



ST JOHN'S
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
FOOTSCRAY

Child Safe Policy

RATIONALE

St John's Footscray has the responsibility to embed a culture of child safety and ensure that policies and procedures demonstrate zero tolerance of child abuse in the school.

The school's policies and procedures shall provide the foundation for and commitment to child safety by ensuring :

- all school staff comply with a code of conduct which addresses child safety. St John's recognise and consider existing professional codes of conduct when developing child safety codes of conduct;
- recruitment processes are in place to manage and reduce the risk of child abuse. In addition, processes shall be in place to ensure that there are appropriate staff induction programs, staff professional development and staff supervision arrangements to ensure a child-safe environment;
- policies and procedures for reporting and responding to suspected child abuse shall enable individuals to take the appropriate course of action to protect the safety of students;
- the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of risk management strategies to ensure child safety in the school environment.
- children feel safe to report abuse and have processes in place to ensure that students are empowered to raise any child safety concerns. St John's will support students to develop appropriate knowledge and skills so that children can identify and communicate when they don't feel safe.

GOALS

- ✓ To create and maintain a child safe school environment.
- ✓ To ensure that strategies, policies, procedures and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children, particularly students who are vulnerable due to age, family circumstances, abilities, or Indigenous, cultural or linguistic background.
- ✓ To develop policies and procedures to implement the child safe standards, communicate information about them to the school community; including staff, parents and students and conduct appropriate professional development activities.

IMPLEMENTATION

The following sets out the processes and strategies to be implemented, aligned to the identified standards contained within Ministerial Order 870, to ensure St John's creates and maintains a child safe school environment.

Standard 1 - strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements.

Principal, Deputy Principal and Student Wellbeing Leader are identified with the role & responsibility of ensuring Child Safety is embedded in the school culture.

- St John's philosophy is contained within the school's vision, strategic intent and goal statements for Religious Education, Learning & Teaching, Student Wellbeing, Leadership and Management and School Community spheres. (See Attachment 1)
- Governance arrangements exist which outline responsibilities and steps for staff to respond to the care, safety and welfare of students, including all school environments and outside of school hours and particularly on school camps. These are found in the Staff Handbook and Parent Handbook.

IMPLEMENTATION (cont.)

Standard 2 - a child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.

- Pastoral Care policy includes a commitment to a culture of child safety and to zero tolerance in regard to Cyber bullying.
- Clear procedures to implement the statement of commitment to a culture of child safety, including all school environments and outside of school hours.
- Child Safe Policy developed in 2016.

Standard 3 - a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.

- School has job descriptions for all school staff documented in the Staff Handbook, including those involved in child-connected work in all school environments and outside of school hours which include a statement of expectations for duties and responsibilities related to child safety.
- Archdiocesan 'Code of Conduct for the Caring of Children' applies contractually to the Out of School Hours Care facility (currently contracted to 'Extend) and its staff.
- Staff Codes of Conduct for all teaching and non-teaching staff adopted as Attachment 2 & 3 below.
- Parent Code of Conduct & Parent & Friends Code of Conduct developed and implemented in 2016. (Attachment 4 & 5)

Standard 4 - screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

- School has policies and procedures that apply to all staff involved in child-connected work in all school environments and outside of school hours. They include consideration of child safety for recruitment, induction, professional development and supervision of staff.
- All teaching staff are required to have the NCRC, all non teaching staff are required to have the WWCC and parent helpers / volunteers are also required to hold a WWCC.

Standard 5 - processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

- There are procedures for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse in accordance with this requirement and other legal obligations, including criminal offences regarding grooming, failure to disclose and failure to report. These are found in the Pastoral Care Policy, (Attachment 6) and in the Staff Handbook on page 39 under, 'Mandatory Reporting' (Attachment 7).
- There are policies and procedures for reporting and responding to suspected child abuse (as above) that apply to all staff involved in child-connected work in all school environments and outside of school hours.
- Mandatory Reporting Policy (Attachment 6) is to be regularly revised & teaching staff undertake the on-line professional development module on an annual basis.

IMPLEMENTATION (cont.)

Standard 6 - strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse.

- Risk management strategies are developed & implemented regarding child safety in school activities via OHS audit procedures (risk assessments) within the OHS Policy (Attachment 8) and environments (e.g. Gated security, ID badges).
- Risk management related to online school environments (including email and intranet systems), including (where applicable) child safety outside of school hours occurs via the school's 'Internet Policy' and Cyber bullying seminars for teachers, parents and students annually.
- Assistance and advice is sought via the Children's eSafe Commissioner's website related to Cyber Safety.
- Assistance and advice is sought via the Cyber bullying unit at Moonee Ponds Police Station related to Cyber Safety.

Standard 7 - strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children, including promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and promoting the safety of children with a disability.

- The school encourages the development of 'Student Voice' in each classroom at each year level. Students initiate the development of Classroom rules at the start of each year, students set their own personal goals to be met each Term and each student presents their achievements to their parents at intervals throughout the year via 'SeeSaw'. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback to school staff to assist planning at all stages of the learning cycle.
- The school reinforces and promotes children's awareness of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour via classroom 'Circle Time', monthly School Assemblies and the reinforcement of all School and Classroom rules.
- The school supports students understanding of their rights and enable students to raise child safety concerns in all school environments and outside of school hours via email communication, classroom 'Circle Time' feedback and their Student Representative Council.
- Implementation of educational strategies covering resilience and healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality) occurs in targeted social skilling groups and through Prep, Yr. 1/2, 3/4, and 5/6 Faith Life Inquiries.
- Processes are in place that are inclusive of the needs of all children, particularly children who are vulnerable due to age, family circumstances, abilities or Indigenous, cultural, or linguistic background via specialist intervention programs, social skilling and special indigenous education programs. Specific, needs based programs (e.g social skills programs, ERIK, RAN, Reading Recovery) occur 'at point of need' during the school day.

EVALUATION

Annual evaluation to occur to ensure policy, practices & processes are up-dated and effective 2018.

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