# Description: Harrisfield PS Logo**DUTY OF CARE POLICY**

**Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office on (03) 9546 9210.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to explain to our school community the non-delegable duty of care obligations that all staff at Harrisfield 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
* Tree Maintenance/ Grounds Maintenance procedures
* Personal Property
* Child Safe Standards
* External Providers
* Emergency Management
* Visitors
* Volunteers
* 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.

This policy forms a critical component of ensuring that Harrisfield Primary School is a Child Safe School.

**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 including our transition programs at neighbouring secondary schools. Our Visitors Policy and Camps and Excursions Policy include information on the safety and care of our students when engaged with external providers (includes the completion of a risk assessment document).

**COMMUNICATION**

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

* Available publicly on our school’s website where applicable
* Saved on COMPASS under School Documentation
* Included in staff induction processes, staff training and child safety training processes
* Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
* Discussed at parent information nights/sessions where applicable
* Included as annual reference as a COMPASS notification if required
* Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request.

**FURTHER INFORMATION and resources**

* the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Duty of Care](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/duty-of-care/policy)
* the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Structured Workplace Learning](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/structured-workplace-learning/policy)

**Review Cycle**

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| Policy last reviewed | 25th October 2024 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | October 2027 |