



Engaging Families in Child Safety Procedures

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (**MACS**) schools operate with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and are owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS).

1. Purpose

This procedure outlines the strategies and actions in place to ensure that families, carers and other members of the school community are informed about relevant child safety and wellbeing matters and are involved in the promotion of child safety and wellbeing at the school.

2. Scope

These procedures apply in St Joseph's Catholic Primary School.

3. Principles

The following principles underpin our commitment to family engagement:

- Parents and Carers are given the opportunity to participate in decisions relating to child safety and wellbeing which affect their child
- Our school engages and openly communicates with Parents, Carers and other members of the school community about our child safe approach
- Relevant information relating to child safety and wellbeing about their child or children will be available to parents and carers
- Parents, Carers and other members of the school community can provide input into the development and review of the school's policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing
- Parents, Carers and other members of the school community have the right to be informed about the operations and governance of the school in relation to child safety and wellbeing.

4. School Commitment

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

The Principal and school leaders at our school recognise their responsibilities to communicate and engage with families, carers and other members of the school community in relation to issues regarding child safety and wellbeing.

The Principal ensures the following actions and strategies are implemented to ensure we meet this commitment.

4.1. School leadership actions and strategies

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Mernda, we recognise that the safety and wellbeing of children is a shared responsibility. In partnership with Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS), our school leadership team actively supports parents, carers and families to participate meaningfully in our child safety and wellbeing culture. We honour the vital role families play in

nurturing, protecting and advocating for their children, and we strive to ensure that our processes are transparent, inclusive and culturally responsive.

Ways We Engage and Support Families

1. Communication and Transparency

- We regularly provide information to parents and carers through school newsletters, the website, Compass, and parent information sessions about our child safety and wellbeing strategies, updates and responsibilities.
- All policies, procedures and practices related to child safety—including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Complaints Handling Policy and Reportable Conduct processes—are published on our school website and made readily accessible to the school community.
- Parents, carers and students are informed of how to raise concerns about child safety or wellbeing, including who to speak with, how to lodge a complaint, and the supports available.

2. Engagement Through Learning and School Programs

- We plan for and promote family engagement in learning through curriculum events, wellbeing programs, digital technologies education, and student-led learning opportunities that reinforce child safety messages.
- Families are invited to participate in workshops and information sessions on student wellbeing, online safety, respectful relationships, positive behaviour support and digital citizenship.

3. Collaborative Review and Consultation

- We engage parents and carers in reviewing and improving our child safety and wellbeing practices through surveys, consultative groups, policy reviews and school improvement conversations.
- Feedback from families is actively sought and used to strengthen our child-safe culture and ensure strategies remain relevant, effective and responsive.

4. Cultural Safety and Inclusion

- We proactively build culturally safe and respectful relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and community members, recognising their right to cultural connection, identity and safety.
- We consult with Aboriginal families and community organisations to ensure that strategies for cultural safety are meaningful, respectful and reflective of their voices.
- Translation and interpreter services are made available to ensure full participation by families for whom English is an additional language or dialect, and information is provided in accessible formats where needed.

5. Governance and School Leadership Responsibilities

- The Principal, Leadership Team and Child Safety and Wellbeing Team ensure that families have adequate information about school operations, governance and

decision-making processes relating to child safety.

- We maintain consistent communication about roles, responsibilities, and reporting pathways so parents and carers can confidently partner with us in promoting student safety and wellbeing.

1.1. Actions and strategies for Staff

School Staff also have a responsibility to support MACS, the school's governing authority, and school leaders in communicating and engaging with Parents, Carers and other members of the school community regarding child safety and wellbeing.

Strategies and actions used to carry out this responsibility are listed below.

At St Joseph's, the principal and school leadership team are committed to maintaining open, transparent and respectful communication with parents, carers and all members of our school community, particularly in relation to child safety and wellbeing. We recognise that strong partnerships with families are essential to creating a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for every child.

To uphold this commitment, our school:

- **Maintains open lines of communication** with families, carers and the wider school community in relation to child safety and wellbeing, ensuring information is shared clearly, promptly and respectfully.
- **Liaises directly with parents and carers** regarding any concerns, observations or decisions that affect their child, ensuring communication is timely, sensitive and grounded in the best interests of the student.
- **Provides opportunities for families to contribute**, where appropriate, to discussions and decision-making processes related to child safety, wellbeing and school operations.
- **Notifies families and community members** when school practices, procedures or policies relating to child safety and wellbeing are reviewed, updated or newly implemented.
- **Ensures all staff adhere to MACS and school-based policies** relating to child safety and wellbeing, including the expectations, procedures and reporting requirements outlined in the Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy.
- **Provides clear information to families** about how to raise concerns, make complaints or seek support regarding the safety and wellbeing of their child.
- **Shares relevant information through school communication channels** such as newsletters, email updates, the school website and information sessions to ensure families remain informed of strategies, initiatives and commitments related to child safety.
- **Engages with families to review and strengthen practices** that promote student safety, wellbeing and inclusion, valuing their insights and perspectives.
- **Actively fosters culturally safe relationships** with Aboriginal families, recognising and respecting their knowledge, identity and connection to culture, and supporting the cultural safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children in our care.
- **Provides access to translation and interpretation services** for families who require additional language support, ensuring all parents and carers can engage meaningfully in

conversations relating to their child's safety and wellbeing.

These strategies reflect our ongoing commitment to working in partnership with families and carers to ensure that every student at St Joseph's is safe, supported and able to thrive.

1. Definitions

Definitions of standard terms used in this document can be found in the [Glossary of Terms](#).

Carer

Refers to those with permanent care, foster care or kinship care arrangements.

Parent

A person who has parental responsibility for the child or young person. This may include a biological parent or another person who has been granted parental responsibility by a court order.

Parental responsibility

All the duties, powers, responsibilities and authority, which by law, parents have in relation to their children.

Principal

The role of the principal in a MACS school is to lead and manage the planning, delivery, evaluation and improvement of the education of all students.

Staff

Staff or staff member refers to the MACS board, board committee and working party members, MACS executives, principals, employees, contractors, consultants and volunteers in MACS schools and offices. The term includes those involved in religious ministry.

Volunteer

A person who performs work without remuneration or reward for MACS or a MACS school.

2. Related policies and documents

Related MACS policies and documents

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedures

Protect – Identifying and Responding to Abuse – Reporting Obligations Policy

Reportable Conduct Policy

Policy information table

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