

SALESIAN COLLEGE CHADSTONE

Child Safety Policy

Rationale

Salesian College Chadstone (College) is a Catholic community in the spirit of St John Bosco. The objects of the College include the adoption and promotion of the Salesian educational philosophy expressed in a three-fold approach of reason, religion and loving-kindness. It strives to create environments characterised by:

- (a) a sense of welcome (A HOME).
- (b) a spirit of faith (A PARISH).
- (c) dynamic learning (A SCHOOL).
- (d) engaged social interaction (A PLAYGROUND).

Providing for the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people is central to the College's mission.

This policy outlines our approach and strategies to provide a child safe school and keep students from harm. It calls on everyone to 'play their part'. It impacts on our culture, decision-making processes and actions. It takes into account relevant legislative requirements within the state of Victoria including the requirements of Victorian Child Safe Standards set out in [Ministerial Order No. 870](#).

Principles

- Safety and protection from abuse and neglect is:
 - every child's and young person's fundamental right,
 - everyone's responsibility, and
 - dependent on a child safe culture.
- Adults have a responsibility to care for young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any harm or abuse.
- Child safety should be discussed openly.
- Child safety is promoted by engaging with families and the community (particularly those that have an impact on child safety and protection).
- Members, Directors, staff, clergy, volunteers, contractors, parents, carers and students should feel free to raise concerns about child safety and be confident that concerns will be taken seriously and acted upon.
- Students have a right to education in all aspects of personal safety, should be actively encouraged to openly express their views and should be taught what they can do if they feel unsafe.
- Policies and practices should demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements and cooperation with the Church, governments, the police and human services agencies.
- All persons involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.
- Appropriate confidentiality must be maintained with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed.
- Special consideration should be given to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, those from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds and those with a disability.

Statement of Commitment

The College is committed to:

- Meeting its responsibilities for the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people with particular attention to the vulnerable.



- Meeting our moral, legal and mission-driven responsibilities to create a nurturing school environment where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are and feel safe.
- Continual, responsive and evidence-based improvement designed to eliminate the possibility of abuse.
- Prompt action when allegations of abuse concerning children and young people are raised.
- Effective practices in child safety and identifying and responding to child harm.
- Collaboration and an understanding that everyone involved in the operation of the College has a responsibility to understand their role in ensuring that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people must be at the forefront of all they do and every decision.
- Meeting the Ministerial Order No870 seven minimum standards.

Our commitment to our students

- We commit to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people enrolled in our school.
- We commit to providing children and young people with positive and nurturing experiences.
- We commit to listening to children and young people and empowering them by taking their views seriously, and addressing any concerns that they raise with us.
- We commit to act to ensure that children and young people are protected from abuse or harm.
- We commit to teaching children and young people the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.
- We commit to seeking input and feedback from students regarding the creation of a safe school environment.

Our commitment to parents and carers

- We commit to communicating honestly and openly with parents and carers about the wellbeing and safety of their children.
- We commit to engaging with and listening to the views of parents and carers about our child-safety practice, policies and procedures.
- We commit to transparency in our decision-making with parents and carers where it will not compromise the safety of children or young people.
- We commit to acknowledging the cultural diversity of families and being sensitive to how this may impact on student safety issues.
- We commit to continuously reviewing and improving our systems to protect children from abuse.

Our commitment to our school staff (school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy)

- We commit to providing all staff with the necessary support to enable them to fulfil their roles - including regular and appropriate learning opportunities.
- We commit to providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm policy and procedures in relation to child safety and the protection and wellbeing of young people - including annual training in our Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct and staff responsibilities to report concerns.
- We commit to listening to all concerns voiced by staff, clergy, volunteers, and contractors about keeping children and young people safe from harm.
- We commit to providing opportunities for employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy to receive formal debriefing and counselling arising from incidents of the abuse of a child or young person.

Policy

The College strives for a child safe school consistent with our values, mission and legal requirements. Child safety must be embedded in our governance structure, at the core of decisions and actions and opportunities for improvement fostered by review and an inclusive and engaging in a manner that everyone is aware of their role, rights and capacity to contribute. Child safety must be considered in the recruitment, engagement and ongoing development of staff.

Roles and responsibilities

Responsible party	Role
Board	Develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the College.
	Allocate roles and responsibilities for achieving child safety strategies.
	Inform the College community about strategies, roles, responsibilities and practices.
	Periodically review the effectiveness of strategies and revise when required.
	Ensure adequate resources are available for and applied to implementation of child safety policies and procedures.
	Ensure the Principal and Leadership Team are held accountable for implementation.
	Direct, receive and consider reports from the Child Safety, Risk and Compliance Committee.
Child Safety, Risk and Compliance Committee	Monitor and advise on compliance with child safety requirements, identified risks (refer risk assessment), applicable laws and regulatory requirements, oversee and make recommendations to the Board in relation to child safety.
Principal	Management of child safety under delegation of the Board.
	Maintenance of a child safe culture and safe environment.
	Ensure staff recruitment and screening practices are rigorous.
	Provide induction and development opportunities to clarify staff obligations, policy and procedures in relation to child protection and wellbeing.
	Ensure the College complies with Ministerial Order No.870 and PROTECT:Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools. Demonstrate compliance with seven standards – refer appendix A.
Leadership Team	Support and advise the Principal in managing and implementing child safety strategies.
	Provide a clear and consistent message that that child safety is at the core of all teams' efforts.
	Upholding high principles and standards and modelling behaviour between adults and children based on mutual respect and consideration.
	Be informed of legislative and regulatory requirements (eg Ministerial Order No. 870) and VRQA and CECV guidelines.
Child Safety Officers	Senior staff with specialised training in child protection who are first (or early) points of contact for raising concerns – comprises the Principal, Leadership team members, Deans of Students, Year Level Co-ordinators and Counsellors.
	Assist in responding to child protection incidents.
	Assist in promoting a child safe culture.
Staff	Protect and treat children with dignity and respect and discharge a duty of care to them.
	Following legislative, regulatory and College processes if they form a reasonable belief that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected in the course of their work.
	Providing a physically and psychologically safe environment where the wellbeing of children and young people is nurtured.
	Undertaking regular training and education in order to understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and the wellbeing of children and young people.
	Assisting children and young people to develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from abuse
	Following the College's Child Safety Code of Conduct.
Volunteers and contractors	Be informed of and accept the College's child protection policies and procedures and raise child safety concerns.
	Maintain a current Working With Children Check.

Reporting and Responding

Child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct will be recorded and stored in accordance with security and privacy requirements. Our school complies with legal obligations that relate to managing the risk of child abuse under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.), the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic.) and the recommendations of the [Betrayal of Trust](#) report.

Our school's **PROTECT: Reporting Obligations Policy** sets out the actions required when there is a reasonable belief that a child at our school needs protection or a criminal offence has been committed and provides guidance and procedures on how to make a report. Our policy assists staff, volunteers and families to:

- identify the indicators of a child who may need protection.
- understand how a 'reasonable belief' is formed.
- make a report of a child or young person who may need protection.
- comply with mandatory reporting obligations under child protection law and their legal obligations relating to criminal child abuse and grooming under criminal law.

Our school has also established internal processes to ensure that appropriate action is taken to respond to concerns about the wellbeing and/or safety of a student.

Our complaints and disclosure processes are outlined in our Complaints and Pastoral care policies and detailed in the following policies and procedures:

- Complaints Policy
- Duty of Care
- Responding to Critical Incidents:
 - Disclosures & Suspicions of Child Abuse &/ Family Violence procedure
 - Disclosures of self-harm/suicidal ideation procedure
 - Disclosures of a significant trauma event procedure
 - After hours response procedure

Application

The Child Safety Policy applies to Members of the College, the College Board, staff (teaching, non-teaching and casual), trainees on placement, volunteers, contractors, parents and carers and students.

Staff appointment and retention

All advertisements and job description involving child connected work must set out obligations of the role and qualifications, experience and selection criteria in relation to child protection. When recruiting and selecting employees, contractors and volunteers involved in child-connected work, reasonable efforts must be made to:

- Confirm the applicant's Working with Children Check and National Police Check status and/or professional registration.
- Obtain proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications
- Verify the applicant's history of work involving children
- Obtain references that address the applicant's suitability for the job and working with children.

Successful applicants must be provided with child safety induction and access to the College's Child Safety Code of Conduct and Child Safety Policy.

The continuing suitability of staff to work with children should be monitored and assessed including regular reviews of the status of Working with Children Checks and staff professional requirements such as Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration.

Staff development

The College will must provide Members, Directors, employees and volunteers with regular and appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge of, openness to and ability to address child safety matters. This includes induction, ongoing training and professional learning to ensure that everyone understands their professional and legal obligations and responsibilities and the procedures for reporting suspicion of child abuse and neglect.

Risk management

We are committed to proactively and systematically identifying and assessing risks to student safety across our whole school environment and reducing or eliminating (where possible) all potential sources of harm. We document, implement, monitor and periodically review our risk management strategies for child safety and ensure that the strategies change as needed and as new risks arise – refer Appendix B.

Staff will be encouraged to raise child safety matters when they feel a need arises and at regular staff meetings. Child safety will remain a standard leadership agenda item. Leadership Team members are required to assist the Principal in implementing child safety strategies. The Child Safety, Risk and Compliance Committee (Board sub-committee) will assess child safety strategy implementation and effectiveness, compliance and make recommendations to the Board.

Breach of this policy

Where a member of staff is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility under this Policy, the College may commence process under clause 13 of the *Victorian Catholic Education Multi Enterprise Agreement 2018* (VCEMEA) for managing employment concerns. This may result in disciplinary consequences.

Where the Principal is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this policy, the concerned party should contact the Board Chair. Relevant notification should also be made to Catholic Education Melbourne (Office of Professional Conduct, Ethics and Investigation).

Where any other member of the College community is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility under this policy, the College will take appropriate action, including in accordance with our PROTECT: Identifying and responding to abuse – Reporting Obligations and Complaints Policy. Where appropriate, contact will be made with Catholic Education Melbourne (Office of Professional Conduct, Ethics and Investigation).

Legislation

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic.)
Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic.)
Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)
Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)

Related documents

PROTECT: Identifying and responding to abuse – Reporting Obligations Policy
Pastoral Care Policy
Complaints Policy (and Procedures)
Information and Communications Technology Policy
Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Agreement
Duty of Care
Responding to Critical Incidents:

Disclosures & Suspicions of Child Abuse &/ Family Violence procedure
 Disclosures of self-harm/suicidal ideation procedure
 Disclosures of a significant trauma event procedure
 After hours response procedure

Review

The College is committed to continuous improvement of its child safety systems and practices. The policy is dynamic and will be annually reviewed to ensure it is updated to accommodate changes in legislation, circumstances or experience arising from practice. At least once per annum, compliance with the seven minimum standards (Appendix A) will be assessed and the Board will consider recommendations from the Child Safety, Risk and Compliance Committee in relation to changes that should occur.

References

- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) 2016, *Commitment Statement to Child Safety: A safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people in Catholic schools.*
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) 2018, *Victorian Catholic Education Multi Enterprise Agreement 2018*, CECV.
- Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, Vatican.
- Department of Education, 2018, *PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools*
- State of Victoria 2016, *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools: Ministerial Order No. 870*, Education & Training Reform Act 2006, Victorian Government Gazette No. S2.
- Parliament of Victoria, Family and Community Development Committee, 2013, *Betrayal of Trust*

Version control

Prepared by	Salesian College Chadstone
Approved by	Salesian College Chadstone Board
Approval date	January 2021
Next review	June 2021
Version control	
Date	Comment
April 2017	Child Protection and Safety Policy

Appendix A - Seven minimum standards (Ministerial Order No870)

Child Safe Standard 1 – Embedding a culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

With particular emphasis on leadership and ensuring that everyone involved with the College is aware of their role in promoting child safety, this standard seeks the establishment of and continual improvement in the College's child safety culture and ensuring child safety is at the centre of every decision and action.

Compliance

- Child safety is included as a standing item on all agendas of the Board, Child Safety, Risk and Compliance Committee, Leadership and all-staff meetings. Discussions are reflected in minutes of meetings.
- All directors, staff and volunteers have completed training in the College's child safe policy and procedures and how to recognise and respond to child abuse.
- Appraisals of Leadership Team members must include consideration of child safety.
- Wellbeing notes and records are maintained – particularly in relation to vulnerable students.

Child Safe Standard 2 – Child Safe Policy

This Standard requires the school community to work collaboratively to produce a policy that provides an overview of key elements of a school's approach to creating a child-safe organisation. A Child Safety policy influences the organisational culture through an overarching set of principles and commitments. It should also set out the school's proposed actions for child safety and be under constant review in response to emerging evidence and practice.

Compliance

- Child safety policies and materials are included on website and are adequately represented in documentation (eg enrolment materials).
- Information is regularly provided to parents / carers and the wider community on the College's child safe policy and procedures and how concerns can be raised.
- Child safe policies and procedures are reviewed at least once per annum and updated to reflect regulatory changes, input from and consultation with stakeholders and experience working with the policy and procedures over time.

Child Safe Standard 3 – Code of Conduct

This Standard promotes child safety in schools by establishing clear expectations of staff and volunteers for appropriate behaviour with children, in order to safeguard them against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse and/or neglect. A Child Safety Code of Conduct recognises the critical role that school staff play in protecting the children in their care. It clarifies and affirms boundaries in the school's environment and enables all to be held accountable.

Compliance

- Maintenance and annual review of a Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Inclusion of Code on website.
- Staff induction and training records.

Child Safe Standard 4 – Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

This standard covers staff selection, supervision, ongoing training and monitoring of suitability to work with children as a means of reducing the risk of child abuse. It also sends a message of a ‘zero-tolerance’ approach to abuse. All staff need to understand the importance of child safety, be trained to minimise the risk of child abuse and be aware of the College’s policies and procedures.

Compliance

- All job descriptions for positions involving child-connected work must indicate duties and responsibilities, qualifications, experience and attributes relating to child safety.
- All applicants must be informed of child safety policies and practices and the code of conduct and successful applicants inducted in child safety and monitored for ongoing suitability.
- The College will make reasonable efforts to verify suitability for child related work by securing Victorian Institute of Teaching registration or Working with Children Check, confirming history of child related work and determining suitability by reference checking.
- The College will review the effectiveness of staff selection processes and initial and ongoing child safety training programs.

Child Safe Standard 5 – Responding to and Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

This Standard reinforces that all community members have a moral obligation to protect any child under our care and supervision from reasonably foreseeable harm. Staff play a critical role in protecting children (including identifying, responding and reporting child abuse) and must meet a range of legal obligations. Policy and processes must be established in line with legislation and ensure that all members of the community are well informed and supported to act if they suspect, receive a disclosure, or are witness to any form of child abuse.

Compliance

- The College’s PROTECT: Identifying and responding to abuse – Reporting Obligations Policy (based on Catholic Education Melbourne’s (CEM) Child Protection - Reporting Obligations Policy 2.19) has been established to ensure requirements for identifying and reporting child safety matters comply with statutory requirements.
- Training for all staff is conducted as soon as practicable after commencement at least once per annum. Records of training are maintained.

Child Safe Standard 6 – Safety in online environments

Schools are required to identify and mitigate known or foreseeable risks to student safety in all school environments - including virtual spaces. It is important that schools re-assess their online risks and strengthen practices to ensure the ongoing safety of students. School risk registers should be reviewed and updated accordingly.

Compliance

- Staff, students and parents are provided with clear guidance on expectations and protocols for online learning.
- Staff use school-provided devices (not personal devices) to communicate with students and parents.

- Staff are encouraged to raise concerns with online learning platforms or approaches that they believe pose risks.
- Staff are reminded to comply with the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct when engaging in work online.
- Staff are reminded of procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

Child Safe Standard 7 – Participation and Empowerment of Children

This Standard underlines the importance of fostering an environment of openness, inclusiveness and respect where children and young people feel valued and 'have an awareness of their rights and adult' responsibilities regarding child safety. This requires schools to have a focused and intentional commitment to cultural and structural change and to take deliberate action.

Compliance

- Pastoral Care Policy
- Information and Communications Technology Acceptable Use Agreement
- Duty of Care
- Responding to Critical Incidents:
 - Disclosures & Suspicions of Child Abuse &/ Family Violence procedure
 - Disclosures of self-harm/suicidal ideation procedure
 - Disclosures of a significant trauma event procedure
 - After hours response procedure

Appendix B – Child Safety Risk Register

The risk assessment template (refer sample below) will be tabled by the College at meetings of the Child Safety, Risk and Compliance Committee for consideration. The Committee will make recommendations to the Board based on its assessment. The register considers risks, existing measures and risk rating. It also provides details of new measures and targets and allocates responsibility.

CHILD SAFETY RISK REGISTER (with examples)

Risk Description	Causes	Impacts	Controls	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Rating	Risk Treatments	Responsibility	New Risk Rating
Poor child safe culture	Structure	Lack of improvement in practice	Charters, policy and codes	Possible	High	High		Board	Low
Inappropriate behaviour unreported	Compliance with code and reporting	Reinforced poor culture	Code and reporting	Possible	Medium	Medium	Add child safety to ARMs	Principal	Low
Excessive trust in long term staff	Lack of process for established staff	Abuse	Regular training incl. code of conduct	Possible	High	High	Add child safety to ARMs	Principal	Low
Poor recruitment	Failure to adhere to required practice	New risk	Employment provisions in policy	Unlikley	High	Medium	Construct employment checklist	Principal	Low
Online engagement with students	Failure to adhere to code	Inapproriate exchanges	Code of conduct	Possible	Medium	Medium	Training on code / reinforce at staff meetings	Principal & Leadership Team	Low

Risk Description	Causes	Impacts	Controls	Likelihood	Consequence	Risk Rating	Risk Treatments	Responsibility	New Risk Rating
Access to students during excursions and camps	Less controllable location	Inappropriate exchanges	Excursions policy. Student code, Assessments	Unlikley	Medium	Low	Improve assessments / student briefings	Principal, Leadership Team, Teaching	Low

		Consequence		
		Low	Medium	High
Likelihood	Unlikley	Low	Low	Medium
	Possible	Low	Medium	High
	Likely	Medium	High	High

Appendix C – Definitions

Board	The Board of Directors of Salesian College Chadstone.
Chair	The Chair of the Board of Directors of Salesian College Chadstone.
Child	A child or a young person enrolled as a student at the school.
Child abuse	Any act committed against a child involving: o a sexual offence or an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming)
	The infliction, on a child, of physical violence or serious emotional or psychological harm
	Serious neglect of a child.
Child-connected work	Work authorised by the College’s Board and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.
Child FIRST	A registered, community, referral service that can receive a confidential referral about a child with concerns. It has no statutory powers but can refer matters to family services.
Child Protection	A State Government agency that has statutory powers to protect children at risk of significant harm.
Child safety	Matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse. (Ministerial Order No. 870)
Child Safety, Risk and Compliance Committee	A sub-committee of the Salesian College Chadstone Board responsible for receiving reports, reviewing compliance and making recommendations to the Board.
Child neglect #	Failure to provide a child with an adequate standard of nutrition, medical care, clothing, shelter or supervision to the extent that the health and physical development of the child is significantly impaired or placed at serious risk.
Child physical abuse #	Generally, consists of any non-accidental infliction of physical violence on a child by any person.
Child protection	Services directed at protecting children at risk of serious harm.
Child sexual abuse #	Use of power or authority over a child to involve them in sexual activity. It can include a wide range of sexual activity and does not always involve physical contact or force.
Direct contact	Includes physical contact, face-to-face contact and written, oral or electronic communication.
Emotional child abuse #	When a child is repeatedly rejected, isolated or frightened by threats, or by witnessing family violence.
Grooming	Grooming refers to predatory conduct undertaken by an adult (18 years or over) to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. It is a sexual offence under section 49M of the <i>Crimes Act 1958</i> (Vic.) carrying a maximum 10-year term of imprisonment. Under section 49M, the adult’s words or conduct must be intended to facilitate the child engaging or being involved in the commission of, or attempt to commit, a sexual offence by the adult or another adult.
Mandatory Reporting #	The legal requirement under the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> (Vic.) to protect children from harm relating to physical and sexual abuse by reporting. Mandatory reporters include the principal, teachers, medical practitioners, counsellors and clergy at our school.
Reasonable Belief #	When school staff are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, they must assess that concern to determine if a report should be made to the relevant agency. This process of considering all relevant information and observations is known as forming a ‘reasonable belief’. A ‘reasonable belief’ or a ‘belief on reasonable grounds’ is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A ‘reasonable belief’ is formed if a

	reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. (PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools)
School environment	Any place (physical or virtual) made available or authorised by the College Board for use by a child during or outside school hours including a campus of the school, online environment and other locations including venues for camps, sport, excursions, competitions and other events. (Ministerial Order No. 870).
School staff	A individual working in a school environment directly engaged by the school, volunteer, contractor, external service provider or minister of religion (Ministerial Order No. 870).
# Refer to: PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools	

Appendix D - Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)

Three new criminal offences have been introduced under this Act:

- **Failure to disclose offence:**
Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.
- **Failure to protect offence:**
The offence will apply where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
- **Grooming offence:**
This offence targets predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with a child. Grooming can be conducted in person or online, for example via interaction through social media, web forums and emails.