



## CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

At Marist-Sion College Warragul (**College**), we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility. 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.

Marist-Sion College is a Catholic co-educational secondary college, inspired by the traditions of the Marist Brothers and the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion. Our mission is to provide an innovative education which integrates faith, learning and life in a welcoming community. Our vision is that students experience an education where they are known and loved, grow as life-long learners and live as active citizens inspired by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

### 2.0 PURPOSE

The College Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This Policy provides an overview of our College's approach to implementing *Ministerial Order No. 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises* (**Ministerial Order No. 1359**), which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our College community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

### 3.0 SCOPE

This Policy:

- applies to all College staff (including teachers, non-teachers, casual employees and pre-service teachers), volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to College Advisory Committee members where indicated
- applies in all physical and online College environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided for a student's use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to section 20.0 Related Policies.

## 4.0 DEFINITIONS

The following terms in this Policy have [specific definitions](#) used in relation to the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order No. 1359:

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school staff
- school governing authority
- student
- volunteer

## 5.0 STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Marist-Sion College is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views are respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults, including school staff, contractors, volunteers, parents, guardians and carers and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer/questioning and/or asexual (LGBTIQA+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our College has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, school staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

## 6.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### College Executive Team

Our College Executive Team (comprising of the Principal, Deputy Principals and Business Manager) are responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order No. 1359.

The Principal will:

- ensure that effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and school staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the College community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and College Advisory Committee meetings
- ensure risk management strategies are documented and in place that focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks related to child safety and wellbeing in the College
- facilitate and maintain records of regular professional learning for College staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and the prevention of, and responding to, abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

### College Staff, Contractors and Volunteers

All College staff, contractors and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (**DOSCEL**), and always follow the College and DOSCEL's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) and the following policies and procedures:
  - Protection of Children – Reporting Obligations Procedure
  - Protection of Children – Anti-Grooming Policy
  - Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Policy
  - Protection of Children – Failure to Protect Policy
  - Mandatory Reporting Policy
  - Guide to Reporting Conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme
  - Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy and Procedure
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students

## **College Advisory Committee**

In performing the roles and responsibilities in accordance with the DOSCEL School Advisory Committee Charter, the College Advisory Committee members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at College Advisory Committee meetings
- undertake annual training on child safety provided by the College
- provide feedback in relation to, and act in accordance with, the College Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to College Advisory Committee members
- when participating in the selection process of the College Principal, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe

## **Specific College Staff Child Safety Responsibilities**

The College has nominated Child Safety Champions to support the Principal to implement our child safety policies and practices, including College staff and volunteer training.

The responsibilities of the Child Safety Champion are outlined in the DOSCEL guidance for Child Safety Champions. In addition to these roles, the College Child Safety Champion is also responsible for:

### ***I. Promote Child Safety Culture***

- Promote child safety and wellbeing (e.g., at staff meetings, assemblies and through promotion of the annual National Child Protection Week).
- Ensure the College's child safety policies and procedures are current and publicly accessible
- Promote a culture of listening to students and families and acting on their child safety concerns (i.e., by attending Student Executive Leadership Team and/or Student Representative Council Meetings once per term).
- Support staff and volunteers to focus on the child safety needs of vulnerable students.

### ***II. Provide Support and Guidance***

- Be a point of contact for child safety concerns for staff, volunteers and students.
- Provide guidance to students, staff and volunteers on child safety policies and procedures.
- Work with College Executive to respond to child safety incidents.
- Maintain current skills and knowledge to support child safety and wellbeing, including:
  - child-focused complaint processes, mandatory reporting obligations and the Four Critical Actions
  - student rights, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal cultural safety and inclusive practices to meet students' diverse needs
  - child safety risk management including online safety
  - child safety information sharing and record-keeping obligations
  - working with relevant agencies to refer students and families to appropriate support
  - keeping across emerging research and best practice guidance in child safety and wellbeing.

### ***III. Train and Educate***

- Provide child safety induction programs for new College staff, volunteers and College Advisory Committee, upon commencement.
- Provide child safety training for College staff, volunteers and College Advisory Committee
- Provide regular child safety updates and information to staff, volunteers and College Advisory Committee

- Provide information to all staff on College Mandatory Reporting procedures
- Maintain College registration and access for authorised users of Child Link. Child Link is a digital tool that displays key information about every child and young person in Victoria to authorised professionals who have a responsibility for child safety and wellbeing
- Authorised users complete mandatory Child Link User Training

#### **IV. Monitor, Review and Report**

- Record child safety complaints and concerns, and analyse trends as needed.
- Coordinate reviews following significant safety incidents and recommend improvements.
- Maintain the College's child safety risk register with the College Executive Team.
- Coordinate child safety policy and practice reviews in consultation with the College community.
- Maintain detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals.

The College Principal, Deputy Principal – Wellbeing Partnerships and Safety and Child Safety Champions are the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

- The Principal, supported by the Deputy Principal – Wellbeing Partnerships and Safety, is responsible for monitoring the College's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our College community should approach the Principal and/or the Deputy Principal – Wellbeing Partnerships and Safety if they have any concerns about the College's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- The Principal, supported by the Deputy Principal – Wellbeing Partnerships and Safety, is responsible for informing the College community about this Policy, and making it publicly available.
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in other child safety policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Protection of Children – Reporting Obligations Procedure, Mandatory Reporting Policy, and Child Safety Risk Register.

The College has also established a Child Safety and Wellbeing Team. The Child Safety and Wellbeing Team meet regularly to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safety and wellbeing and monitors the Child Safety Risk Register. The Student Representative Council (**SRC**) provides an opportunity for students to provide input into College child safety strategies.

## **7.0 CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Marist-Sion College Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the College.

The College [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#) also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

## **8.0 MANAGING RISKS TO CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING**

At our College we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we

develop for off-site activities, such as school camps and excursions, and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Our College Executive Team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

The College's approach to promoting child safety and managing risk in physical and online environments in accordance with [Child Safe Standard 9](#) includes the following strategies and considerations.

### **Promote a culture of online and physical safety for all students**

- Ensure students are supervised in accordance with policies and procedures in all settings, including in the yard, during incursions, excursions and overnight stays
- Give particular attention to the safety, diverse needs and vulnerabilities of students in each activity or setting during the planning, preparation and facilitation of activities
- Inform students and their families about appropriate use of the College's technology, safety tools and how to seek help and report concerns including cyberbullying and online grooming in accordance with policies and procedures as well as via the College's newsletter, website, and daily messages for students, assemblies and information evenings
- Promote activities in the College community that connect schools and communities and raise awareness to prevent bullying and violence (e.g., National week of action against bullying and violence)
- Create a respectful, sensitive and safe environment for people who may be experiencing family violence. Schools are required to align to the Victorian Family Violence Multiagency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (**MARAM Framework**) over time. [MARAM responsibility 1](#) requires schools to create a respectful, sensitive and safe environment that enables a child or young person to feel comfortable to talk about their experiences of family violence and seek support

### **Manage risk in physical spaces**

- Identify and document the College's child safety risks in the College's risk register and ensure strategies are in place to manage those risks
- Consider the range of College environments and the nature of physical spaces including onsite buildings and grounds, bathrooms and change rooms, classrooms, corridors, locker bays, and pick-up and drop off areas
- Consider off-site physical environments for student use and where reasonably possible, inspect these sites and venues for events, excursions, and overnight stays ahead of time.
- Consider risks arising from child-to-child and adult-to-child interactions in physical and online spaces
- Consider cultural safety and if there are elements of the physical environment that would be unwelcoming to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Inform staff, contractors, volunteers and students where appropriate of identified risks and risk management strategies
- Keep records of risk management activities, including risk assessments for school camps and excursions
- Provide training and refresher training to staff and relevant contractors and volunteers on risk management policies and procedures

### **Supervise appropriately**

- Be aware of risks posed by dark spaces, stairwells, private spaces and corners in school environments and develop strategies to address these risks

- Inform students about spaces that are off limits, including out-of-bounds areas, storerooms and staff rooms
- Nominate ratios of staff and volunteers to students for different types of activities in accordance with applicable guidelines
- Keep records of any court orders in place regarding access or intervention orders and communicate to staff who can collect students in these circumstances
- Use observation aids when appropriate, such as Closed Circuit Television (**CCTV**) and consider the balance between appropriate visibility, the College CCTV Policy and respecting staff and students' privacy
- Let students know how to raise concerns and where to go if they need help
- Organise professional learning to discuss risk and harm prevention and hazard awareness with staff, volunteers and College Advisory Committee members
- Keep records of incidents that occur, including accidents and medical events
- Review incidents against policies and procedures, including seeking student feedback on how incidents were handled and how safe they felt, and make improvements as needed

### **Promote student safety online**

- Give students opportunities to learn, play, create, entertain, make new friends and stay connected
- Facilitate age-appropriate ways to use the internet and social media for students drawing from the Victorian *Curriculum 'Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships'*, the Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour Support and the eSafety Commissioner.
- Use the Pastoral Program, Assemblies, Digital Technologies and Health and PE curriculums to inform students about online safety risks, including:
  - cyberbullying and trolling
  - invasion of privacy or digital surveillance
  - inappropriate sharing of images
  - phishing, harvesting of personal information or data theft
  - identity theft
  - malevolent software (malware)
  - offensive images and messages
  - age-inappropriate online content
  - impersonation/catfishing
  - grooming
- Outline acceptable use of personal devices for students
- Prohibit the use of student email addresses to sign up to unauthorised third-party services and communicate this expectation to students and the College community
- Use filtering software on school-based devices
- Encourage parents, guardians and carers to use parental controls on personal devices.
- Advise students on how they can seek help from a trusted adult if they are exposed to inappropriate imagery or content that upsets them
- Monitor online activity and respond to breaches of the online policies and procedures with appropriate consequences

### **Promote acceptable behaviour by staff, contractors and volunteers**

- Address acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour in online environments in the College's Child Safety Code of Conduct. Address social media, email, instant messages, SMS and other apps in the College's Code of Conduct
- Outline acceptable use of personal devices by staff, contractors and volunteers.
- Have guidelines for taking, storing and using images of children and students – including photos and video recordings

- Deal with misuse of digital devices and unacceptable behaviour in accordance with College policy
- Review communication protocols regularly, considering emerging services and technologies, such as disappearing message services
- Uphold policies and report breaches in accordance with the College’s Complaints and Grievances Management Policy and the College’s complaints handling procedure and Code of Conduct
- Provide avenues for students, families, guardians, carers, communities, staff and contractors to report online issues or concerns
- Protect student privacy by supporting students to limit the amount of information provided online
- Require College staff to undertake information security training to reduce the risk of online phishing or malware attacks

### **Consider procurement and third parties**

- Undertake child safety due diligence when engaging third parties. A new vendor presents new risks
- Require vendors to provide evidence of compliance with the Child Safe Standards to deliver services to students
- Ensure a Privacy Impact Assessment is undertaken for any software handling student personal information
- Prior to services provided by third parties or the use or hire of school facilities commencing, ensure approval from DOSCEL is sought and the relevant DOSCEL contract is in place.
- Ask contractors to sign in and provide their Working with Children Check upon entry to the College
- Provide contractors with a copy of the College Child Safety Code of Conduct and College Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Compliance Team is responsible for collecting child safety compliance information about third party providers via SAM4Schools – the College’s Risk and Compliance Contractor Management System
- Keep records of due diligence processes.
- If a vendor is found to be non-compliant with the Child Safe Standards:
  - cease all activities with the vendor until the issue is resolved
  - notify the DOSCEL Secretariat Compliance and Risk Team
  - if appropriate, inform the vendor of the non-compliance and provide an opportunity to rectify the problem, or
  - if the issue is serious, contact the relevant authorities

## **9.0 ESTABLISHING A CULTURALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

The College is committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe environment where the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people’s histories, cultures, values and practices are respected and celebrated.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, we recognise that the link between the student’s culture, identity and their cultural safety are critical to ensuring that they feel comfortable being themselves and expressing their spiritual and cultural beliefs.

The College creates opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, families and local Aboriginal communities to have a voice and presence in our College planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our College community:



- Pausing for an Acknowledgement of Country as a standing agenda item in College briefings, meetings, events and gatherings. Using this as an opportunity to pause and reflect or open a discussion
- Flying the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on College grounds
- Celebrating the local Aboriginal community in communications with students, staff, volunteers and families
- Using the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Plan to maintain an inclusive and culturally safe school for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students

## 10.0 STUDENT VOICE AND EMPOWERMENT

To support child safety and wellbeing at the College, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Strategies are in place to ensure that all student voices are listened to, including students who find it harder to speak up or be heard. We support our students to feel comfortable about speaking up and recognise that students communicate in different ways, including through verbal and non-verbal cues, play, body language, facial expressions, drawings and/or behaviours.

All students are empowered to express their views, contribute to College life and are encouraged to provide feedback on school wide decisions. We take into account student views when College decisions are made, including when developing and implementing policies and procedures.

Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the College to ensure a sense of belonging through implementing our Vision and Mission, the Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour Support (**WSAPBS**) including the School Wide Expectations for all students to *Be Respectful*, *Be Responsible*, and *Be Safe* and the student Code of Conduct.

We inform students of their rights through our WSAPBS, the Pastoral Program, Child Safety Briefings facilitated via assemblies and through promotion of student voice and agency. This work is to support students having the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns via the College [website](#).

When the College is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents, guardians, and carers, as appropriate) informed of progress.

## 11.0 FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Our families and the College community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our College's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this by:

- seeking input from families and the community – for example, through the College website, newsletters, College Advisory Committee, or working parties of the College Advisory Committee, student, College staff, and parent meetings
- all our child safety policies and procedures will be available for students and parents, guardians and carers via the College [website](#)
- Newsletters and the parent portal (**PAM**) will inform families and the College community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety
- PROTECT Child Safety posters and the College’s [Child Safety Policy for students](#) will be displayed across the College including each classroom, staff offices, student reception, the wellbeing centre, first aid/medical and the library. It is also accessible to students and via the learning management system (**SIMON**) and the Student Planner.
- the College’s [website](#) provides the College community with access to all policies which relate to child Safety and Wellbeing.

## 12.0 DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disability
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international students
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+

Marist- Sion College will utilise other College strategies and actions for diversity and equity as per Ministerial Order No.1359, Clauses 9.2 and 9.3 and [Child Safe Standard 5](#) including:

- Communicating that discrimination and bullying are not tolerated – if incidents of bullying or discrimination occur, address the incident in line with the College Anti-Bullying and Prevention Policy (Students)
- Providing child safety information in accessible, child-friendly language and formats
- Seeking out expert advice as needed to support inclusion, such as an occupational therapist, speech pathologist, provision planning
- Using images of students with diverse characteristics in College publications to reflect the College community
- Support diversity through the recognition of dates including:
  - World Day of Prayer and Awareness against Human Trafficking
  - World Day of the Sick
  - Cultural Diversity Week
  - Hearing Awareness Week
  - IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia)
  - National Reconciliation Week
  - Solemnity of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus
  - ‘Wear it Purple Day’

- World Day of Migrants and Refugees
- World Mental Health Day
- International Day of Persons with Disability
- Ensuring the College environment is welcoming and inclusive. For example:
  - display flags representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
  - provide materials in different languages and/or an interpreter as needed
- Checking in with vulnerable students and their families to confirm their needs are being met. This can occur at pick-up or drop-off, at parent teacher interviews or through informal discussions
- Offer buddying and mentoring for students who are at risk of social isolation
- Discuss how students feel about discussing their personal circumstances and respect their wishes. Note that where staff or volunteers have formed a reasonable belief that sharing information is necessary to lessen or prevent a serious threat to an individual's life, health, safety or welfare, they may be required to share information despite the wishes of the student that their information remain confidential
- Take a holistic approach when responding to family violence
- Respond to family violence in a way that is accessible, culturally responsive, safe, child-centred, inclusive and non-discriminatory

### **13.0 SUITABLE COLLEGE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

At Marist-Sion College, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all College staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

#### **College staff recruitment**

When recruiting College staff, we follow the DOSCEL Recruitment and Engagement Policy and associated guidelines.

When engaging College staff to perform child-related work, we:

- ensure Child Safety is a key focus in the selection and employment process
- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children check (**WWCC**) evidence or equivalent background check such as a Victorian Institute of Teaching (**VIT**) registration
- collect and record:
  - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
  - the person's history of working with children
  - references that address suitability for the position and working with children
  - acknowledgement of the College's Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct

#### **College staff induction**

All newly appointed College staff are expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- the Protection of Children – Reporting Obligations Procedure
- the Protection of Children – Anti-Grooming Policy
- the Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Policy
- the Protection of Children – Failure to Protect Policy
- the Mandatory Reporting Policy
- the Guide to Reporting Conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- the Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy and Procedure

- any other child safety and wellbeing information that DOSCEL and/or College Leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

### **Ongoing supervision and management of College staff**

All College staff engaged in child-connected work are supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. Where it is not practical or desirable for College staff such as teachers to be directly supervised in their classrooms, the College has strategies in place to provide support and supervision of these College staff.

College staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continued suitability for child-connected work. This will be done through annual review meetings and various other performance related meetings.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed promptly and in accordance with our College and DOSCEL policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

### **Suitability of volunteers**

All volunteers are required to comply with the College Volunteers Policy, which describes how schools must assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

## **14.0 CHILD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND AWARENESS**

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that College staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our College staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

College staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our College's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completing the [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#) online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other 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
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the College environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, pastoral care positions of leadership, child safety and wellbeing team members, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

### **College Advisory Committee training and education**

To ensure our College Advisory Committee is equipped with the knowledge required to support the Principal in making decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in our College environment, the College Advisory Committee is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment
- College child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices.

## 15.0 COMPLAINTS AND REPORTING PROCESSES

The College fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, guardians, carers, and the College community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in the College Complaints and Grievances Management Policy and the College complaint-handling process. The College [Complaints and Grievances Management Policy](#) and the College [Complaint Handling Procedure](#).

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all College staff and volunteers (including College Advisory Committee members) must follow DOSCEL policies to address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, College staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the College. Policies to be followed by College staff are:

- Protection of Children – Reporting Obligations Procedure
- Protection of Children – Anti-Grooming Policy
- Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Policy
- Protection of Children – Failure to Protect Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Guide to Reporting Conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy and Procedure.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant College staff have been informed, we will ensure our College follows:

- the [Four Critical Actions](#) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending.

The College Anti-Bullying and Prevention Policy cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

## 16.0 COMMUNICATIONS

Marist-Sion College is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the College community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the following policies:
  - Protection of Children – Reporting Obligations Procedure
  - Protection of Children – Anti-Grooming Policy
  - Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Policy
  - Protection of Children – Failure to Protect Policy
  - Mandatory Reporting Policy
  - Guide to Reporting Conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme

- Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy and Procedure.
- PROTECT Child Safety posters and the College's *Child Safety Policy for students* will be displayed across the College including each classroom, staff offices, Student Reception, the Wellbeing Centre, First Aid/Medical, library. The College's *Child Safety Policy for students* is also accessible to students via the learning management system SIMON platform and the Student Planner.
- updates in our College newsletter, website and via the PAM parent portal
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at College Executive meetings, staff meetings and College Advisory Committee meetings.

## 17.0 PRIVACY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Marist-Sion College, collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our College collects, uses and discloses information refer to the College [Privacy Policy](#).

## 18.0 RECORDS MANAGEMENT

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the College Records Management Policy and Child Safe Recordkeeping Policy.

## 19.0 REVIEW OF CHILD SAFETY PRACTICES

At Marist-Sion College, we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

We will:

- review and improve our policy every two years or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with College staff and our College community.

## 20.0 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related College policies, procedures, and codes. These include:

- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaint-handling procedure
- Student Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Policy for students

### Related policies, procedures and resources

- Protection of Children – Reporting Obligations Procedure
- Protection of Children – Anti-Grooming Policy
- Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Policy
- Protection of Children – Failure to Protect Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Guide to Reporting Conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy and Procedure

- Digital Learning Policy (Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices)
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Complaints and Grievances Management Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Prevention Policy
- Records Management Policy
- Child Safe Standards – Recordkeeping Policy
- Off-Site Supervision of Students Policy
- On-Site Supervision of Students Policy
- Recruitment Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Whole School Approach to Positive Behaviour Support

#### Other related documents

- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
- [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](#)
- [The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct](#)
- [Ministerial Order No. 1359, Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises](#)

## 21.0 AUTHORITY, MONITORING AND REPORTING

DOSCEL, a Company incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth.), is the Governing Authority of primary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Sale, excluding Catholic College Sale and Lavalla Catholic College, Traralgon.

The Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL, is responsible for the management and general administration of DOSCEL schools. Based on the principle of subsidiarity and in keeping with the DOSCEL Delegation Register for Schools, a broad range of duties, functions, powers and authority are delegated to the Principal. This includes the effective implementation of this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the compliance obligations outlined in this policy.

However, the Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL, remains responsible for monitoring the development and implementation of this policy and for providing reports as required to the Directors of the DOSCEL Board.

The Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring compliance with the obligations outlined in this policy
- assigning authority, responsibility and accountability at appropriate levels within the College for policy implementation and compliance
- providing delegated College staff with the direction, support and resources necessary to fulfil policy requirements
- ensuring cyclic reviews of the policy

- reporting and escalating concerns, issues and policy breaches to the Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL, and working collaboratively with the Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL, to resolve them

Whilst the Principal will play an important role in effective implementation of this policy and compliance with the Standards, it is noted that responsibility for compliance with the Standards ultimately remains with DOSCEL.

## 22.0 POLICY STATUS AND REVIEW

The Principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the College Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from students, parents, guardians, carers and the College community.

This Policy is endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL.

<b>Implementation Date:</b>	July 2022
<b>Last Amended:</b>	November 2024
<b>Consultation:</b>	Student Representative Committee – July 2024 Child Safety and Wellbeing Team – November 2024 College Executive Team – November 2024 College Advisory Committee – August 2024 All Staff – November 2024
<b>Review Date:</b>	November 2026 Note: This policy is reviewed every two years.