



CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (the Policy) is structured and guided by Ministerial Order 1359 Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools (Ministerial Order 1359) and the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

Mount St Joseph Girls' College is committed to providing educational opportunities that actively welcome, engage, inspire and challenge all students to learn in a safe and enlivening Catholic environment. We acknowledge that we are a diverse community and promote equity for all learners. The College will ensure a culturally safe environment for all.

The College will ensure that:

- A student's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
- Staff, students and volunteers and the school community are prepared to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students.
- We have adopted measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted, and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed through our Anti Bullying Framework.
- We undertake surveys with students and engage with students through committees e.g Child Safety Committee Meetings and Student Leadership.
- The participation and inclusion of Aboriginal children and students and their families is actively supported.

Purpose

This Policy sets out commitment, strategies, practices and expectations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in Mount St. Joseph Girls' College and to enable the Board, Executives, Principal and all other staff, including contractors, and those involved in religious ministry and volunteers to effectively manage the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people under the College's care.

Scope

This Policy applies to all staff of Mount St. Joseph Girls' College who have a responsibility to collectively ensure a child safe culture.

Statement of Commitment

Mount St. Joseph Girl's College has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse and is deeply committed to upholding and embedding the highest standards of child safety within our College.

We are guided by our Catholic faith and the unique and unrepeatable dignity of every person in our care. We are dedicated to creating an inclusive and protective environment where every child can feel and be safe.

We are responsible for inspiring and enabling every child to flourish and enrich the world.

Child safety is a shared responsibility between Mount St. Joseph Girl's College and the wider community.

Principles

Guided by Ministerial Order 1359, the Victorian Child Safe Standards, and our Catholic faith, Mount St. Joseph Girls' College is committed to the following principles in managing child safety and wellbeing:

- We foster a culturally safe and inclusive environment where the diverse identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued, alongside the inherent dignity and diversity of all students.
- Child safety and wellbeing are embedded in our governance, leadership, and decision-making practices.
- Students are empowered to understand their rights, participate in decisions that affect them, and feel safe and supported within our school community.
- We uphold equity and respect diversity, with a strong emphasis on the dignity of every child and young person in our care.
- We actively partner with families and the broader school community to promote child safety and wellbeing, encouraging shared responsibility and participation in decisions that impact students.
- We are committed to maintaining a safe physical and online environment for all students.
- Our policies and procedures promote openness, ensuring all individuals — especially children and young people — feel safe to raise concerns or report risks of harm.
- Staff are equipped with appropriate training to uphold child safety and wellbeing.
- All complaints, concerns, and disclosures of child abuse are taken seriously and addressed promptly and thoroughly.



Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure/Framework

Mount St. Joseph Girls' College is committed to embedding a Child Safety and Wellbeing Framework (the Framework) that is fit for purpose and provides protection to children and young people under its care. The foundation of the Framework is supported by our Catholic identity and values and the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

The approach to child safety and wellbeing is documented in the Procedure/Framework document and should be referred to understand how the college has embedded child safety and wellbeing across its practices.

Child Safety Knowledge, Skills and Awareness

Mount St. Joseph Girls' College recognises that initial induction and ongoing training and awareness is critical for ensuring that the College staff understand their roles and responsibilities to protect and empower children and young people.

Staff of Mount St. Joseph Girls' College will participate in a range of training to reinforce their skills and knowledge to establish and maintain a child safe environment.

Child Safety and Wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually across the organisation.

Training may include but is not limited to:

- The child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and the Code of Conduct for Staff
- completing the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by adults, children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations and
- identifying and mitigating child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other learning and training on child safety and wellbeing will be tailored to specific roles

and responsibilities.

Reportable Conduct

The college is committed to ensuring all staff understand their obligations to report child safety incidents and concerns.

Mount St. Joseph Girls' College will:

- educate staff on the Reportable Conduct Scheme during the induction process and through ongoing training.
- immediately act to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing and report the matter internally to the Reportable Conduct Team (Principal and Deputy Principal - Learning & Staffing) and relevant authorities and
- provide clear guidelines on the reporting process and ensure it is accessible to all staff.

The college will ensure any allegations of Reportable Conduct involving Staff are addressed promptly and appropriately.

Mount St. Joseph Girls' College will:

- report any allegations of reportable conduct to the Social Services Regulator (SSR) within three business days and
- conduct thorough investigations and take appropriate actions based on the findings.

Continual improvement and review

Mount St. Joseph Girls' College is committed to regularly reviewing its approach to child safety and wellbeing including a review of this Policy, compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, Ministerial Order 1359 and its overarching approach to managing child safety and wellbeing risk.

Following the child safety and wellbeing review, the college will report on the outcomes to the Principal. Principal will then have responsibility for ensuring that these outcomes are reported to Staff, members of the school community, families and students as soon as possible through the school's usual communication channels.

Legislative requirements

This Policy and supporting documents are guided by all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

Recordkeeping

Child Safety and Wellbeing policies and records will be kept in line with Ministerial Order 1359 and the college's policies and procedures for information and records management. Staff and Volunteers must receive appropriate training about the collection, use, storage and disposal of child safety and wellbeing records.

Where there is any inconsistency between the Ministerial Order 1359 and the college's policies, the Ministerial Order will prevail.

All child safety and wellbeing records are to be kept in a secure manner in accordance with the college's recordkeeping policies and procedures, which must detail the processes the school has in place to meet the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards.

Date: 25 June 2025
Date for review: 25 June 2028