



# Standard Two – Child Safety Policy

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### Introduction

**Child Safety at St Paul's** - We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our students, staff, and volunteers. As part of this commitment we have implemented the [Victorian Child Safe Standards](#) to help protect children and young people under the age of 18 from child abuse and neglect, including cultural safety for Indigenous children and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability. The school has developed and actively enforces Child Safety Strategies to ensure that any person involved in 'child connected work' is aware of their obligations & responsibilities for ensuring the safety of all children under their care.

In accordance with requirements of the [Victorian Government's Ministerial Order No 870](#), St. Paul's Primary School maintains a culture of 'no tolerance' to child abuse and to support this has established minimum Child Safety Standards.

### Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate St. Paul's Primary School's commitment to ensuring Child Safety and to illustrate the measures implemented by the school to maintain a safe education environment, as well as processes for responding to suspected abuse.

### Scope

This policy & associated procedure applies to all staff members (teaching & non-teaching), clergy, casual relief staff, volunteers, and contractors engaged by the school.

### Commitment to Child Safety

All students & young people attending St. Paul's Primary School have the right to feel safe. The school affirms its commitment to child safety by adopting a 'zero tolerance' to child abuse and by actively implementing and managing strategies to help protect children from harm.

Initiatives undertaken to ensure the safety of students and young people at St. Paul's Primary School include the following:

- » An annual assessment of the effectiveness of its Child Safety Management Strategies to identify areas for improvement.
- » A Code of Conduct defining workplace expectations including professional boundaries, ethical behaviours and acceptable & unacceptable relationships.
- » Processes for the recruitment, support, training & supervision of staff members, clergy, casual relief staff, volunteers, and contractors who participate in 'Child Connected Work'.
- » Procedures for responding to and reporting suspected Child Abuse.
- » Inclusion & empowerment of all students & young people in the establishment of Child Safety strategies.



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- » A commitment that promotes safety of Indigenous children, children with disabilities and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

St. Paul's Primary School maintains policies, procedures and strategies to create a child safe environment in the following areas.

### **Risk Management**

St. Paul's Primary School recognises the importance of minimising the potential of Child Abuse or harm and uses this process to inform our policies, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general Occupational Health & Safety risks the school proactively manages risk via a formal assessment process.

### **Code of Conduct**

St. Paul's Primary School enforces a Code of Conduct for all staff members, clergy, casual relief teachers, volunteers, and contractors that clearly defines workplace expectations including professional boundaries, ethical behaviours and acceptable & unacceptable relationships.

This Code of Conduct aims to provide guidance and support to individuals so that they feel valued, respected and fairly treated. It is provided to any person engaged in 'Child Connected Work' and is available on the school website & in the Employee Handbook.

### **Recruitment, Support, Training & Supervision**

St. Paul's Primary School adopts Administrative & Human Resource practices to ensure its screening, recruitment & performance management processes identify and engage the most suitable candidates for positions available at the school. Recruitment and screening processes, as well as Police and Working with Children's Checks are minimum requirements for those engaged in 'Child Connected Work'.

Staff Members are provided with regular development opportunities, support, supervision & training to assist with addressing child safety matters.

### **Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Concerns or Abuse**

St. Paul's Primary School has appointed a Child Safety Officer (Ms. Jacoba Nasveld) with specific responsibilities for responding to reports or complaints made by any member of the school community relating to child safety concerns or abuse. The school's Child Safety Officer works closely with members of the leadership team, staff members, clergy, casual relief teachers, volunteers, contractors, students and the parent community to ensure Child Safety Standards are maintained and all child safety complaints, suspected abuse, disclosures or breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct are immediately addressed.

Where staff members have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a student or young person they are mandated by law to report their concerns immediately to the Principal, Child Safety Officer or a Members of the Leadership Team before contacting DHHS Child Protection. Staff members will be supported through all aspects of the reporting process.

The school's reporting & complaints procedure is located on the school website.



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### **Inclusion & empowerment of all students & young people**

St. Paul's Primary School works with students to ensure that they are empowered to understand their rights, recognise what abuse is and encourage them to speak up when they feel uncomfortable or afraid. Staff members actively encourages students & young people to express their views on matters that directly affect them. The school educates students and young people on strategies they can adopt if they feel unsafe.

### **Valuing Diversity**

St. Paul's Primary School values diversity and does not tolerate discriminatory practices.

To achieve this the school:

- » Promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Indigenous children and their families.
- » Promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from cultural and/or linguistically different backgrounds.
- » Welcome children with disabilities and their families and actively promotes their participation.
- » Seek to employ staff members from a culturally diverse background.

### **Review of this Policy**

St. Paul's Primary School reviews its Child Safety Code of Conduct every three years more frequently in the event of a complaint or when there has been a change to the work environment or work arrangements that may impact on the protection of children.

Principal

Date: 31/10/2017

## References:

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## St. Paul's Primary School

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Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) 2016, *Commission For Children & Young People 2015, A Guide to Creating a Child Safe Environment*

Victorian Government 2005, *Children, Youth and Families Act*

Victorian Government 1958, *Crimes Act*

Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 1 - Good leadership and governance in child safe organisations*

Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 2 - Child safe policy and statement of commitment*

Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 3 - Code of conduct (including sample code of conduct)*

Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 4 - Human resources practices for child safe organisations*

Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 5 - Recruitment practices for child safe organisations*

Victorian Government Department of Health & Human Services 2016, *Resource 6 - What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made*

Victorian Government Department of Justice 2016, *Betrayal of Trust Implementation*

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Victorian Government Education and Training 2005, *Child Protection Reporting Obligations*

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Victorian Government 1988, *Privacy Act*

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Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority 2016, *Child Safety Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety*

Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority 2016, *Child Safety Standard 2: A Child Safety Policy or Statement of Commitment to Child Safety*

Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority 2016, *Child Safety Standard 3: Child Safety Code of Conduct*

Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority 2016, *Child Safety Standard 4: Staff Selection Checklist*

Victorian Registration & Qualifications Authority 2016, *Child Safety Standard 5: What to do when an allegation of child abuse is made*

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Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) 2013, [Victorian Catholic Education Multi Enterprise Agreement 2013](#), CECV.

Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, [The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium](#), Vatican.

Safe Schools Hub 2014, [National Safe Schools Framework Glossary](#), Australian Government Department of Education and Training.

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.

Victorian Government Department of Justice 2016, [Betrayal of Trust Implementation](#).