



# ***Cranbourne East Primary School COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL POLICY***

## **AIMS**

To ensure that the communication of information is carried out correctly and in a manner that complies with School, DET, Privacy and legal requirements.

## **SCHOOL COUNCIL'S ROLE IN COMMUNICATION**

- The School Council communicates that it has zero tolerance of child abuse in any form.
- Child safety is listed for discussion at all formal meetings (eg School Council, Consultative Committee, staff briefings).
- Child safety strategies are developed, rigorously reviewed and adjusted to meet legislative and policy requirements.
- Effective reporting processes are developed, with identified people in the school to oversee outcomes.
- School Council and identified staff of the School will communicate with the wider school community about the Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy and child protection reporting requirements.
- The school will report on child safety (and risk minimisation) in its Risk Registry.

## **LINKS TO OUR STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

Child protection is a shared responsibility between all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the Cranbourne East Primary School community. The safety and wellbeing of our students form a central and fundamental responsibility of our School and compliments our vision and values of: Respect, Relationships, Resilience, Responsibility and Rigour.

It is important that this rationale is communicated at all levels within the wider school community. Equally, that we are committed to Zero tolerance of child abuse including physical violence, sexual offences, serious emotional or psychological abuse and serious neglect. It is our moral and legal responsibility to create a nurturing school environment where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age disability, sexual orientation, family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse. Cranbourne East Primary School affirms our commitment towards:

- The support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- Actively working towards listening to and empowering all children.
- Creating systems to protect children from abuse and will take all allegations and concerns seriously, having mechanisms in place to ensure consistency in line with school, DET and DHHS protocols.
- Promoting cultural safety and safe learning environments for Aboriginal children, the disabled and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Empowering and providing an inclusive environment for Aboriginal children, the disabled and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

It is essential that staff members of the school communicate information in agreeance with established protocols so as to preserve the reputation of the school, to protect the rights of individuals, to uphold our duty of care to students, and the comply with departmental and legal requirements.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

- The School will produce an Annual Report (retrospective to the previous year) each year. DET will publish this document to the wider school community. This report will include reference to Child Safety Standards and the Empowerment and Inclusiveness measures undertaken for indigenous students and disabled students.
- Our School has a policy of open and cooperative communication.
- This practice, however, recognises that staff members have legal, departmental, local, professional and social obligations with regards the communication of information. DET will publicise this outline to the Gateway.
- Action will be taken by individuals, DET or organisations against staff members who choose to communicate information improperly.
- The school will provide ongoing feedback (via COMPASS) on student academic progress, two parent-teacher interviews (and additional interviews upon request).
- DET employees are free to make public comment on issues relating to education, but in doing so, must be wary not to make comments that can be construed as negative criticism of our school, School Council, our community, staff or community member.
- As a matter of professional courtesy, staff will communicate with the Principal before making public comment or formal statement on educational issues, organisation of the program of the school or place of work. The Principal and School Council President will ensure that each other is informed.
- The Information Privacy Act 2001 and the Health Records Act 2001 require that schools protect the interests of individuals with regard to their personal information and respect the individual's right to control how their personal information is used, and for what purpose.
- The school will only collect consensual information that it requires about individuals, and will only communicate and disclose information for the purposes for which it was collected.
- Any person seeking information from the school that falls outside the school's previous practices must be directed to the Principal who may require that a formal written Freedom of Information request be made.
- All such Freedom of Information requests will be referred to the DET Freedom of Information Unit.
- Information sought by police, including interviews of students must be directed to the Principal.
- Requests from Department of Health and Human Services personnel regarding students or families will be complied with at all times.
- All staff will comply with court subpoenas to provide information at all times.

## **EVALUATION**

Ratified by School Council: 19<sup>th</sup> October 2016

This policy is to be reviewed annually or as policy is amended.