



The Japanese School of Melbourne

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact school office on 0395281978.

Purpose

The Japanese School of Melbourne (JSM) Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our school's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This policy provides an overview of our school's approach to implementing [Ministerial Order 1359](#) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

Scope

This policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school board members where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided for a student's use (for example, a school camp) and those provided by third-parties
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

Definitions

The following terms in this policy have [specific definitions](#):

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school staff
- school governing authority
- student
- volunteer
- Visitor

- Contractor

Statement of commitment to child safety

JSM is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environment, including the training of staff and the promotion using posters etc. of the School's approach to safety.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or discrimination, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed, with consequences as outlined in the Child Safety Code of Conduct. Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers using the below methods to inform our ongoing strategies.

- Surveys
- Interviews with students and their guardians
- School council and staff meetings

Roles and responsibilities

School leadership team

Our school Leadership Team (comprising the Principal, Assistant Principal, Administration Manager, Chief Teacher, Head of Primary Grade Teachers and Head of Secondary Grade Teachers) is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

Principal, Assistant Principal and Administration Manager will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students

- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school board meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of, and responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities

School staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school in collaboration with ISV or by the school itself, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
ISV
- act in accordance with our [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy](#) and Procedures, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.
- Our principal is the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

School board

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, school board members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture within the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school board meetings
- undertake annual training on child safety
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with, the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school board employees and members
- when hiring school board members, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe. At our school, school board responsibilities are delegated to the principal who is bound by this policy.

Specific staff for child safety responsibilities

JSM has nominated a Child Safety Champion (Assistant Principal and Administration Manager) to support the principal in implementing our child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training.

The responsibilities of Child Safety Champion are outlined at [Guidance for Leadership Team](#).

Our principal is the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

- The Principal is responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our school community should approach The Principal if they have any concerns about the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

- The Principal is responsible for informing the school community about this policy, and making it publicly available
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in other child safety policies and procedures, including the [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#), [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations](#) Policy and Procedures, and Child Safety Risk Register.

Our school has also established a Child Safety Risk Management Team and a Student Council on child safety. The Child Safety Risk Management Team meet regularly to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safety and wellbeing. The Student Council provides an opportunity for students to provide input into school strategies.

Our Child Safety Risk Management Team monitors the Child Safety Risk Register.

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

[The Child Safety Code of Conduct](#) also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

Managing risks to child safety and wellbeing

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Our school leadership team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

Establishing a culturally safe environment

At JSM, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community and actively support child or student's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights in the following ways:

- equip staff, students and volunteers to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students for any future enrolments
- adopt measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted, and not tolerated
- address any instances of racism within the school environment with appropriate consequences
- actively support participation and inclusion in the school by Aboriginal children, students, and their families when future enrolment occur
- ensure school policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, students and their families for any future enrolments

- actively work with local Indigenous organisations to promote inclusive practices within the school for any future enrolments
- provide educational programs delivered by Indigenous groups to the students every year

Student empowerment

To support child safety and wellbeing at JSM, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school, through activities such as interaction across different year levels, to ensure a sense of belonging. We do this by implementing our whole school approach to respectful positive relationships, by ensuring compliance with our Code of Conduct, and by observing our school values.

We inform students of their rights through our whole school approach to respectful positive relationships by having the guidance counsellor give a talk on it at the all-hands school morning meeting at the beginning of every year. We give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. The guidance counsellor will make sure that our students know that they can always talk to either their classroom teacher - or teachers to whom they feel more comfortable speaking - if they are ever worried or feeling unsafe. We encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time and to promote this.

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

Family engagement

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at JSM we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices by making them available on the school website. We are also committed to involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this in the following ways:

- all of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for students and parents/carers on the website www.jsm.vic.edu.au and at the school reception.
- Newsletters and/ or parent portal will inform families and the school community of any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety. ••
- PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed on the wall outside of the staff room.

Diversity and equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

Suitable staff and volunteers

At JSM, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

Staff recruitment

JSM makes sure job advertisements have clear statements about:

- the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety and wellbeing
- the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety and wellbeing

JSM advises job applicants on the child safety practices of the school, including the Code of Conduct.

The school screens school staff applicants by:

- sighting, verifying and recording the person's Working With Children Check if the person is required to have one or any equivalent background checks such as a Victorian teaching registration or Police Check
- collecting and recording proof of identity, qualifications, history of working with children and references

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working With Children Check or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record:
 - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
 - the person's history of working with children
 - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

Staff induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy](#) and Procedures and
- [Duty of Care Policy](#)

- any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done with regular performance reviews by principal.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school and department policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

Suitability of volunteers, visitors and contractors

JSM screens volunteers, visitors and contractors by:

- sighting, verifying and recording a Working With Children Check if the person is required to have one or any equivalent background check such as VIT registration or Police Check.
- Consider the child safety risks relevant to the volunteers, visitors and contractors' role and, if reasonable and appropriate, collect and record proof of identity, qualifications, history of working with children and references
- Provide an induction regarding child safety and wellbeing that is appropriate to the nature of the role
- Ensure volunteers, visitors and contractors aware of the school's [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#) and [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)

Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

School Board training and education

To ensure our school board is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing

risks in our school environment, the board is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment
- JSM's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

Reportable Conduct Scheme

A Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme commenced operation on 1 July 2017, and it is administered by the Commission for Children and Young People.

The scheme requires organisations that have a high level of responsibility for children to report allegations of child abuse and child related misconduct to the Commission for Children and Young People. Central oversight of how organisations respond to allegations of reportable conduct helps embed a child-safe culture across all organisations.

Complaints and reporting processes

JSM fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

If there is an incident, or disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including school board members) must follow our [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy](#) and Procedures. Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- the [Four Critical Actions](#) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy-and [Bullying Prevention Policy](#) cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

Communications

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

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document), [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#), and the [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations \(including Mandatory Reporting\) Policy](#) and Procedure
- displaying PROTECT posters on a wall outside of the staff room
- updates in our school newsletter and/ or parent portal
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school board meetings.

Privacy and information sharing

JSM collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to: School's [Privacy Policy](#)

Records management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards.

JSM:

- maintains records relevant to child safety and wellbeing and keep them organised in a way that ensures they are searchable and retrievable.
- stores child safety and well being records securely, protected from unauthorised access
- retains student safety and wellbeing records for a minimum of 75 years
- retains all records documenting the reporting and investigation of sexual abuse incidents, allegations and disclosures for a minimum of 99 years
- retains screening records for school staff applicants, such as working with children checks.

Review of child safety practices

At JSM, we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

We will:

- review and improve our policy every second year or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community

Related policies and procedures

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- [Digital Technologies Policy](#)

Related Department of Education and Training policies

- [Bullying Prevention and Response Policy](#)
- [Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management Policy](#)
- [Digital Learning in Schools Policy](#)
- [Family Violence Support](#)
- [Protecting Children: Reporting Obligations Policy](#)
- [Policy and Guidelines for Recruitment in Schools](#)

- [Reportable Conduct Policy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Supervision of Students Policy](#)
- [Visitors in Schools Policy](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools Policy](#)
- [Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)

Other related documents

- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](#)

Policy status and review

The School Leadership Team is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers, staff and school community.

Approval

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| Created date | April 2025 |
| Consultation | Staff, School board |
| Endorsed by | School Board |
| Endorsed on | April 2025 |
| Next review date | November 2026 |

This policy was drafted in English, and translated into Japanese for reference purposes only. In the case of a difference in interpretation the English version will prevail.