



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 College community are informed about relevant child safety and wellbeing matters and are involved in the promotion of child safety and wellbeing at the College.

2. Scope

These procedures apply in St Mary's 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 College engages and openly communicates with Parents, Carers and other members of the College 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 College community can provide input into the development and review of the College's policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing
- Parents, Carers and other members of the College community have the right to be informed about the operations and governance of the College in relation to child safety and wellbeing.

4. School Commitment

Our College is committed to ensuring that all members of our College 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 College recognise their responsibilities to communicate and engage with families, carers and other members of the College 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 Mary's College Seymour, the active involvement of parents, carers and families essential to building a safe, respectful and inclusive community for all children. In partnership with MACS, we prioritise open communication, cultural safety and ongoing collaboration to strengthen child safety and wellbeing across the College.

As Principal, I ensure the following strategies, responsibilities and actions are in place:
Planning for ways to engage families through curriculum and learning programs.

At St Mary's College Seymour we:

- Embed child safety themes—such as Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships, digital safety and personal wellbeing—into the curriculum and invite families to engage through information nights.
- Provide opportunities for parents to learn about classroom programs that support safety and wellbeing (e.g., School Wide Positive Behaviour Support practices, Pastoral care lessons, Life skills Go check ins, RE curriculum components).
- Encourage family participation in learning experiences such as liturgies, cultural celebrations and wellbeing events that reinforce the importance of safe relationships and a positive school culture.

At St Mary's College Seymour, the partnership between families, MACS and the school leadership team is central to ensuring every child experiences a safe, welcoming, inclusive and culturally respectful environment. The College actively promotes meaningful family engagement in child safety and wellbeing through the following responsibilities, strategies and actions

Providing information through the school's communication channels to update parents and carers about the school's child safety and wellbeing strategies

- The College newsletter
- PAM and SIMON notifications
- The school website
- School Facebook page
- SMS alerts for urgent matters
- Parent information evenings and Start-of-Year briefings
These communications include updates to policies, reminders of reporting pathways and invitations to parent consultations.

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

- Published prominently on the school website
- Available in printed form from the office
- Included in enrolment packs
- Shared with families at key transition points (Foundation, Year 7, new enrolments)
This ensures our community has easy access to Child Safe policies, the Code of Conduct, wellbeing procedures and reporting information.

Engaging with families to develop and review practices and strategies relating to child safety and wellbeing

- Conducting annual Child Safety and Wellbeing reviews with opportunities for parent feedback
- Inviting families to provide input through surveys, forums and working groups
- Consulting Aboriginal families and families and carers of students with additional needs to ensure our practices meet needs
- Responding to parent suggestions to improve communication and visibility of child safety actions

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

- Newsletter updates
- Evenings covering topics such as online safety, respectful behaviour and school-wide wellbeing initiatives
- Transparent reporting about MACS Child Safe expectations, audits and compliance processes

Informing parents, carers and students know how to raise concerns and issues about child safety and wellbeing

- Providing age-appropriate student education on how to seek help and identify trusted adults
- Offering multiple ways for parents to raise concerns (in person, phone, email, online form)
- Posters displayed around the school regarding reporting process/choices

Proactively build culturally safe and respectful relationships with Aboriginal families, recognising their role in supporting the identity, cultural safety, and wellbeing of their children

- Relationship with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander co-operative Rumbalara
- Offering translation services through MACS
- Ensure all families—LGBTQIA+, foster/kinship carers, separated families, culturally diverse families—are welcomed and supported through adaptable communication and meeting structures.
- We work with local services such as Seymour Health, and youth support agencies to provide joined-up wellbeing support where needed.

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.
2. Liaison with parents and carers about concerns and/or decisions that affect their child occurs.
3. Opportunities, where appropriate, for families to contribute to discussions.
4. Informing families and school community members when practices and procedures involved in child safety and wellbeing are reviewed and updated.
5. Ensuring all staff manage child safety and wellbeing issues in accordance with all policies for child safety and wellbeing.
6. Providing information about how to make complaints or raise concerns
7. Aboriginal perspectives in curriculum, prayer, signage, artwork and events. Ensuring Aboriginal students can access cultural mentors and culturally-informed wellbeing support.
8. Offering flexible meeting formats (phone, online, in-person) to reduce barriers to participation
9. Providing information about local wellbeing services and referral pathways during meetings with families.
10. Displaying Child Safe materials prominently throughout the school environment.
11. Modelling a culture of safety through presence at community events, school gatherings and wellbeing initiatives.

12. 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.

13. 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

Approving authority	Director, Child Safety and Risk
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School document owner	
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