PRINCIPAL PREAMBLE
Sharon Walker

In 2013, the Victorian Parliament held an Inquiry into the ‘Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Non-Government Organisations,’ resulting in the ‘Betrayal of Trust Report.’

The report found that more could be done to strengthen existing approaches to child safety. In response, the Victorian Government is phasing in child safe standards for organisations that work with children, including schools.

The child safe standards require schools to consider all aspects of child safety and put measures in place to protect children from all forms of abuse, including:

- sexual or grooming offences
- physical violence
- serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect

There are seven child safe standards:

1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety.
2. A child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety.
3. A child safety code of conduct.
4. School staff selection, supervision and management practices for a child-safe environment.
5. Procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse.
6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.
7. Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation.

Schools must endeavour to have this work done by August 1, 2016. Our Child Safety Policy will be attached to this newsletter and parents will be given copies of all other child safety documents when they are approved by School Council - Child Safety Code of Conduct, Staff Recruitment and Reporting Child Abuse Policy and Template. The Child Safety Policy is currently on the website.

We also have to educate children about sexual abuse, grooming, how to identify inappropriate child/adult interactions and what steps to take to report such abuse. This term we are conducting the Sexual Education Program for all students so part of this course will address some aspects of child safety. The F-2 children attended an incursion by ‘Bravehearts’ around keeping safe from abuse. The Leadership Team is in the process of seeking outside providers that may help with this sensitive subject. It is important we give our children such education but do it in a way that is sensitive and non-threatening. I am the Child Safety Officer so any questions can be directed to me.
Supporting children and young people through separation and divorce

Separation is often a very difficult time for everyone involved, usually resulting in large amounts of change and new challenges. Any change to, or loss in the way things were or loss of hopes and dreams, can cause a grief-like response and each family member will react to changes and loss in their own different way.

It’s important for parents to consider how they will support their kids through this time as the impact of separation on children and teenagers can be significant. This can be challenging for the parent or carer, especially at a time when they themselves are also managing their own emotional pain.

**What is the impact of separation and divorce on children and young people?**

It’s helpful to be aware of how children and teenagers can react to loss or change. They will often move in and out of different emotions and may not always be able to clearly express what they are feeling and why. Talking about the separation in a conflict-free space can provide an opportunity for them to express their emotions and/or concerns about what’s happening.

It’s likely you’ll notice some changes in your children as they work through their emotions. Extra patience may be needed to support your children if their behaviours are challenging or difficult to understand. You may find it easier to support your children through this time if you can:

- Recognise the many different stages and emotional responses to change or loss such as shock, denial, sadness, anger, blame and acceptance
- Allow them to work through their emotions
- “Role-model” openness, honesty and healthy ways of communicating feelings
- Listen to your child and allow him/her to freely speak their mind without judgment
- Provide younger children with opportunities for play. Play is the language of young children and it’s a way for them to express their emotions. Examples include drawing, play dough, puppets, collage or playing with dolls and action figures
- Be mindful that teenagers may need plenty of time with their peers to work through their emotions.

PARENTS PHOTOGRAPHING CHILDREN IN CLASSROOMS OR ON EXCURSIONS

Please remember that parents do not have the right to photograph other people's children without permission from their parent. Some of our families have not given permission for their children to be photographed other than for the class photos.

MATRON JESSIE MC HARDIE WHITE SCHOLARSHIP

School Council is delighted to announce the introduction of the ‘Matron Jessie McHardie White Scholarship’ for eligible Year 6 students. This scholarship, of $1,000 to be used in Term One 2017, is provided by a benefactor who at this time wishes to remain anonymous.

The scholarship is provided to enable the successful student’s guardian to purchase school related items to assist in their transition to Year 7. The full ‘Guiding Principles’ document, and historical context, will be sent home with all Year 5 and 6 students shortly.

Basically students will be considered who have demonstrated our REACH values over time— during their Year 4, 5 and 6 schooling. The School Leadership Team, in consultation with relevant staff, will select the successful candidate by November 30 of each year. The successful candidate will be announced at an assembly in December prior to receiving their scholarship medal at the Year 6 Graduation Dinner.

SCHOOL CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM

Our School Chaplain, Judy Young, needs to change the days she is at school here. Judy will now be here every Thursday and every second Wednesday. If you wish to meet with Judy, or have your child/children work with her, please see Kerrie in the office to sign a permission slip.

SCHOOL ASSEMBLY CHANGE

Due to the Friday ‘Artist in Schools’ program we have changed the weekly assembly time from Friday morning to Thursday afternoon at 3pm. The assemblies will be conducted in Mrs Hannagan’s room. We ask that parents please be seated by 2.55pm. Each week a class will present an item as we continue to foster student leadership and engagement.

Mrs. Hannagan, and her children, have made a whiteboard background that will be displayed each week.

The change took effect last week and will continue until further notice.
2016 PARENT OPINION SURVEY

On Monday the ‘Parent Opinion Survey’ will go out to 44, CASES 21 randomly selected, school families. The survey takes around 20 minutes to complete. Parent responses are confidential. All completed surveys must be sent back to school by Friday July 2016. It is vital we get back all responses so Kerrie will ask for any not returned.

Usually we score lowly in the ‘Extra Curricula Activities’ section. Please be aware that this area covers all activities taken outside the classroom such as camps, excursions, incursions, special days/night and sporting activities. We are always surprised by the low rating because we offer so many extra curricula activities. It appears that some respondents think this item refers to after school activities only.

The survey is filled out with the experiences of the child named on the survey sheet in families where there are siblings attending the school. Responses should be given regarding current experience, not historical events. We have tried really hard to address issues raised in 2015 and hope these efforts have made a difference.

YARRA VALLEY FM 99.1

As part of our ‘Student Leadership’ initiative, the ‘Communication’ group will have a chance to present once a month on the ‘School’s In’ program at 10am. This month Sophie, Ava, Bailey and Anna will be presenting. Tune in at 99.1FM on Friday, July 29, at around 10.15am to hear their show on the Olympic Games.

Thank you to Jody Crawford who will transport our little group to and from school. Thank you to Ryan Walker for coordinating and supporting this initiative. The presenters will leave school at around 9am and be back by 11.30am. All children attending this activity must have a signed permission note.

NEWS FROM THE ART ROOM

The Yarra Glen Winter Light Festival is on the 20th of August this year and will take on a slightly different format. We have been invited to participate and have begun working on our lanterns in the art room. The lanterns are different from last years. They are of string and tissue construction and are well on the way.

Amanda Hull
**ELECTION DAY BBQ – JULY 1**

A huge thank you to these families for assisting at the Election Day BBQ where a profit of $216.25 was raised: Evans, Johnson-Shortis, Hull, Oakley, Jackson—Smith, Smith, Hannagan, McMurray and Walker.

**PARENT CLUB TRIVIA NIGHT**

We are all really excited about our upcoming Trivia Night on Saturday August 27, 2016. The night begins at 7.30pm in the Yarra Glen Memorial Hall.

Limited tickets are still available from the office for $20.00 each. Come along for a night filled with much fun and laughter. Start saving up your gold coins for the coin tosses and bring along cash or cheques for the silent auctions—no credit card facilities.

We are desperate for items to auction. Do you have a brand new gift that sits in the cupboard unused? Could you approach a business for a voucher or gift donation? Monies raised by the night will go towards our new gazebo project and in beautifying the children’s quiet area.

**SHOPPING TOUR**

Deposits of $20.00 are due for the shopping tour. Please see the last newsletter for outlet details. The tour is scheduled for Saturday October 15, 2016. It is a great day out.

**SCHOOL CURRICULUM DAYS**

There are two curriculum days left for staff this year. The first is scheduled for September 9 and is being used to expand our knowledge of computer coding in line with the expectations of the new Victorian Curriculum.

The final day is Monday October 31. This is the day before the Melbourne Cup public holiday. Teachers will use the Monday to organise student achievement records and to write second semester student reports.

**DIXONS CREEK – DIXONS DIALOGUE PUBLIC SPEAKING COMPETITION**

Nine courageous students worked hard at home to prepare and rehearse a three minute speech for our public speaking competition held on Monday. The whole school listened respectfully and attentively to the speakers and enjoyed the range of topics presented. Samara and Belle spoke about their favourite animal. Jason reminded us about “The Importance of Being on Time”. Jess, Chloe and Anna researched facts and figures and related a range of ideas to help us “Be Happy”. Erin gave a passionate plea for us all to resolve conflict, in her speech “If I Could Change the World”. Millie engaged us in the topic “Why you should all watch the Simpsons” and James talked about winning a basketball grand final as being “The Happiest Experience” of his life.

The whole school voted on the two best speakers to represent us at the Healesville Rotary Public Speaking Competition to be held on Wednesday August 3 at the Performing Arts Centre, Healesville High School. The winning speakers were Anna and Erin. Congratulations and best of luck!
Mrs Hoogie’s F-1

We have enjoyed getting back to school and have already started our Inquiry learning by looking at the brilliant picture story book called ‘My Place’ written by Nadia Wheatley. We have also looked at Jeanie Baker’s books ‘Window’ and ‘Belonging’. We are beginning to explore the concept of change - personal and family histories.

In Mathematics we have been measuring length. We used informal units such as play dough, counters, match sticks teddies and blocks to measure objects in the classroom and then we went on to learn about how to correctly use a ruler. We played ‘Stretchy Snake Snapper’ with our rulers and then we gobbled up our snakes! We also cooked pancakes in Mathematics and measured mass and volume. We discussed the capacity of different containers. Once the pancakes were cooked we cut them into fractions - there is so much learning to be done when cooking!!!

We were excited to welcome Angie Macmillan our Artist in Residence. She took us through a Puppet Playshop in which the students worked collaboratively to design and construct a puppet out of simple materials. The results were astounding and we are all keen for Friday to come around again so we can spend more time learning from Angie and being creative!!!
Year 5/6H News

The students in Year 5/6 completed a series of activities on ‘Myths and Legends’ with the help of our student teacher Mrs Shaw. They read and listened to a number of stories and participated in plays such as Pandora’s Box, Theseus and the Minotaur and Athena and Medusa. The next task was to plan their own story in the style of a myth or legend. The story needed to include an orientation, a journey, a challenge, the supreme challenge and the triumphant return. The completed stories will be shared with other students in Years 3 / 4 and 4 / 5. To complement their stories the children created their own heroes and monsters and displayed them in a diorama.

In Mathematics this term we are looking at mapping. The students created their own cities out of lego blocks and toys, photographed them from a birds eye view and then designed their own maps and keys. We will be mapping the view we see from our classroom and introducing topographical maps and contours soon.

YEAR 4/5B

Last Friday My Devisser arranged another highly popular and successful skiing excursion to Lake Mountain for our Year 3 to 6 students. After the last two school trips having no snow on the mountain, our kids were lucky to have some fresh snow to cross country ski and toboggan on. Thanks to Ryan Walker and Ben Murray for rugging up for the day and heading up with the students. A great day was had by all.
CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Definition: This policy applies to all people involved in the school, including:

- employees (permanent and casual)
- volunteers
- contractors
- sub-contractors
- work experience students
- indirect service providers
- school family members
- any other individual, or member of a group, who is permitted by the principal onto the school grounds

Rationale:
There is a zero tolerance of child abuse in this school. All children who come to school have a right to feel, and be, safe. We are committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people accessing our services. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority. We aim to create a child safe, and child friendly, environment where all children are valued, have a voice and feel protected.

Aims:
- To ensure ‘risk management,’ in relation to all school activities, is given first priority
- To encourage and respect the views of children and young people who access our services.
- To listen to, and act upon, any concerns that children, young people or their families raise with us.
- To teach children what they can do if they feel unsafe.
- To ensure that children, young people and their families know their rights and how to access the complaints procedures available to them.
- To value diversity and not tolerate any discriminatory practices or bullying.
- To ensure that all people who come in contact with the children at this school know their obligation in regard to child safety.
- To ensure the recruiting process at this school adheres to best practice.

Implementation:
- The principal, or nominee where there is a conflict of interest, of this school will act as the appointed Child Safety Officer and be the first point of contact to provide advice and support to children, parents, employees and volunteers regarding the safety and well-being of children in our school.
- In regards to recruitment of employees at this school, all reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that selection panels engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. A range of screening measures and best practice standards will be employed in the recruitment of employees and volunteers. Interview and conduct referee checks will be made on all employees.
- A Working with Children Check will be required for anyone at school who:
  - has regular contact with children and is not directly supervised at all times;
  - works in close proximity to children on a regular basis and is not directly supervised at all times
- All members of the school community, and those given access to the school grounds by the principal, must abide by our ‘Code Of Conduct’
- The principal will ensure that employees/volunteers who work with children have regular supervision, support and training so that their capacity is developed, and enhanced, to promote the establishment and maintenance of a child safe environment. Strategies implemented will include:
All new employees will undergo induction and receive a copy of this 'Child Safe' policy and the 'Code of Conduct.'

All employees will receive regular professional development sessions that include a focus on ongoing learning about child protection and other matters that affect children and young people.

The principal, or nominee, will be appointed to act as a first point of contact for all child protection matters.

- All employees and volunteers must understand their obligation to notify the principal, as soon as practicable, if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child has been, or is being, abused or neglected.
- All teachers must regularly update their knowledge of the 'Mandatory Reporting' guidelines and complete the DET online training each year. The principal will ensure that support is available for an employee making a report, particularly where an ongoing service is provided to the child, young person and their family.
- Child Protection is everyone's responsibility and even where a report is made, school staff may still have a role in supporting the child or young person. This support may include:
  - Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate services
  - Displaying information about services that can assist children and their families (such as the Kids Helpline 1800 551 800 and Youth Helpline 1800 080 323) in areas accessed by children and their families.
- All school policies relating to child safety, health and wellbeing must be updated every three years by the School Council, or following a serious incident where child safety was compromised.
- All forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying will not be tolerated. These issues may seriously affect the health of the victim. Anyone who believes that they, or another person, has been harassed, discriminated against or bullied can be encouraged to raise this issue with the principal or nominated Child Safety Officer.
- The principal will ensure that everyone to whom this policy applies is aware of, and has had an opportunity to read, the policy.
- All employees, volunteers and parents (where appropriate) will be asked to sign a written statement indicating that they have read, and will abide by, our child-safe policy. A copy of the signed statement will be given to the signatory and the school will retain a copy of all signed statements.
- This policy must be read in conjunction with other policies relating to child safety, risk management, child health and student wellbeing. These include but are not limited to: Yard duty, Child Safe Code of Conduct, Care of Ill Students, Medication, Camping, Excursions, Anaphylaxis, First aid, School Community Code of Conduct, Anti Bullying, Anti Discrimination, Duty of Care, Internet Usage, Mandatory Reporting and Suspension policies.

I...................................................have read this Child Safety policy and agree to abide by it at all times. Child safety will be paramount in my mind when interacting with all children at this school.

Dated...........................................

Evaluation:

This policy was last ratified by School Council in...  21/3/2016
Child Protection Guidelines for Employees and Volunteers of Dixons Creek Primary School

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for employees and volunteers of this organisation.

All employees and volunteers of this organisation are responsible for promoting the safety and well-being of children and young people by:

- Ensuring the safety and welfare of the child or young person is paramount at all times.
- Treating all children and young people fairly with dignity, equality and respect.
- Adhering to this organisation’s child safe policy at all times.
- Listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people in our care.
- Taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people in our care.
- Ensuring children and young people understand their rights and explaining to the child in age-appropriate language what they can expect when participating in a service, activity or program offered by the school.
- Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian.
- Notifying the Department of Human Services Victoria 13 12 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected.

Employees/volunteers will not:

- Take part in any unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person.
- Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.
- Develop any ‘special’ relationships with children or young people outside of the professional relationship.
- Hold any child up to ridicule.
- Attend to a child’s toileting needs without a second adult present.
- Give individual children gifts or special favours
- Take photos or video of children without the permission of the principal