



CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Rationale

Mildura Senior College is and has always been committed to child safety. This requires the College to develop, implement, monitor and evaluate risk management strategies to ensure child safety in all College environments.

This Policy Aims to:

1. Identify the college's child safety risks;
2. Identify any risk mitigation measures and College's internal controls;
3. Assess and rate the college's child safety risks given the existing controls in place, taking into account the likelihood of risk, and the likely consequence of the risk;
4. If the risk is more than the "acceptable level", identify further risk management strategies through additional controls or prevention, detection or mitigation strategies and then reassess the risk;
5. To ensure College processes and practices respond to the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust inquiry by enacting Ministerial Order No. 870, address Child Safe Standards and meet the requirements for VRQA registration.

Definitions

Key words and their meanings.

MSC	Mildura Senior College
DET	Department Education & Training
VRQA	Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority
DHS	Department of Human Services
ETR Act	The Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (as amended from time to time).
Child	A child enrolled as a student at the college.
Child-connected work	Work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.
Child abuse	includes— any act committed against a child involving— a sexual offence; or an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming); and the infliction, on a child, of— physical violence; or serious emotional or psychological harm; and serious neglect of a child.
Child safety	Encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.
Minister of religion	Has the same meaning as in the Working with Children Act 2005.

Proprietor	In relation to a school, means the person who is ultimately responsible for the way the school is managed and conducted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in the case of a Government school, the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training in the case of a non-Government school, the proprietor of the school
School environment	Any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a campus of the school; • online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and • other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).
School governing authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor; or the governing body for a school (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of a school or the ETR Act; or • the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the ETR Act. Explanatory note: There is a wide variety of school governance arrangements. Depending on the way a school is constituted and operated, the governing body for a school may be the school board, the school council, or some other person or entity. The school governing authorities may share or assign responsibility for discharging the requirements imposed by this Order, in accordance with the school's internal governance arrangements
School staff	In a Government school, an individual working in a school environment who is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employed under Part 2.4 of the ETR Act in the government teaching service; or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employed under a contract of service by the council of the school under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act; or • a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).

Policy Statement

MSC is committed to:

- the safety of all children;
- zero tolerance of child abuse as defined in the definitions within this policy;
- The safety of children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
- child safety standards and the school's reporting obligations;
- children's safety and best interests including an understanding of children's rights;
- ensuring all child safety policy and statements apply to all College Environments inclusive of physical and online environments;
- MSC core values and principles with respect to child safety;
- the prevention and risk management of child safety;
- raising and reporting concerns about child safety information about the school's responsibility to report child abuse and the associated reporting procedures.

It is expected that the governing authority, management, staff (including contractors and volunteers), visitors and children to proactively ensure the safety of children at all times.

Implementation

- Child safety is considered in the recruitment, selection and management of staff (including contractors and volunteers), these align with DET policies and procedures.
- All people engaged or recruited for child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a current Working with Children Check and/or VIT teacher registration to provide evidence for the College's records. This is consistent with the College Staff Register Policy and Working with Children Check Policy
- MSC is compliant with its Mandatory Reporting Policy and ensure new teachers are inducted and that it is included in the staff manual that is available to all staff. The Mandatory Reporting policy articulates legislative requirements for staff and advice on when and how to make reports.
- Any allegations of abuse and/or safety concerns and any subsequent school investigations will be documented and securely & confidentially stored.
- The induction process for volunteers will include guidance on how to respond if they have concerns about a child's safety
- The College will ensure appropriate supervision of all classes, excursions, camps and school environment. This is consistent with the College Supervision Policy and Camps Guidelines which articulate expectations and risk management strategies. In turn, these align with DET policies and procedures.
- The College is committed to cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability by making appropriate and reasonable adjustments.
- Key staff will be identified within the school that have knowledge of child safety and student safety support. These staff will act as the key contact point for others who have questions or concerns or want to report an allegation of child abuse or child safety concerns. The following teams/staff all have roles and responsibilities in regard to this policy; the Principal team, the Wellbeing Team and others as identified in the Mandatory Reporting Policy.
- Proactively seek and implement strategies to address child safety and e-safety.
- Seek and maintain memberships with appropriate agencies to maximise child safety and e-safety, ie. ESmart Schools and Safe Schools Coalition.
- Implementation of the bullying and harassment mitigation strategies

Resources

Education and Training Reform Act 2006

Child Safe Standards – Managing The Risk Of Child Abuse In Schools

Ministerial Order No. 870

VRQA <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe>

Appendices

- Working with Children Check Policy
- Staff Register
- Working with Children Check
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Onsite Supervision
- Camps Guidelines
- Anti-bullying and Harassment
- All relevant DET policies

Evaluation

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