



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 Marymede Catholic College-

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

Ways MACS and School Leadership Support Parent, Carer and Family Participation in Child Safety and Wellbeing

- Including planning for ways to engage families through the curriculum and learning and teaching programs, with particular emphasis on integrated child safety education across year levels and offering parent workshops on contemporary child safety issues including cyber safety and protective behaviours

- Providing information through the school's communication channels (PAM, newsletters, website) to update parents and carers about the school's child safety and wellbeing strategies
- Publishing school policies, procedures and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing so that they are easily accessible to parents and carers and other members of the school community via the school website and parent portal
- Engaging with families to develop and review practices and strategies relating to child safety and wellbeing through parent advisory committees, consultation forums, and annual surveys to gather feedback and identify areas for improvement
- Providing members of the school community with adequate information about the school's operations and governance relating to child safety and wellbeing through regular communication in newsletters, at information sessions and forums
- Informing parents, carers and students how to raise concerns and issues about child safety and wellbeing through multiple reporting pathways (in-person, phone, email) with clear, accessible guides showing the reporting process
- Proactively building culturally safe and respectful relationships with Aboriginal families, recognising their role in supporting the identity, cultural safety, and wellbeing of their children, and consulting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and community Elders in the development of culturally responsive child safety practices
- Providing professional translation and interpreter services for families who speak languages other than English, ensuring full access to child safety information and consultation processes, with key documents translated into the most commonly spoken community languages
- Ensuring all parent engagement activities and materials are accessible to families of children with disabilities, including providing communication supports (interpreters, accessible formats, assistive technology) and consulting with these families to ensure practices are inclusive
- Providing comprehensive child safety information to all new families during enrolment, including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Code of Conduct, and expectations for adult behaviour, with orientation sessions that include dedicated time for discussing child safety
- Implementing clear child safety requirements for all parent volunteers, including Working with Children Checks, child safety induction training, and adherence to the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Hosting dedicated information sessions for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families about Australian child safety frameworks, mandatory reporting, and school expectations, partnering with multicultural support organisations and community leaders
- Facilitating connections between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families with relevant community organisations and cultural support services, while celebrating and acknowledging culture through events that strengthen family engagement and identity
- Scheduling parent information sessions at various times to accommodate working families, offering virtual attendance options, and providing information in multiple formats (print, digital, visual, audio) to accommodate diverse needs
- Sharing outcomes and learnings from child safety initiatives with the parent community (while maintaining confidentiality), providing annual reporting on child safety indicators, initiatives implemented, and progress toward goals
- Establishing a Parent Child Safety Reference Group with representation from diverse family backgrounds (including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, CALD families, and families of students with disabilities) to provide ongoing input into child safety practices and policy review processes

4.2. 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.

1. Open lines of communication with families, carers and other members of the school community, particularly with respect to child safety and wellbeing matters, through regular newsletters, PAM notifications, school website updates, dedicated parent information evenings, and establishing multiple accessible communication channels including email, phone, parent portal, face-to-face meetings, and an anonymous reporting system
2. Ensure liaison with parents and carers about concerns and/or decisions that affect their child occurs in a timely, respectful, and confidential manner, with clear documentation of discussions and agreed actions, and implement a protocol for contacting families immediately when child safety concerns arise
3. Create opportunities, where appropriate, for families to contribute to discussions about child safety policies, procedures, and initiatives through a Parent Child Safety Reference Group that meets termly, annual parent surveys, consultation sessions, and inviting parent representatives to participate in policy review committees
4. Inform families and school community members when practices and procedures involved in child safety and wellbeing are reviewed and updated through direct communication, website updates, information sessions explaining changes, and an annual Child Safety and Wellbeing Update summarising policy reviews, new initiatives, and improvements implemented
5. Ensure all staff manage child safety and wellbeing issues in accordance with all policies for child safety and wellbeing through mandatory annual training, regular supervision, clear accountability frameworks, performance management that includes child safety competencies, and comprehensive induction for all new staff before commencing work with students
6. Provide clear, accessible information about how to make complaints or raise concerns through multiple formats including the school website, parent handbook, newsletters, and information sessions, with child safety reporting pathways displayed prominently throughout the school including contact details for the Principal, Child Safety Officer, and external agencies
7. Develop culturally responsive communication strategies in consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, ensuring information about child safety is delivered in culturally appropriate ways, and facilitate connections between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and families with relevant community organisations and cultural support services
8. Provide translated child safety information and access to professional interpreter services for families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, ensuring equitable access to reporting and support processes, and host specific information sessions for different community groups in culturally appropriate contexts
9. Ensure all parent engagement activities and child safety information are accessible to families of children with disabilities through communication supports, accessible formats, and consultation to ensure practices are inclusive and responsive to individual needs
10. Implement a comprehensive complaints management system that tracks all child safety concerns from initial report through to resolution, ensuring timely response and follow-up,

and ensure families understand the difference between internal reporting processes and mandatory reporting to external authorities

11. Conduct regular risk assessments of school environments, activities, and programs involving staff, students, and families, implement data collection and analysis to monitor child safety incidents and trends, and establish key performance indicators for child safety and wellbeing with annual reporting to the School Advisory Council and wider school community
12. Ensure child safety and wellbeing is a standing agenda item at all School Leadership Team and School Advisory Council meetings, maintain visible leadership by personally leading information sessions and being accessible to families with concerns, allocate adequate resources to child safety initiatives, and engage with MACS regional staff and other principals to share best practice and continuously improve child safety systems

13. 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.

14. 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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School document owner	
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