



CHILD SAFE POLICY

1.0 PURPOSE OR RATIONALE

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the whole school community of St Patrick's School leaders, staff, volunteers, students, their families, to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and procedures developed to keep everyone safe from harm, including all forms of abuse.

2.0 COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

All students enrolled, and any child visiting, have a right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety.

3.0 CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO SAFETY AND PARTICIPATION

The staff and volunteers of St Patrick's School encourage students to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.

We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us.

St Patrick's School has processes in place, such as PBIS and delivery of a Social Emotional Curriculum for the implementation of educational strategies covering resilience and healthy and respectful relationships.

Systems such as PBIS and our LNSLN provision are in place to be inclusive of all children, particularly children who are vulnerable due to age, family circumstances, abilities or Indigenous, cultural or linguistic background.

4.0 VALUING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We value and celebrate diversity, especially cultural diversity, and we do not tolerate discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students and their families
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) and their families
- promote the personal safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability and make them feel welcome and part of all aspects of school life

5.0 RECRUITING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

St Patrick's School will apply the most thorough and rigorous standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers and require police checks and Working With Children Checks (WWCC) for all staff and volunteers. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements for staff and volunteer positions.

[www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Industrial Relations/Polices and Guidelines/Child-Safety](http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/Industrial%20Relations/Polices%20and%20Guidelines/Child-Safety).

Refer - New Staff Induction Checklist

6.0 SUPPORTING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

St Patrick's School provides support and supervision to all staff and volunteers so people feel valued, respected, affirmed in their work and fairly treated. We have a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

Refer – Volunteer/Visitor Induction Checklist

7.0 REPORTING A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

Our school records any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Code of Conduct, and store the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements. Our complaints and disclosure processes are outlined and detailed in the following policies and procedures

- *Child Safe Reporting and Responding Policy*
- *Child Safe Reporting Procedure*
- *Complaints & Disclosure Policy*
- *Complaints Procedure*
- *Disclosure of Abuse or Harm Procedure*
- *Child Safe Responding Procedure*

The Principal has been appointed as Child Safety Officer with specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or students in relation to Child Safety.

8.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is an approach that minimises the potential for child abuse or harm to occur. Our Risk Management Plan outlines and details all aspects of risk across our whole school environment (on site and off site school activities) with specific activity risk assessments. In addition to our general Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse and harm to our students.

St Patrick's Primary School is committed to ensuring all children within the community are safe and have taken steps to ensure that all foreseeable risks are assessed and wherever possible, mitigated.

A risk management plan has been developed and details all foreseeable risks and minimisation strategies to the children within our community

Resources:

- Sandhurst Resources and Policies www.ceosand.catholic.edu.au
- Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement
- Catholic Education Sandhurst Guidelines to Schools for compliance with the Working With Children Act 2005, available at www.ceosand.catholic.edu.au, under Downloads, then Legal Resources for Schools'. Access requires user to be log in using the school's user-name and password.
- SSEB Policy: Staff Misconduct and/or Incompetence
- SSEB Guidelines for employers regarding allegations of Misconduct and/or Incompetence
- SSEB Guidelines for employers when a staff member is charged with an offence
- SSEB Policy: Whistleblower Protection
- SSEB Employment in Catholic Education
- Sandhurst Camp Guide
- Privacy Law: Introductory Information for Schools and CEO staff, available at www.ceosand.catholic.edu.au, under Downloads, then Legal Resources for Schools'. Access requires user to log in using the school's user- name and password.

CECV Resources

- Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, available at http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/publications/StudentWellbeing/ProtectProtocol_011009.pdf
- Mandatory Reporting eLearning Module: www.elearn.com.au/deecd/mandatoryreporting/external
- Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines, available at www.cecv.catholic.edu.au, under 'Industrial Relations' and then 'Legal Resources for Schools' (requires user to log in using the school's user name and password)
- Employment resources, www.cecv.catholic.edu.au, under 'Industrial Relations'
- OHS resources, available at www.cecv.catholic.edu.au, under 'Industrial Relations' CEOM Operational Guide - Available at CEVN under 'Finance, Legal, Operations'

Other Church Resources

- Towards Healing: <https://www.catholic.org.au/documents/1346-towards-healing-2010-2>
- Integrity in the Service of the Church: <https://www.catholic.org.au/documents/1345-integrity-in-service-of-the-church-1>
- Integrity in Ministry: <https://www.catholic.org.au/documents/1344-integrity-inministry-2010-1>
- The Truth, Justice and Healing Council: <http://www.tjhcouncil.org.au/>
- Child Safe Standards – Department of Health & Human Services: <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-andresources/policies,-guidelines- and-legislation/>
- Working with Children Checks: www.justice.vic.gov.au/workingwithchildren
- Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority: <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/registration/Pages/schminsdards.aspx>
- VIT Professional Standards and Code of Ethics: <http://www.vit.vic.edu.au>

9.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed every three years and we undertake to seek feedback from students, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.

Policy Ratified:	*** 2016
Next Review date:	*** 2019