



Catholic Schools Child Safe Schools

St Joseph's College Geelong

Student-friendly edition of our Child Safety Policy

Date of policy: July 2018

Date of last major review: Aug 2019

Date of next major review: Aug 2020



Policy Title

St Joseph's College Student-friendly edition of our Child Safety Policy
Aug 2019

Introduction	<p>At St Joseph's 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 in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel.</p>
Purpose	<p>The purpose of our Child Safe Policy is to demonstrate the strong commitment of St Joseph's College to the care, safety and wellbeing of all students at our school. It provides information on how we keep students safe from harm, including all forms of abuse in our school environment, on campus, online and in other locations provided by the school.</p>
Principles	<p>We believe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All students deserve, as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect. ➤ Our school works in partnership with relevant groups and all of the school community are engaged in decision-making that have an impact on child safety and protection. ➤ All students have the right to an education in all aspects of personal safety. ➤ All adults in our school have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any kind of harm or abuse. ➤ All our processes are based on honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults, children and young people. ➤ All involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect. ➤ All should feel free to raise concerns about child safety, knowing these will be taken seriously by school leadership. ➤ Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed.
Policy commitments	<p>Our commitment to our <i>students</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 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 opinions seriously, and addressing any concerns that they raise with us.

- We commit to taking action 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 students and 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*:

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

Expectation of our school staff

At St Joseph's College we expect school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy to proactively ensure the safety of students at all times and to take appropriate action if there are concerns about the safety of any child at the school. All school staff must remain familiar with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and policies and procedures in relation to child protection and to comply with all

	<p>requirements.</p> <p>We have a Code of Conduct <i>Safeguarding Children and Young People</i> which recognises the critical role that school staff play in protecting the students in our care and establishes clear expectations relating to how staff interact with children in order to safeguard them against abuse and or neglect.</p>
<p>Student participation</p>	<p>It is important that students have a shared responsibility for child safety in the school. Students are included in the Child Safety Committee to assist in the development of the Child Safety practices and processes that will be used to educate and promote this priority throughout the College. The choice of language and the most appropriate format for child-friendly documentation is important to its success.</p>
<p>Reporting and responding</p>	<p>If you have been abused or feel unsafe you can tell a teacher or any adult at our school. All school staff members have a responsibility to protect any child under their care. They will be able to help you.</p> <p>If you think someone has been abused or is unsafe you should talk to an adult you trust. Any staff member at our school will be able to help. Help your friend by encouraging them to tell a trusted adult. Even if your friend has specifically asked you not to tell an adult, you still should. It is more important to make sure that your friend is helped and feels protected.</p> <p>The school records any child safety complaints. All school staff members have a responsibility to protect any child under their care. You will be helped.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The adult will listen to your concerns and help you. ➤ The information will not be shared with the person who is making you feel unsafe. ➤ Information will only be shared with people who can support and protect you. ➤ In some cases the people helping you are required by law to tell the police, the Department of Health and Human Services' Child Protection services and/or your family to prevent any further abuse, or risk of abuse.
<p>Recruitment</p>	<p>St Joseph's College applies thorough and rigorous screening processes in the recruitment of employees and volunteers. Our commitment to child safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements and all new staff applicants are provided with copies of the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Child Safety Policy.</p> <p>The College routinely checks all employees to ensure they continue to meet Child Safety requirements such as Working With Children clearances.</p>

<p>Professional learning for school staff</p>	<p>All school staff are provided with our Child Safe and Mandatory Reporting Policies and are required to sign our Child Safe Code of Conduct. They are also provided with a Copy of the EREA Code of Conduct which outlines the expectations for them. Any updates are emailed to all staff.</p> <p>Any specific training is provided through an online course and specific presentations are provided as part of the schools annual training program.</p>
<p>Risk management</p>	<p>At St Joseph's College 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. The Child Safe Committee is involved in the review process.</p>
<p>Supporting documents</p>	<p>The following are related St Joseph's College policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Policy 3.1 <i>Child Protection – Reporting Obligations</i> ➤ Policy 4.2 <i>Bullying and Harassment Policy</i> ➤ Policy 4.4 <i>Complaint Handling Procedure</i>
<p>Communication</p>	<p>The College will keep everyone informed through a variety of ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ College Newsletter ➤ Student and Staff Noticeboards ➤ Posters ➤ Emails ➤ Student Online medium/website/Facebook
<p>Review</p>	<p>At St Joseph's College we are committed to continuous improvement of our child safety systems and practices. We intend this policy to be a dynamic document that will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is working in practice and updated to accommodate changes in legislation or circumstance.</p> <p>The policy will be reviewed annually and will incorporate suggestions from teachers, non- teaching volunteers, students, parents and other relevant bodies.</p>