



Sacred Heart
College
GEELONG

ENGAGING FAMILIES IN CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

Introduction

Catholic education is an active partnership between family and school, where families are recognised as the first and ongoing educators of their children. Schools and families partner in the shared privilege and responsibility for children and young people's faith formation, learning, safety and wellbeing.

At Sacred Heart College, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel (CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety).

We believe that every person is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27), with the inherent dignity that this implies, and all are created as social beings, with the mutual rights, obligations and needs that this implies. Our Mercy Values of Respect, Compassion, Justice, Courage, Hospitality and Service compel us to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all College community members is cherished and developed. The College strives to do this through inclusive practices that invite belonging to and participation from the College community in all aspects of child safety and wellbeing.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the strategies and actions that the College has in place to ensure that families, and other members of the College community, are informed about relevant child safety and wellbeing matters and are involved in the promotion of child safety and wellbeing at the College.

This Policy takes into account the specific requirements of the Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 1359.



Educating Girls to Make a Difference

A Ministry of Mercy Education Limited ABN 69 154 531 870

Definitions

Workplace Participants means an individual working within a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
- a contracted service provider, consultant, student on placement or volunteer engaged to perform child-related work for the College
- a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the College (Ministerial Order No. 1359).

Scope

This Policy applies to employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy (referred to as workplace participants within this policy). It should be read in conjunction with related College policies and procedures, including:

- [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [PROTECT Policy: Identifying and Responding to Abuse – Reporting obligations](#)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Policy](#)

Policy Statement

The following principles underpin the College's commitment to family engagement:

- Families should have the opportunity to participate in decisions relating to child safety and wellbeing which affect their child.
- The College engages and openly communicates with families, and other members of the College community about our child safe approach.
- All members of the College community should have access to information relating to child safety and wellbeing.
- Families, and other members of the College community must have the opportunity to provide input into the development and review of the College's policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing.
- Families, and other members of the College community, have the right to be informed about the operations and governance of the College in relation to child safety and wellbeing.

The College is committed to ensuring that all members of our College community are kept informed about relevant child safety and wellbeing matters and are involved in the promotion of child safety and wellbeing at the College.

We implement the following strategies and actions to ensure that we are able to meet this commitment.



Strategies / actions used by College leadership

The Principal, governing authority and leaders at the College recognise their particular responsibilities to communicate and engage with families, carers and other members of the College community in relation to issues regarding child safety and wellbeing. Strategies and actions used to carry out this responsibility include:

- utilising the College's *Engaging Families in Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* to inform and guide curriculum planning, policies and practices
- supporting workplace participants through appropriate professional learning, to strengthen their communication and engagement skills and to understand the value and importance of effective communication and engagement
- identifying opportunities for families to participate in decisions that affect their child's safety and wellbeing
- ensuring that existing policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing are made publicly available so that they are easily accessible to families, and other members of the College community
- engaging with families, and other members of the College community to collaboratively develop and periodically review policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing
- creating opportunities to ensure that members of the College community are adequately informed about the school's operations and governance relating to child safety and wellbeing

Strategies / actions used by College workplace participants

College workplace participants also have a responsibility to support the College's governing authority and leaders in communicating and engaging with families and other members of the College community regarding child safety and wellbeing. Strategies and actions used to carry out this responsibility include:

- creating and maintaining open lines of communication with families and other members of the College community, particularly with respect to child safety and wellbeing matters
- liaising with families in relation to any concerns and/or decisions that affect their child and giving them the opportunity to contribute to any discussions, where appropriate
- ensuring that families and others in the College community are updated and involved in child safety and wellbeing
- ensuring they act in accordance with the principles set out in this Policy when managing issues relating to child safety and wellbeing

Related Resources

MACS

- [eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities](#)
- [Horizons of Hope: Vision and Context](#)
- [Horizons of Hope: Families as Partners](#)
- [Horizons of Hope: Wellbeing](#)

SHC

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- PROTECT Policy: Identifying and Responding to Abuse – Reporting obligations
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Reportable Conduct Policy



Mercy Education Limited

- Mercy Education Limited: Child Protection Policy
- Mercy Education Limited: Code of Conduct
- Mercy Education Policy: Privacy Policy

Version Control

Date Approved: 28 March 2024

Name: Anna Negro, Principal

Signature: 

Date presented at Advisory Council Meeting: 27 March 2024

Sponsor: Deputy Principal - Student Engagement, Development and Empowerment

Reviewed by:

- School Committee: Child Safety and Wellbeing Team
- Sub Committee of the College Council: Wellbeing Subcommittee
- Student Leadership House Focus Team: N/A

Location checklist:

- The Hub
- Student Space
- Parent Portal
- Website

VERSION HISTORY

| Version | Date approved | Next review |
|---------|---------------------|-------------|
| 1.0 | May 2022 (creation) | 2024 |
| 2.0 | Mar 2024 | 2026 |
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