

Principal's Report

RETURN TO SCHOOL

It was such a pleasant surprise to receive the news that school now resumes on Monday 1st November for all students. This comes as such a welcome relief to our families, who have done such a magnificent job supporting their children through flexible and remote learning.

The latest School Operations guide has come out today and beginning next week, a number of restrictions will be able to be lifted. We will advertise this with the school community once we've had a chance to digest the information.

SCHOOL REVIEW

Our school review begins shortly and during the process we will be required to conduct a parent forum to gather some information about the school. Further details regarding dates and times will be advertised on Compass next week.

FOUNDATION TRANSITION 2022

We are currently in the process of 'supercharging' our transition program for our future Foundation students. We are putting the final touches on the program and it will be advertised shortly.

100+ DAYS OF SCHOOL

Congratulations to our Foundation students who achieved their 100 days of Foundation. Ms Frowd, Mrs Dahlstrom and Mrs Bremner celebrated in style and the students had a wonderful day!



VISION & VALUES STATEMENT

A reminder as we all return to school, of our Baxter Primary School visions and values statement:

Baxter Primary School is a caring community where students are encouraged to reach their full potential and become successful citizens.

Working together we aim to build a community of responsible and resilient learners who strive to achieve academically, creatively and socially.

We value being KIND, RESPECTFUL, INCLUSIVE AND ENCOURAGING OF OTHERS.

SCHOOL POLICIES

This year, we have been reviewing all of our school policies. We have attached some of our revised policies in the following pages of this newsletter and encourage everyone to read these and contact the school if they have any questions. All policies have also been uploaded to our school website.

MELBOURNE CUP PUBLIC HOLIDAY

As previously mentioned, all students are returning back to school on Monday. Please remember that Tuesday is the Melbourne Cup public holiday and is a pupil free day.

'UP' DAY

On Tuesday 7th December, all children will go 'up' to their grade for next year. Our current Year 6 students will spend the day at their 2022 secondary schools and our new Foundation students will join us for the morning. All students will know their teacher and classmates for 2022 at the end of the day.

Nick Schneider
Principal

IMPORTANT DATES

TERM 4 2021

Monday 4th October to Friday 17th December

Monday 1st November—All students return to school full time (aside from those currently in quarantine)

Tuesday 2nd November—Melbourne Cup Public Holiday (pupil free day)

Monday 8th, Tuesday 16th & Monday 22nd November - School Review

Tuesday 7th December—'Up Day'
Year 6 students to attend their 2022 secondary schools

Thursday 9th December—Year 6 Graduation

DUTY OF CARE POLICY



PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain to our school community the non-delegable duty of care obligations that all staff at Baxter Primary School owe to our students and members of the school community who visit and use the school premises.

POLICY

“Duty of care” is a legal obligation that requires schools to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include personal injury (physical or psychological) or damage to property. The reasonable steps that our school may decide to take in response to a potential risk or hazard will depend on the circumstances of the risk.

Our school has developed policies and procedures to manage common risks in the school environment, including:

- Yard duty and Supervision
- Bullying Prevention
- Camps and Excursions
- First Aid
- Child Safe Standards
- Emergency Management
- Volunteers
- Visitors
- Working with Children and Suitability Checks
- Mandatory Reporting
- Occupational Health and Safety

Our school acknowledges we are required to take reasonable precautions to prevent the abuse of a child by an individual associated with the organisation while the child is under the care, supervision or authority of the organisation.

Staff at our school understand that school activities involve different levels of risk and that particular care may need to be taken to support younger students or students with additional needs. Our school also understands that it is responsible for ensuring that the school premises are kept in good repair and will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of members of our community suffering injury or damage because of the state of the premises.

School staff, parents, carers and students are encouraged to speak to the principal to raise any concerns about risks or hazards at our school, or our duty of care obligations.

External Providers

Staff at our school acknowledge that, as our duty of care is non-delegable, we are also required to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm when external providers have been engaged to plan for or conduct an activity involving our students. Our *Visitors Policy* and *Camps and Excursions Policy* include information on the safety and care of our students when engaged with external providers.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Provided to staff at induction
- Discussed at staff meetings/briefings as required
- Made available publicly on our school website
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	September 2021
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	September 2024

Child Safety Policy



Purpose

Baxter Primary School's Child Safety Policy sets out the school's commitment and approach to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and provides the policy framework for the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and contractors in the school environment, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people. This policy also applies to school council members where indicated.

The policy will apply to the school environment (see Definitions section). The policy covers both school hours and outside of school hours.

Definitions

Child abuse

Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving:
 - a sexual offence; or
 - grooming; and
- the infliction, on a child, of:
 - physical violence; or
 - serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work

Child-connected work means work authorised by the school, school council, or Secretary of the Department of Education and Training and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child safety

Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

School environment

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school;
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, homestays, and other school activities or events)

School staff

School staff means an individual working in a school environment who is:

- employed by the Department of Education and Training;
- directly engaged or employed by a school council; or

- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY AND CHILD SAFETY PRINCIPLES

Baxter Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

Baxter Primary School is a caring community where students are encouraged to reach their full potential and become successful citizens.

Working together we aim to build a community of responsible and resilient learners who strive to achieve academically, creatively and socially.

At Baxter Primary School our values guide the decisions and behaviours of all members of our school community, including in relation to child safety. We value being KIND, RESPECTFUL, INCLUSIVE AND ENCOURAGING OF OTHERS.

Baxter Primary School has zero tolerance for child abuse.

We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, procedures, strategies and practices will be inclusive of the needs of all children, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, students in out of home care and children who are vulnerable.

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

Child safety principles

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

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

POLICY

Strategies to embed a child safe culture

Baxter Primary School's culture encourages staff, students, parents and the school community to raise, discuss and scrutinise child safety concerns. This makes it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.

All child safety documents, including this policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct [Code of Conduct](#) the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#) and the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) are readily available online and in hard copy at the school office for all staff and students to read at any time.

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. All school staff are required to:

- Act in accordance with the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct, which clearly sets out the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Act in accordance with the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures at all times, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) where necessary
- Undertake annual guidance and training on child safety
- Act in accordance with their legal obligations, including:
 - Failure to disclose offence (applies to all adults)
 - Duty of care (applies to all school staff)
 - Mandatory reporting obligations (applies to all mandatory reporters, including teachers, principals, registered psychologists, and registered doctors and nurses)
 - Failure to protect offence (applies to a person in a position of authority within the school)
 - Reportable conduct obligations (applies to all school staff in reporting conduct to the principal, and applies to the principal in reporting to Employee Conduct Branch)
 - Organisational duty of care (applies to the school as an organisation)
 - For more information on these obligations, see [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#).

As part of Baxter Primary School's child safe culture, school leadership will:

- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, when implementing the Child Safe Standards
- Ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings and staff meetings
- Encourage and enable staff professional learning and training to build deeper understandings of child safety and prevention of abuse
- Ensure that no one is prohibited or discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school or from making records of any allegation.

As part of Baxter Primary School's child safe culture, school mandatory reporting staff are required to:

- Complete the [Protecting Children – Mandatory reporting and other obligations](#) online module every year
- Read the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document
- Read the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document
- Read the school's Child Safety Policy (this document) on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document.

As part of Baxter Primary School's child safe culture, in performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, school councils and school council members will:

- Ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings
- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, when making decisions regarding the Child Safe Standards
- Undertake annual guidance and training on child safety, such as the [Child Safe Standards School Council Training PowerPoint](#).
- Approve the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members, and if updated, note the new document in its school council meeting minutes
- When hiring employees, ensure that selection, supervision and management practices are child safe (unless delegated to the principal).

School leadership will maintain records of the above processes.

Roles and responsibilities

School leaders will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct, which sets out clearly the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

Specific child safety responsibilities:

- Wellbeing team members are responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety Policy every 2 years.
- Wellbeing team members are responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with the Child Safety Policy. The school community should approach a member of the wellbeing team if they have any concerns about the school's compliance with the Child Safety Policy.
- Wellbeing team members are responsible for informing the school community about this policy, and making it publicly available.
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in Baxter Primary School's other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and risk assessment register.

Recruitment

Baxter Primary School follows the Department's Recruitment in Schools guide to ensure child safe recruitment practices, available on the [Department's website](#).

All prospective volunteers are required to comply with our school's Volunteers Policy, including in relation to assessing the suitability of prospective volunteers and obtaining checks required under this policy.

Training and supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in the school understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our school culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in coming forward with any allegations or suspicions of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. This training occurs annually or more often as required.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse, to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability and vulnerable children.

New employees and volunteers will be inducted into the school, including by being referred to the Child Safety Policy (this document), the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures. They will also be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our school's commitment to child safety, and that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. All employees of our school will be monitored and assessed via regular performance review to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported by school staff to the Principal and will be managed in accordance with Baxter Primary School's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures where required.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The school has clear expectations for all staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. All staff (including school council employees) must follow the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) if there is an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse. Immediate actions should include reporting their concerns to DHHS Child Protection, Victoria Police and/or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.

Baxter Primary School will never prohibit or discourage school staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse. The school will always take action to respond to a complaint in accordance with the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures. In accordance with Action 4 of the Four Critical Actions for Schools, Baxter Primary School will provide ongoing support for students affected by child abuse.

Risk reduction and management

Baxter Primary School believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes, found in the school's risk assessment register. The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures.

We will identify and mitigate the risks 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 and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.

Baxter Primary School monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the actions it takes to reduce or remove risks to child safety, more information can be found in the school's risk assessment register.

Listening to, communicating with and empowering children

Baxter Primary School has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities. Our school is committed to supporting and encouraging students to use their voice to raise and share their concerns with a trusted adult at any time of need. Students can access information on how to report abuse from their classroom teacher or another trusted teacher.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with or abuse of a child, the school will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (and/or their parents/carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

The school will promote the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children, including:

- All of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for the students and parents at Baxter Primary School to read at the school reception or on the school website.
- PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed across the school
- School newsletters will inform students and the school community about the school's commitment to child safety, and strategies or initiatives that the school is taking to ensure student safety

The school will use its health and wellbeing programs to deliver appropriate education to its students about:

- standards of behaviour for students attending the school;
- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality);
- resilience; and
- child abuse awareness and prevention.

Baxter Primary School is currently delivering lessons that covers the above dot points through our Respectful Relationships Program, body education and e-Smart programs.

Communications

This school is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- Ensuring that the Child Safety Policy (this document), Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure are available on the school website
- Once per term reminders in the school newsletter of our school's commitment to child safety
- Ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings and staff meetings for discussion
- Our school communicates child safety strategies, through school tours with prospective parents, at parent information sessions or in class, volunteer induction processes, and/or by placing posters throughout the school

Confidentiality and privacy

This school collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the Department of Education and Training's [Schools' Privacy Policy](#).

Related policies and documents

Related policies and documents include:

- Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures
- Risk assessment register
- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](#)

- [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [School Policy and Advisory Guide – Duty of Care](#)
- [School Policy and Advisory Guide – Child Protection Reporting Obligations](#).

Policy evaluation and review

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

Approval

School Principal: Nick Schneider

Date of last review: September 2021

Next review: 3-4 years

Community Notices

HALL FOR HIRE The Baxter Primary School Hall is available for hire on weeknights and weekends by community groups and associations. The hall comes complete with a kitchen, PA system and toilets. Rental contracts may be discussed by calling the office on 5971 1391. Public liability insurance is required by hirers.

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Sat 9.00 am to 1.00 pm

www.baxterpharmacy.com.au

ENROL YOUR CHILD TODAY

When attending Baxter Childcare Centre, your child will experience a high quality program with caring, qualified educators.

- **Open 6:30 am- 6:00pm**
- **Care for Children 6 weeks to School Age**
- **Nutritious Meals provided by our Service Cook**
- **Nappies Provided**
- **Kindergarten Program**

Children are our focus, we are committed to guiding and encouraging each child through their early years to have unique and meaningful experiences.

Please contact our Service Manager to make arrangements to have a look around and meet our team of friendly educators, or alternatively just drop by

Baxter Childcare Centre

111 Baxter Tooradin Road

Baxter VIC 3911 Ph. 03 5971 1651

For more information visit our website

www.sparrowearlylearning.com.au

Baxter Kindergarten and Children's Centre



Community run and minded, our kinder welcomes your enrolment enquiries for our 2021 three and four year old programs

Contact us at:
info@baxterkindergarten.com.au
or phone 5971 1868

www.baxterkindergarten.com.au

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