

Murrayville Community College Human Resources Practices

The child safe standards require Murrayville Community College to have screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

Overview

It is important for Murrayville Community College to have strong human resources practices to help protect children from abuse.

Murrayville Community College should foster a culture of openness and inclusiveness, as well as be aware that people who may wish to harm children could target this school. Robust human resource practices are a good way of reducing these risks. Human resource practices include the recruitment, training and supervision of all personnel.

To achieve this, Murrayville Community College needs to 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.

Murrayville Community College should reinforce its commitment to child safety by recognising the good work and practices of employees and volunteers in keeping children safe and protected.

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 school meets its duty of care when providing services to children.

It is essential that the staff commit to promoting the safety and wellbeing of children, for example by signing Murrayville Community College's Child Safety code of conduct. Training should enhance the skills and knowledge of all 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
- MCC's policies and procedures (including the code of conduct and child safe policy)
- legislative requirements, such as obligations to report child abuse¹, reduce and remove known risks of child abuse², and to hold Working with Children Checks³ where required

¹ The failure to disclose criminal offence requires adults in Victoria to report to police a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed against a child (unless they have a reasonable excuse for not doing so). More information about [failure to disclose](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/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>.

Failure to disclose does not change mandatory reporting obligations. Certain professionals are mandatory reporters, meaning they are required to report to the Department of Health and Human Services if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical and sexual abuse. More information about [mandatory reporting](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/intake/overview-of-intake-of-reports-under-the-children,-youth-and-families-act/1122-mandatory-and-other-required-reporting) is available in the *Child protection manual* <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/cpmanual/intake/overview-of-intake-of-reports-under-the-children,-youth-and-families-act/1122-mandatory-and-other-required-reporting>.

² The failure to protect criminal offence applies to people within organisations who knew of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse by someone in the organisation and had the authority to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently failed to do so. More information

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- how to handle a disclosure or suspicion of abuse, including MCC'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 Aboriginal Elders, Aboriginal community controlled organisations and community members to speak at meetings and events
- 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. 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 our internal reporting procedures (such as our 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 should 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 should be measured against the school'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 MCC and appropriate behaviour.

Code of conduct and disciplinary procedures

Disciplinary procedures would be the consequence of breaches of the MCC child safety code of conduct.

Employees and volunteers should be aware of reporting and how to communicate concerns regarding the improper behaviour of any person within MCC. All staff members should also be aware of their duty to raise concerns about the behaviour of any person who may present a risk of child abuse, without fear of repercussions.

about [failure to protect](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/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>.

³ For more information about [Working with Children checks](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) visit the working with children website <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au>.

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The MCC Child Safety code of conduct will be publicly available on the school's website. Children and their families should be encouraged to raise any concerns about the behaviour of any person, and can expect to be listened to and supported.