruitment process. It includes objectives and examples for:

- Selection criteria in job descriptions
- Advertising
- Face-to-face interviews including behavioural-based questions and questions about motives for wanting to work with children
- Working With Children Checks
- Police record checks and identity checks (including international police record checks where necessary)
- Reference checks over the telephone with recent line managers
- Probation periods.

Selection criteria

Developing appropriate selection criteria for the position is a valuable first step to reducing the risk of appointing someone who poses a child safety risk. It will also ensure that applicants have the specific knowledge and skills required for the position.

Examples of appropriate selection criteria may include:

'Must have experience working with children.'

'Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with children.'

Does your selection criteria clearly state the experience, qualifications, qualities and attributes expected from the successful applicant?	
Does your selection criteria outline the supervision and accountability processes in place which support child safety?	

Remember to ensure your selection criteria provides for the safety of all children. Your applicants should have the opportunity to indicate their understanding of, or any experience they have in working with children with diverse needs and/or backgrounds.

Does your selection criteria include a demonstration of the needs of children with a disability?

Does your selection criteria include a demonstration of Aboriginal cultural safety and awareness?

Does your selection criteria include a demonstration of cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds?

Advertising

Planning the advertisement and its placement provides a good opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to safeguarding children and deter would-be offenders.

Does the advertisement include a message about Crest's commitment to child safety?	
Does the advertisement include reference to Crest's Code of Conduct and Child Safe Policy?	
Does the advertisement inform applicants that appropriate rigorous reference and background checking will be undertaken, including a Working with Children Check and police record and identity check?	

It is imperative that Crest promotes the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability. A suggested approach may be:

'Crest promotes the safety, wellbeing and inclusion of all children, including those with a disability.'

'Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with children with a disability.'

Has the job advertisement included a statement about Crest's commitment to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability?	
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It is important that Crest be culturally safe for Aboriginal children, and encourage participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children. A suggested approach may be:

'Crest promotes the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children, and encourages applications from Aboriginal peoples.'

Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with Aboriginal children and/or communities.'

Has the job advertisement included a statement about Crest's commitment to cultural safety, inclusion and empowerment of Aboriginal children, their families and communities?	
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It is important that Crest promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. A suggested approach may be:

'Crest promotes the safety and wellbeing of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and encourages applications from people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse background.'

Applicants are welcome to elaborate on experience they may have working with children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background.'

Has the job advertisement included a statement about Crest's commitment to the safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds?	
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Interviews

The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right people for the organisation and in identifying any people who may pose a risk to children. Give yourself sufficient time to plan and prepare for the interview process, and form an interview panel with the right mix of experience and skills to carry out the interview, ensuring that all panel members are clear on what the position requires.

An open-ended style of behavioural-based questioning will give you insight into the applicant's values, attitudes and understanding of professional boundaries and accountability. Some useful questions may include:

'Tell us about why you want to work with children?'

'Describe a time when you had to manage a child whose behaviour you found challenging?'

'Tell us about a time when you had to comfort a distressed child?'

Have you prepared a list of open-ended questions which will determine how the interviewee will behave in certain situations?	
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Take notice of your own thoughts and feelings when interacting with the applicant. Ask for more information if the applicant does not provide sufficient information in his or her responses.

Did you notice any warning signs, such as:

• Unexplained lengthy gaps in employment history	
• The applicant says they do not value or 'need' supervision	
• The applicant is evasive or inconsistent in his or her answers	

Pre-employment screening

Screening applicants (including for paid and volunteer positions) is a good tool for helping to prevent people who may abuse children from entering Crest.

POLICE CHECKS

It is important to be upfront and ask the applicant if they have any criminal convictions, formal disciplinary action taken against them, or any finding of improper or unprofessional conduct. This could involve the applicant signing a declaration as part of an application form.

You could also cover this in a face-to-face interview. This may be challenging for the interview panel, particularly if the person is already known to you, but the applicant's response should demonstrate a sufficient level of professionalism as well as an understanding of your obligations. To help introduce this difficult topic, you could say to the applicant that you have some specific questions about child safety because your organisation takes child safety seriously.

Have you included a question about whether the applicant has any criminal convictions, cautions, other legal or pending cases, including formal disciplinary action, which may affect their suitability to work with children?	
If addressed during a face-to-face interview, did you take notice of how the applicant responds to questions with regard to his or her words and body language?	
Have you undertaken a police record check (which includes identity check)?	

Working with Children Check

Under the *Working with Children Act 2005*, people who are doing child-related work, and who are not exempt, need a Working with Children Check. This applies to both paid and volunteer workers. Full details of the [Working with Children Check process](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) can be found on the Working with Children website <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>.

Does the applicant hold a valid Working with Children Check, if required? Have you checked the validity of their Working with Children Check < online.justice.vic.gov.au/wwccu/checkstatus.doj >?	
or If the applicant does not hold a valid Working with Children Check, and it is required, has the applicant provided evidence that they have applied for a Working with Children Check, and does your organisation have processes to follow up pending applications?	
Has the applicant provided you with evidence of their Working with Children Check, or evidence of their application for a Working with Children Check?	

Referee checks

You should always talk to at least two referees as this can provide insight into the applicant's character and skills. Line managers, particularly the most recent, are likely to provide you with the most accurate reference. Where possible, referees that can provide insights into the applicant's experience working with children should be contacted.

Do the referees provided by the applicant include line managers who can be objective, rather than colleagues or friends?	
Has the applicant provided their most recent line manager as a referee? If not, have they provided you with a satisfactory reason?	
Have you spoken to at least two of the referees by telephone? Did you confirm with them their name and position provided to you by the applicant?	

When speaking with the referees, you should seek to establish the referee's relationship with the applicant, including:

- how long the applicant and referee worked together
- the specifics of the position
- the applicant's perceived strengths and weaknesses
- whether the referee would hire the person again, particularly in a role working with children, and whether they have any concerns about the applicant working with children.

You should ask referees directly about any concerns they may have about the applicant working with children. To help introduce this difficult topic, you could say you have some specific questions about child safety because your organisation takes child safety seriously. Take note of any pauses or gaps in the referee's responses.

Ask behaviour-based questions like:

• 'What did the applicant do when...[for example, they had to comfort a distressed child]?'	
• 'Do you have any concerns about the applicant's attitude towards Aboriginal peoples/people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds / people with a disability?'	
• 'Do you have any concerns about the applicant working with children?'	
• 'Would you employ this person again?'	

Additional checks

Additional checks will confirm the identity of the applicant and that their responses have been truthful.

Have you checked the identity of the applicant (for example, that their driver's licence/passport has the same name they have provided you)?	
Did you see a certified copy of the applicant's qualifications (if required)?	

Probation periods

Probation periods can help you assess a new staff member's performance and suitability for the job before confirming their permanent employment. If you have any concerns about the person working with children, you should seriously consider whether you want them to remain in the job and your organisation.

The length of probation periods can vary and are usually between three and six months.

You should consider whether the person should receive closer supervision and additional training throughout the probation period. A probation period can offer an opportunity to set goals with new staff members and identify training, supervision and other support needs.



Standard 5 – What to do when an Allegation of Child Abuse is made

MO 870 states that:

- (1) The school governing authority must have a clear procedure or set of procedures for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse in accordance with this clause and other legal obligations.
- (2) The school governing authority must ensure that the procedure is sensitive to the diversity characteristics of the school community; made publicly available; and accessible to children, school staff, and the wider community.
- (3) The procedure must:
 - (a) cover all forms of 'child abuse' as defined in the ETR Act;
 - (b) apply to allegations or disclosures of child abuse made by or in relation to a child, school staff, visitors, or other persons while connected to a school environment;
 - (c) identify the positions of the person or people who are responsible for:
 - (i) promptly managing the school's response to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, and ensuring that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously;
 - (ii) responding appropriately to a child who makes or is affected by an allegation of child abuse;
 - (iii) monitoring overall school compliance with this procedure; and
 - (iv) managing an alternative procedure for responding to an allegation or disclosure if the person allocated responsibility under Clause 11(3)(c)(i) cannot perform his or her role;
 - (d) include a statement that fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in the procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse;
 - (e) clearly describe the actions the school will take to respond to an allegation of child abuse, including actions to:
 - (i) inform appropriate authorities about the allegation (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);
 - (ii) protect any child connected to the alleged child abuse until the allegation is resolved; and
 - (iii) make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of child abuse and the school's response to it.
- (4) The procedure must not:
 - (a) prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school;
 - (b) state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation;
 - (c) require staff to make a judgment about the truth of the allegation of child abuse; or
 - (d) prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse.

Crest Education will provide services for children to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. This standard is designed to provide guidance on what to do if a child discloses an incident of abuse, or if a parent/carers raises a concern or allegation of abuse which may have taken place in the organisation.

The following document outlines an appropriate response to a report of alleged abuse. Staff will be trained in how to safely and sensitively manage such disclosures.

1. IF A CHILD DISCLOSES AN INCIDENT OF ABUSE

- Try and separate them from the other children discreetly and listen to them carefully.
- Let the child use their own words to explain what has occurred.
- Reassure the child that you take what they are saying seriously, and it is not their fault and that they are doing the right thing.
- Explain to them that this information may need to be shared with others, such as with their parent/carer, specific people at Crest, or the police.
- Do not make promises to the child such as promising not to tell anyone about the incident, except that you will do your best to keep them safe.
- Do not leave the child in a distressed state. If they seem at ease in your company, stay with them.
- Provide them with an incident report form to complete, or complete it together, if you think the child is able to do this.
- As soon as possible after the disclosure, record the information using the child's words and report the disclosure to your Head of College or Crest's **Child Safety Officer**, police or child protection**.
- Ensure the disclosure is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely.

2. IF A PARENT/CARER SAYS THEIR CHILD HAS BEEN ABUSED IN CREST EDUCATION OR RAISES A CONCERN

- Explain that Crest Education has processes to ensure all abuse allegations are taken very seriously.
- Ask about the wellbeing of the child.
- Allow the parent/carer to talk through the incident in their own words.
- Advise the parent/carer that you will take notes during the discussion to capture all details.
- Explain to them the information may need to be repeated to authorities or others, such as Crest's management or Child Safety Officer, the police or child protection**.
- Do not make promises at this early stage, except that you will do your best to keep the child safe.
- Provide them with an incident report form to complete, or complete it together.
- Ask them what action they would like to take and advise them of what the immediate next steps will be.
- Ensure the report is recorded accurately, and that the record is stored securely.

****Department of Health and Human Services**

During business hours – Eastern and south-eastern rural and regional 1800 020 202

After hours and to report concerns about the immediate safety of a child:

Child Protection Crisis Line (24 hours) 13 12 78

Victoria Police - Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT)

Contact the appropriate local office: Southern Metropolitan (03) 9556 6128

Cultural/Language/Disability Barriers

You need to be aware that some people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers in reporting allegations of abuse. For example, people from some cultures may experience anxiety when talking with police, and communicating in English may be a barrier for some. You need to be sensitive to these issues and meet people's needs where possible, such as having an interpreter present (who could be a friend or family member).

If an allegation of abuse involves an Aboriginal child, you will need to ensure a culturally appropriate response. A way to help ensure this could include engaging with parents of Aboriginal children, local Aboriginal communities or Aboriginal community controlled organisations to review policies and procedures. Some children with a disability may experience barriers disclosing an incident.

GENERAL TIPS FOR COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY

- Speak to a person with a disability as you would speak to anyone else. Speak in an age-appropriate tone. Treat adults as adults.
- If a person with a disability is accompanied by another person such as a carer, address your questions directly to the person with a disability.
- Put the person first, not their disability. For example, use the term “a person with a disability” rather than “a disabled person”.
- Try to avoid negative phrases such as “suffers from” and “crippled”. Use the phrase “people who use a wheelchair” rather than “wheelchair bound”.

COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH PHYSICAL DISABILITIES

- Remember that a person’s personal space can include their wheelchair and crutches. Do not touch or push a person’s wheelchair or move their crutches or walking stick without their permission.
- When speaking with a person who uses a wheelchair, try to find something to sit on in order to be at eye level with them.

COMMUNICATING WITH PEOPLE WITH A VISION IMPAIRMENT

- When you meet people who have a vision impairment, always address them by name and introduce yourself by name.
- Speak clearly and in a normal voice. There is no need to raise your voice.
- Remember that people with a vision impairment cannot rely on the same visual cues as people who do not have a vision impairment. Make sure you verbalise any thoughts or feelings.
- If a person is accompanied by a guide dog, do not pat it, feed it or otherwise distract it while it is in a harness. A dog in a harness is working.
- When you enter or leave a room, say something that indicates your presence or that you are leaving. This ensures that the person who has a vision impairment will not be embarrassed by speaking to an empty space.

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

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

While the Child Safe Standards focus on the entire Crest organisation, every adult who reasonably believes that a child has been abused, whether in their organisation or not, has an obligation to report that belief to authorities.

The **failure to disclose** criminal offence requires all adults (aged 18 and over) who hold a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 to disclose that information to police (unless they have a reasonable excuse not to, for example because they fear for their safety or the safety of another).

While failure to disclose only covers child sexual abuse, all adults should report other forms of child abuse to authorities. Failure to disclose does not change mandatory reporting responsibilities.

Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), principals and police) must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

The **failure to protect** criminal offence (commenced on 1 July 2015) applies where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of

authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so.

Embedding This Standard

Crest Education will

- Continually equip staff and volunteers in how to report* and identify signs of risk. Where possible, staff and volunteers will be directed towards accessible training materials.
- Publicise and make accessible avenues for reporting concerns for children and families.
- Institute feedback processes for staff, volunteers, children and families on organisational policies and procedures.
- Ensure children are safe, and that procedures for responding to alleged abuse are fair and focus on child safety, for example by suspending the alleged perpetrator or providing them with alternate duties pending investigation.
- Provide support and comfort to a child reporting abuse or safety concerns, and never blame or interrogate a child.
- Contact parents / carers as appropriate.
- Provide ongoing support (e.g. helping them understand their rights and processes that will follow), and/or make referrals for support (e.g. counselling).
- Review organisational child safe policies and procedures and organisational responses following an incident to help drive continuous improvement.



CHILD SAFETY INCIDENT REPORT

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?

No ☐

Yes, Aboriginal ☐

Yes, Torres Strait Islander ☐

PLEASE CATEGORISE THE INCIDENT:

Physical violence

Sexual offence

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious neglect

PLEASE DESCRIBE THE INCIDENT

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

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OFFICE USE:

Date incident report received by Child Safety Officer:	
Follow-up actions by CSO:	
Date incident report received by Head of College:	
Follow-up actions by Head of College:	
Date incident report received by Executive Principal:	
Follow-up actions by Executive Principal:	

HAS THE INCIDENT BEEN REPORTED?

	Date:	By:
Child protection		
Police		
Another third party (please specify):		

INCIDENT REPORTER WISHES TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS?

Yes ☐ No ☐



Standard 6 – Child Safety Risk Management Strategies

MO870 states that:

- (1) The school governing authority must develop and implement risk management strategies regarding child safety in school environments.
- (2) The school's risk management strategies regarding child safety must identify and mitigate the risk(s) of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of each school environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.
- (3) If the school governing authority identifies risks of child abuse occurring in one or more school environments the authority must make a record of those risks and specify the action(s) the school will take to reduce or remove the risks (**risk controls**).
Explanatory note: Different risk controls may be necessary for particular groups of children depending on the nature of the risk and the diversity characteristics of children affected by the risk.
- (4) As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the school governing authority must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.
- (5) At least annually, the school governing authority must ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to the individual members of the school governing authority and school staff about:
 - (a) individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse;
 - (b) child abuse risks in the school environment; and
 - (c) the school's current child safety standards.

Crest Education has an important responsibility for keeping children safe. Steps have always been taken to protect children from abuse. More can be done, however, particularly in respect to ensuring that Crests risk management strategies meet all the child safety requirements set out in Ministerial Order No. 870.

Child Safe Standard 6 requires the school governing authority to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate risk management strategies to ensure child safety in school environments.

The following document outlines an appropriate response to this standard. This will be overseen by the entire Crest Board and managed by the Board's Risk Committee, in consultation with senior staff across the organisation. Standard 6 will be implemented through attention to the following 5 requirements.

Before looking at the 5 Requirements, there needs to be a clear statement on the nature of the Risk Management approach.

What is a child safety risk management strategy?

A child safety risk management strategy is a formal and structured approach to managing risks associated with child safety. The strategy outlines how risk is managed, including who is responsible for the process (the school governing authority), and a description of the process itself. The process includes risk assessment,

implementation of controls, and a monitoring and review process to ensure the currency of the risk management approach.

Managing risk typically involves the following steps and considerations.

1. Identify the school's child safety risks.
 - What are the areas of concern or hot spots?
 - What could go wrong?
2. Identify any existing risk mitigation measures or internal controls.
 - What strategies, practices, or procedures are in place to control the risk?
 - Have they been fully implemented?
 - Are staff, contractors, volunteers, parents and students aware of them?
 - How effective are they?
3. Assess and rate the school's child safety risks given the existing controls in place, taking into account the likelihood of risk, and the likely consequence of the risk.
 - What are the consequences?
 - What is the likelihood of those consequences?
4. If the risk rating is more than the 'acceptable level', identify further risk management strategies through additional controls or other prevention, detection or mitigation strategies and then re-assess the risk.
 - What is the 'acceptable level' of risk? For child safety, there should be little or no tolerance of risk.
 - What strategies, practices, or procedures could be put in place to control or manage the risk?

The risk management process should be documented, recorded and reviewed periodically. Effective risk management strategies are dynamic and change over time as new risks arise and others may no longer be relevant.

Requirement 1

The Crest Education Board must develop and implement risk management strategies regarding child safety in school environments.

Risk questions	Yes	Not yet	When
Does Crest have a structured and documented approach to identifying child safety risks?			
Does the risk assessment process involve appropriate, knowledgeable people? eg registered teachers, support staff, students, parents – not yet	■	■	Aug 2016
Has the risk assessment process considered issues related to students of different age groups and the diversity of the student group, including but not limited to children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds?		■	Aug 2016
Has Crest established risk rating criteria including appropriate ratings for the likelihood and consequence of risks?			
Has a risk assessment already been carried out with respect to child safety risks?			
Has Crest established existing internal controls to manage child safety risks and has their effectiveness been considered?			
Has Crest identified new controls/management actions to mitigate child safety risks?			
Do the risk management strategies challenge the potential to overestimate the effectiveness of Crest's existing controls?			

Risk questions	Yes	Not yet	When
Do the risk management strategies encompass predatory, opportunistic and situational environment risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • predatory risks¹ (persons who may become adept at creating opportunities to sexually abuse and avoid detection) • opportunistic risks² (persons who may sexually abuse in low-risk, low-effort situations) • situational risks³ (persons who may sexually abuse in a specific set of circumstances) • environment risks (environments that create child safety risks). 			
Has the risk management strategy been endorsed by the Crest's Senior Leadership?			Cabinet July 28
Has the risk management strategy been endorsed by the Crest Board?			Aug 10

Requirement 2

Crest's risk management strategies regarding child safety must identify and mitigate the risk(s) of child abuse in school environments by taking into account the nature of each school environment – Hillcrest, Rivercrest and the Ayr Hill Equestrian Centre, the activities expected to be conducted in each environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.

Risk Questions	Yes	Not yet	When
Does the risk management process consider 'hot spots' and 'hot times' of student-staff and student-student interactions with respect to child safety?			
Does Crest have a process that ensures child safety risks of any new or changed physical environments on and off campus are reviewed?			
Does Crest perform screening as part of its staff recruitment process, including for volunteers and contractors? eg WWCC's ⁴ , criminal background checks, reference checks, psychometric testing etc.*			
Does Crest monitor who is on the premises? eg visitor and contractor sign-in process, perimeter control.			

¹ Predatory – Persistent; calculating; unambiguous sexual interest in children; prepared to invest effort, but only if necessary; may become adept at creating opportunities and avoiding detection.

² Opportunistic – General propensity to exploit opportunities for personal gain at the expense of others, but unlikely to invest significant effort in creating opportunities; no special/unusual sexual interest in children; may sexually abuse in low-risk, low-effort situations.

³ Situational – Conventional social values; usually adequate self-control, and sensitive to informal social controls; may sexually abuse in a specific set of circumstances.

⁴ Please refer to the *Working With Children Act 2005* which establishes a process to screen persons engaging or intending to engage in child-related work through a working with children check, and also sets out exemptions from that requirement for volunteers, parents and others.

Risk Questions	Yes	Not yet	When
<p>Does the risk management process consider child safety risks that may exist in the school environment before, during and after hours, as appropriate? Consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> classrooms and learning environments specialist facilities such as libraries, kitchens and computer, music and art rooms vocational education and training (VET) facilities on campus or off-site recreation areas, playgrounds, sporting facilities on campus and off-site staff workplaces and offices student change rooms and locker areas transport facilities and locations eg buses, bus stops (excluding public transport) excursion or camp locations any other school specific environments. 			
<p>Does the risk management process consider child safety risks in the online environment and through media including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> email Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other social media YouTube mobile phone SMS messages and other mobile messaging media telephone, Skype and other media for making voice calls photography and videography any other electronic media. 			
<p>Does the risk management process consider child safety risks regarding relationships and interactions with students among the following people involved with Crest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> registered teachers and educational support staff welfare staff or those in pastoral care roles relationships with students other students administration and support staff contractors such as specialists delivering services to students eg VET units, music, media or recreation lessons or activities volunteers facilities and security staff interactions with students visitors to Crest or other persons that may have access to students. homestay environments (particularly for International Students) 			

Requirement 3

If the Crest Board identifies risks of child abuse occurring in one or more school environments then a record of those risks must be taken along with the action(s) Crest will take to reduce or remove the risks (risk controls).

Explanatory note: Different risk controls may be necessary for particular groups of children depending on the nature of the risk and the diversity characteristics of children affected by the risk.

Risk Questions	Yes	Not yet	When
Have the identified risks been documented and recorded?			
Have strategies or the mitigation actions (new internal controls) for the risks been established and documented?			

Do the risk management strategies take into account the diversity of the children that are affected by the risk?			
Do the risk mitigation actions (controls): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increase the effort required to abuse • increase the likelihood of detection of inappropriate and/or abusive behaviour • remove triggers for inappropriate and/or abusive behaviour • reduce permissibility of inappropriate behaviour. 			
Does Crest ensure that every person (eg whether employee, contractor, volunteer, or visitor to the school) understands the organisation's expectations for child safety?			Aug 2016

Requirement 4

As part of its risk management strategy and practices, the Crest Board must monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls.

This will certainly happen through Ongoing Review processes to be adopted at the August 2016 Board meeting

Risk Questions	Yes	Not yet	When
Does Crest test the effectiveness of internal controls surrounding child safety?			Aug 2016
Is Crest monitoring its child safety risk management strategies to confirm they have been implemented?			Aug 2016
Does Crest review the child safety risk management strategies to confirm their effectiveness?			Aug 2016
Does the Crest Board monitor the child safety standard risk management strategies?			Aug 2016
Does the Crest Board evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented mitigation controls?			Aug 2016

Requirement 5

At least annually, the Crest Board must ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to the individual members of the Crest Board and staff about:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse;
- child abuse risks in the school environment; and
- Crest's current child safety standards.
- d)

This will certainly happen through Ongoing Review processes to be adopted at the August 2016 Board meeting

Risk Questions	Yes	Not yet	When
Is guidance and training provided to members of the Board and staff about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse • child abuse risks in the school environment • Crest's current child safety standards. 			Aug 2016

Are the outcomes of the risk assessment made available to all relevant people eg staff, students, parents, in line with best practice approaches to increase transparency of the school's compliance with the child safe standards?			Aug 2016
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Risk Assessment

A key part of a risk management strategy is a risk assessment. Risk assessments can take many forms. An example of a common style of risk assessment is provided below. Also provided is an example of a risk rating matrix and some examples of risks and controls.

Example Risk Assessment Template

Below is an example of a child safety risk assessment approach that could be used to identify risks and document child safety risk management strategies.

Risk Event	Existing Management strategies or internal controls	Likelihood	Consequence	Current risk assessment	New risk management controls or internal controls	Who is responsible?	Residual risk
No organisational culture of child safety- child abuse tolerated, hidden from public.	Child safety code of conduct, embedding culture of child safety	Possible	Severe	Extreme	Staff induction and annual awareness training, inclusion of obligation in staff position descriptions, policy and procedure for managing child safety, performance management procedures, reporting procedures	Principal and Chair of School Governing authority	Low
Recruitment of an inappropriate person – inappropriate behaviour	WWCC or Victorian Institute of Teaching registration	Unlikely	Major	Medium	Criminal history search, online searches (Google, Facebook etc), pre-employment reference check includes asking about child safety	Principal	Low

RISK RATING		Consequence				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Severe
Likelihood	Almost Certain	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
	Likely	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
	Possible	Low	Medium	Medium	High	Extreme
	Unlikely	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High
	Rare	Low	Low	Low	Medium	Medium

Examples of Potential Child Safety Risks and Risk Management Strategies

The table below comprises a listing of potential child safety risk and risk management strategies. These lists are not intended to be exhaustive.

Risks

- Lack of an organisational culture of child safety
- Familiarity breeding a culture of not reporting issues
- Natural trust of long term employees (who may have developed issues over time)
- Children alone with one other person unsupervised
- Recruitment of an inappropriate person
- Inappropriate behaviour not reported
- Harassment via email, SMS or other media
- Unsupervised recreational or other activities
- Ad-hoc contractors on the premises (eg maintenance)
- Vulnerability of staff and students due to unknown personal issues
- Unknown people and environments at excursions and camps
- False allegations

Risk Management Strategies

- Implement an effective child safety risk management strategy
- Child safety code of conduct
- Child safety reporting procedures
- Induction for all visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors
- Train students and staff to detect inappropriate behaviour
- Counselling and other resources
- CCTV for unsupervised areas, and 'hot spot' areas
- Clear windows in walls to enable visibility of occupants
- Non-lockable doors in hot spots
- Assessment of new or changed physical environments for child safety risks
- Supervision or monitoring of activities
- Online searches (Google, Facebook etc)
- Performance management procedures
- Pre-employment reference checks that include checking for child safety
- Criminal history checks and confirming currency of WWCC/VIT registration
- Psychometric testing



Standard 7 – Strategies to Promote the Participation and Empowerment of Children

MO 870 states that:

- (1) The school governing authority must develop strategies to deliver appropriate education about: standards of behaviour for students attending the school; healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality); resilience; and child abuse awareness and prevention.
- (2) The school governing authority must promote the child safety standards required by this Order in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.

Crest Education needs to ensure children feel safe and comfortable in reporting concerns or allegations of abuse. There will need to be simple and accessible processes that help children understand what to do if they want to report abuse, inappropriate behaviour or concerns for their safety. All staff and volunteers need to have an awareness of children's rights and adults' responsibilities regarding child abuse.

Rationale

Children often do not report abuse because they feel uncomfortable or they do not know how to raise their concerns or allegations of abuse. Crest Education will have simple and accessible processes assisting children to understand their rights and how to report concerns regarding their safety.

Benefits of empowering and supporting the participation of children

- Participation and empowerment are vital components of a child safe organisation that benefits children, families, organisations and staff.
- Involving and consulting with children enables Crest to improve its policies, practices and services as children provide a unique voice regarding what makes them feel safe and unsafe.
- Facilitating the empowerment and participation of children enhances a culture of child safety and listening to children within your organisation.
- Children and young people learn new skills, build self-esteem and develop an understanding of collaboration and rights.
- Children are more likely to report abuse or concerns if they feel safe and empowered in the organisation.
- Children feel their views are valued and listened to. Children are more likely to support the outcome if they have been involved.
- It is critical that there is genuineness in our approach to children and follow through on what we say we will do – credibility needs to be earned and can be easily lost.

To implement this standard, Crest will:

- Provide children with child-appropriate and accessible information about what child abuse is, their rights to make decisions about their body and their privacy, that no one has a right to injure them, and how they can raise concerns about abuse. For example, information could be included in welcome packs, information sessions and posters, as well as on websites and social media.
- Ensure information and processes for reporting concerns are accessible to all children, for example by having policies and procedures that are able to be accessed and understood by children with a disability.
- Ensure information and processes for reporting concerns are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal children and for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

- Consider access and culturally appropriate language, photographs and artwork for Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability when drafting communication materials.
- Gather feedback from children, for example through surveys, focus groups, story time and social media, about whether they would feel safe and taken seriously if they were to raise concerns, and implement improvements based on this feedback.
- Enable children to express their views and make suggestions on what child safety means to them, and on child safe policies, reporting and response procedures, and acknowledge and act upon these where possible. For example, views could be gathered through suggestion boxes, surveys and feedback sessions.
- Ensure services are accessible for people with a disability, for example provide appropriate communication aids such as hearing loops.
- Train relevant staff and volunteers on methods of empowering children and encouraging children's participation.
- Ensure Aboriginal children are accepted when identifying as Aboriginal, and that staff and volunteers understand appropriate responses to children identifying as Aboriginal.
- Encourage participation and empowerment of children in other organisational activities, such as organisational planning and decision making.
- Raise awareness in the community about children's rights, for example through staff conversations with families and communications such as websites and newsletters.

Successfully implementing this standard will result in Crest Education having:

- Reporting procedures for when a child feels unsafe are accessible for all children
- Children who understand what child abuse is, and their rights (age appropriate)
- Children who understand how to report an allegation of abuse or concern for their safety to the organisation, a trusted adult and external bodies (for example, the police)
- Children who feel safe, empowered and taken seriously if they raise concerns
- Children who feel empowered to contribute to the organisation's understanding and treatment of child safety
- Children's reports of concern responded to appropriately
- Staff who understand how to empower children and encourage their participation.



The Role of the Child Safety Officer

While it will be expected that all staff (particularly teaching staff) will be equipped and willing to be a 'go to' person for students who need to talk about a child safety issue, it will also be vital that at least one Child Safety Officer be appointed at Hillcrest, Rivercrest and at the Ayr Hill Equestrian Centre.

It will be most likely that non-teaching staff at Hillcrest and Rivercrest will be trained as Child Safety Officers – the chaplains and registrars would be ideal given their more global role at each College and the greater flexibility in their daily responsibilities. At the Ayr Hill Equestrian Centre, the expectation is that the Equestrian Manager will fulfil this role, given the part time nature of other contractors

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.

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.

A FORMAL POSITION DESCRIPTION WILL BE CREATED AND ENACTED IN AUGUST 2016 LEADING TO THE FORMAL APPOINTMENT OF THESE INAUGURAL CHILD SAFETY OFFICERS



CHILD PROTECTION FACT SHEET

Introduction

Crest Education is committed to providing a caring, safe and accepting environment for students. All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe.

Crest Education is committed to child safety. We have zero tolerance of all forms of child abuse.

Rationale

All adults have a responsibility to care for children and to protect them from any kind of abuse or neglect. Crest is responsible to provide a safe environment for children and to provide an education which fosters their health, developmental needs, spirituality, self-respect and dignity. We are entrusted by parents with the care of their children, who are precious in the sight of God.

Types of Child Abuse

Child abuse can have a significant effect on a child's physical or emotional health, development and wellbeing. The younger a child is the more vulnerable they are and the more serious the consequences are likely to be.

Types of child abuse include:

- Physical
- Emotional
- Neglect
- Medical neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Family Violence
- Risk-taking Behaviour

RESPONDING TO A REPORT OF HARM

If a child tells you about harm, you need to be well prepared so that you can be supportive of the student and clear about your responsibilities at the same time. The Crest community has a duty of care to take immediate action.

The person to whom the child has disclosed should:

- Actively listen to the student and never probe for details or ask leading questions;
- Reassure the child that they haven't done anything wrong;
- Talk gently and reassuringly, pointing out you are there to help;
- Do not take a written statement from the child if you believe the incident being reported to you may be subject to mandatory reporting;
- Where the harm is taking place outside the school's control, never assure the student that the harm will stop as that cannot be guaranteed;
- Do not make promises that you will not tell anyone; in fact, you should disclose that you have a responsibility to tell the Child Safety Officer, Head of College or the Executive Principal.

WHAT DO I DO IF I HAVE CONCERNS?

- You need to be aware of the indicators of child abuse.
 - Document your concerns including any behavioural observations you have had with the child or young person, using the Child safety Incident Report
 - If anyone reports actual or suspected abuse you should report this immediately to the relevant Child Safety Officer or directly to the Executive Principal or a Head of College at Crest Education
- Call the police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a child's safety.

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe.



CHILD PROTECTION STUDENT FACT SHEET

INTRODUCTION

The teachers and other support staff at Hillcrest are here to make sure that you feel safe at school at all times. We also are here to hear from you if you have some things outside of school which are worrying you.

WHO CAN I TALK TO?

If you are worried about your safety, for you or someone you know, there are people you can talk to. It's a good idea to talk to an adult you trust about any concerns you have. That person might be a parent or relative, a teacher, or someone who works at school. You may want to talk to more than one person about your concerns.

IF YOU SEE HARM OCCURRING, YOU CAN DO THE FOLLOWING:

Help the student who has been harmed, for example:

- By telling other students to move away
- Get a teacher or Co-ordinator involved as soon as possible
- Tell them straight away about what you saw
- If possible, write down what you saw and give them the information.

WHAT OTHER RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

There are services that you can contact to access more information, and in some cases, to speak to somebody about your concerns.

National Child Abuse Helpline (Child Wise) Phone: 1800 991 099

This is a toll-free number with access to expert advice from trained counsellors and an opportunity to speak up about child abuse.

Kids Helpline Phone: 1800 551 800

For any time and for any reason –free, private and confidential phone and online counselling 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

Headspace (National Youth Mental Health Foundation) Phone: 1800 650 890

Headspace can help if you are aged 12 or over and you are going through a tough time. You can talk to someone at Headspace on the phone, online or in person. They are online at: <http://headspace.org.au>

WHO ARE THE CHILD SAFETY OFFICERS AT HILLCREST?

1. Mrs Wendy Tucker
2. Ms Kim Barrett

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe.

CHILD PROTECTION STUDENT FACT SHEET

INTRODUCTION

The teachers and other support staff at Rivercrest are here to make sure that you feel safe at school at all times. We also are here to hear from you if you have some things outside of school which are worrying you.

WHO CAN I TALK TO?

If you are worried about your safety, for you or someone you know, there are people you can talk to. It's a good idea to talk to an adult you trust about any concerns you have. That person might be a parent or relative, a teacher, or someone who works at school. You may want to talk to more than one person about your concerns.

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Help the student who has been harmed, for example:

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- Get a teacher or Co-ordinator involved as soon as possible
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Headspace can help if you are aged 12 or over and you are going through a tough time. You can talk to someone at Headspace on the phone, online or in person. They are online at: <http://headspace.org.au>

WHO ARE THE CHILD SAFETY OFFICERS AT RIVERCREST?

1. Mrs Sue Perros
2. Mrs Leanne Naude

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe.

CHILD PROTECTION STUDENT FACT SHEET

INTRODUCTION

The Ayr Hill Equestrian Centre is an important part of Crest Education. As an organisation we are committed to child safety and have a zero tolerance of all forms of child abuse. The teachers and other support staff at the Equestrian Centre are here to make sure that you feel safe at all times. We also are here to hear from you if you have some things outside of school which are worrying you.

WHO CAN I TALK TO?

If you are worried about your safety, for you or someone you know, there are people you can talk to. It's a good idea to talk to an adult you trust about any concerns you have. That person might be a parent or relative, a teacher, or someone who works at school. You may want to talk to more than one person about your concerns.

IF YOU SEE HARM OCCURRING, YOU CAN DO THE FOLLOWING:

Help the student who has been harmed, for example:

- By telling other students to move away
- Get a teacher or Co-ordinator involved as soon as possible
- Tell them straight away about what you saw
- If possible, write down what you saw and give them the information.

WHAT OTHER RESOURCES ARE AVAILABLE?

There are services that you can contact to access more information, and in some cases, to speak to somebody about your concerns.

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Headspace can help if you are aged 12 or over and you are going through a tough time. You can talk to someone at Headspace on the phone, online or in person. They are online at: <http://headspace.org.au>

WHO IS THE CHILD SAFETY OFFICER AT THE AYR HILL EQUESTRIAN CENTRE?

1. Mrs Deborah Lovett

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe.

Action Plan

Activity	In Place	Partially in Place	Not in Place	Action Required	Time Frame
Child safety is a core part of public and internal messaging				Publish articles 8 page summary booklet to be published	Across Sem 2 End of Term 3
The organisation has a child safe policy, which is accessible to the public.				Board Chair to ratify, then publish on websites	By Aug 10 th
All staff and volunteers are aware of the organisation's commitment to child safety and their duty of care requirements					
Appropriate safe behaviour with children is clearly defined in a code of conduct, which is accessible and understood by staff, volunteers, families and children				Create a separate JS 'child friendly version' of the Code of Conduct	Follow up at Cabinet 11 th Aug
Staff and volunteers are trained in child safety, and understand and practice appropriate behaviour, including with Aboriginal children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and children with a disability respectively				This will be cemented by the requirement that all staff and contractors read and sign Stds 2, 3, 5 and 7; volunteers only Std 3	By mid August
Risk management approaches are regularly reflected on and improved.				Discuss at Board, Cabinet and Staff meetings	Annually
Reporting procedures are accessible for all children				Sheets being prepared for all students	By mid August
Staff briefing on the Child Safe Strategy Document.				To be held via email then sectional meetings in early August	Then annually at start of year and midyear induction
Principal attendance at VRQA and other Child Safe Standards Information Session				Attend further updates as needed	As needed, at least annually
Child safety around toilet blocks				Develop signage	Mid August
Std 2 – Linked policies needing to be developed:					
• Staff Employment				This policy will need to be written and adopted.	End of Aug 2016
• Whistleblower				Draft needs to be adopted	End of Aug 2016
Std 3 Code of Conduct adoption				Confirm re procedures for future staff, contractors and volunteers to sign C of C	26 th July meet with JB
Std 4 Update of HR processes				Update employment documentation	28 th July Cabinet
Std 5 Child Safety Incident Report				To whom should it be submitted and how then handled?	28 th July Cabinet
Std 6 Reqt 1				Parent/Student involvement; Dealing with diverse students	28 th July Cabinet
Std 6 Reqt 2				Double check re wellbeing of Homestay students	Meet with Nicola B
Std 6 Reqt 3				Ensure the Code of Conduct is effectively communicated and followed	28 th July Cabinet
Std 6 Reqt 4/5				Adopt Board review processes	Aug 10 Board meeting
Std 7 Visual reminders re Child Safety				Source/Create appropriate posters for classrooms	By end of August
Std 7				Who/what/when re: Info out to students	28 th July Cabinet
Child Safety Officer				Discussion to clarify role	28 th July Cabinet
Child Safety Officer				Discussion, appointment and training schedule	August

Useful Links and Resources

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School Governance. (2016, March) Child Protection Revolution: Are You Ready? Retrieved from

www.schoolgovernance.net.au/video-1/.

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www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/documents/readiness.pdf

Glossary of Terms

Aboriginal

The term 'Aboriginal' in this guide is inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Child

The words 'child' and 'children' in this guide refers to children and young people up to the age of 18 years, unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Child abuse

For the purposes of this document, abuse constitutes any act committed against a child involving:

- physical violence
- sexual offences
- serious emotional or psychological abuse
- serious neglect.

It includes all forms of physical abuse, emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse and exploitation, neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that results in actual or potential harm to a child.

Children from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds

A child or young person who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis.

Child protection means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

Child safety

In the context of the child safe standards, child safety means measures to protect children from abuse.

Child safe organisation

In the context of the child safe standards, a child safe organisation is one that meets the child safe standards by proactively taking measures to protect children from abuse.

Child sexual assault is any act which exposes a child to, or involves a child in, sexual processes beyond his or her understanding or contrary to accepted community standards. Sexually abusive behaviours can include the fondling of genitals, masturbation, oral sex, vaginal or anal penetration by a penis, finger or any other object, fondling of breasts, voyeurism, exhibitionism, and exposing the child to or involving the child in pornography. It includes child grooming, which refers to actions deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a child to lower the child's inhibitions in preparation for sexual activity with the child.

Children with a disability

A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury or intellectual disability or developmental delay that affects a child's ability to undertake everyday activities. A disability can occur at any time in life. Children can be born with a disability or acquire a disability suddenly through an injury or illness. Some disabilities may be obvious while others are hidden.

Cultural safety for Aboriginal children

The positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity.

Organisation

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 (the Act) will provide that the standards apply to 'applicable entities', which are defined in the Act as:

- an incorporated body or association
- an unincorporated body or association (however structured)
- an individual who carries on a business and engages contractors, employees or volunteers to assist in the business in providing services or facilities.

Reasonable grounds for belief is a belief based on reasonable grounds that child abuse has occurred when all known considerations or facts relevant to the formation of a belief are taken into account and these are objectively assessed. Circumstances or considerations may include the source of the allegation and how it was communicated, the nature of and details of the allegation, and whether there are any other related matters known regarding the alleged perpetrator.

A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person believes that:

- (a) The child is in need of protection,
- (b) The child has suffered or is likely to suffer "significant harm as a result of physical injury",
- (c) The parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation.

A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed if:

- A child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
- A child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
- Someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
- Professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; and/or
- Signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused

For further explanation or definitions please refer to the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2



Staff and Contractor Declaration of Compliance to Child Safe Standards

I, _____, have read and understood the Crest Child Safe Code of Conduct in relation to Crest's commitment to providing a child safe environment for all students at all times.

I agree to completely abide by the expectations and requirements of this Code of Conduct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

- THIS SIGNED CODE OF CONDUCT IS TO BE SUBMITTED BY ALL CURRENT (as of August 31st 2016) CREST STAFF, CONTRACTORS AND VOLUNTEERS BY AUGUST 31st 2016.
- FROM SEPTEMBER 1st 2016, ALL FUTURE EMPLOYMENT AND INVOLVEMENT BY STAFF, CONTRACTORS AND VOLUNTEERS WILL BE DEPENDENT ON THE SUBMISSION OF A SIGNED CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT.

In addition, all Crest staff and contractors* will be required to have read and understood the following sections of the Crest Child Safe standards:

1. Standard 2 – Child Safe Policy
2. Standard 5 – Responding to Allegations of Child Abuse
3. Standard 7 – Empowering Children

I, _____, have read and understood Standards 2, 5 and 7 of the Crest Child Safe standards.

I agree to completely abide by the expectations and requirements of these sections of the Child Safe Framework.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

WHEN COMPLETED, PLEASE RETURN TO MRS JOANNE BALL, CREST HR/OHS MANAGER EITHER IN HARD COPY OR AS A SCANNED PDF DOCUMENT

* those contractors whose role is to work directly or indirectly with students

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe.



Crest Volunteer Declaration of Compliance to Child Safe Standard

I, _____, have read and understood the Crest Child Safe Code of Conduct in relation to Crest's commitment to providing a child safe environment for all students at all times.

I agree to completely abide by the expectations and requirements of this Code of Conduct.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

- THIS SIGNED CODE OF CONDUCT IS TO BE SUBMITTED BY ALL CURRENT (as of August 31st 2016) CREST VOLUNTEERS BY AUGUST 31st 2016.
- FROM SEPTEMBER 1st 2016, ALL FUTURE EMPLOYMENT AND INVOLVEMENT BY STAFF, CONTRACTORS AND VOLUNTEERS WILL BE DEPENDENT ON THE SUBMISSION OF A SIGNED CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT.

When completed, please return to Mrs Riska Holtzhausen, Personal Assistant to the Executive Principal, either:

in hard copy

OR

as a scanned pdf document, emailed to riska.holtzhausen@cresteducation.vic.edu.au

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