STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY & REDUCE OR REMOVE THE RISK OF CHILD ABUSE
(Child Safe Standard 6)

DESCRIPTION:

Hume Valley School has adopted a risk management approach by identifying and considering child safety risk(s) based on a range of factors including the nature of activities undertaken with children, physical and online environments and the characteristics of children - including the cultural safety for Aboriginal children; children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and the safety of children with a disability.

It covers both 'business as usual' risks at school and risks posed by specific activities such as excursions and overnight trips and camps. Where risks are identified, Hume Valley School institutes measures to reduce or remove them. ***Please refer to the school's Excursion, Incursion, External Providers, Anti-Bullying & Anti-Cyber Bullying, Internet, On-Site Supervision, Camps and Duty of Care policies.***

RATIONALE:

Hume Valley School has an active approach to its duty of care in protecting children and tend to have a risk management approach and a commitment to continuous improvement. Additionally, implementation of a risk management approach is part of Hume Valley School's recognition of its legal responsibilities to ensure the safety of children.

Hume Valley School implements this standard by:-

- Ensuring clear and accessible processes for evaluating risks posed by situations and activities appropriate to Hume Valley School, its size and resources, physical and online environments, and the characteristics of its children.

- Developing, recording and communicating clear processes for removing risks to children (for example, rules on online communications – included in the Internet and Anti-bullying and Anti-cyber bullying policies.

- Providing relevant staff and volunteers with training in identifying child abuse risks, for example blocked-off/out-of-sight spaces (especially rooms with doors that can be locked), overnight stays, and opportunities for physical contact, such as sports coaching and personal care.

- Engaging methods for continual improvement in how risks are managed by learning from past lessons, including policy review and staff training.

- A risk management approach driven through endorsement and ownership by management, including responsibility for risk identification and response in position descriptions.

- Ensuring supervision requirements for staff and volunteers who work with children.

- Instituting processes for periodic review of risk management approaches and/or processes and following any incidents.

- Recognising and adapting to the needs of particular children and communities, including Aboriginal children, culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and children with a disability. For example, acknowledgement that greater staff or volunteer to child ratios may be needed for some children with a disability.

- Recognising and addressing risks to Aboriginal children which might exist because of their experiences, for example if a child does not feel safe identifying as Aboriginal, or if there is an inadequate response to self-identification.
- Recognising and addressing risks to children with a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, which might exist because of their experiences, for example increased communication with families may be necessary to build trust and understanding of organisational activities.
- Recognising and addressing risks for children with a disability, for example communication barriers when telling an adult they feel unsafe.
- Having a central reporting and advisory contact (Child Safety Team) for staff to raise concerns and get advice about what to do if they need to report suspected abuse.
- Including statements about shared responsibility for management of risks in all position descriptions.
- Having a consistent risk management approach across the school.
- Including discussion about apparent risks or 'near misses' in staff/team meetings and areas for improvement.
- Rostering staff with appropriate experience and qualifications to manage high risk environments.

By successfully implementing this standard Hume Valley School will be a school in which:

- Situational risks are considered and understood by all staff
- Steps are put in place to reduce risks where possible
- Risk management approaches are regularly reflected on and improved
- Specific risks to children with a disability are identified, assessed and mitigated
- Specific risks to Aboriginal children are identified, assessed and mitigated
- Specific risks to children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background are identified, assessed and mitigated.

EVALUATION

This document will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle or if guidelines change.

Ratified By Hume Valley School Council	September 2016
Review Date:	September 2019