

**St Columba's Primary School Elwood  
Leadership Team**



# Child Safety Policy

**23 March 2017**



***Date of policy: 1 August 2016***

***Date of last major review: July 2016***

***Date of next major review: 1 August 2017***

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	3
2. Purpose of the Policy .....	3
3. Principles.....	3
4. Definitions used in this Policy .....	4
5. Policy Commitments .....	6
6. Responsibilities and Organisational Arrangements .....	7
6.1 Guide to Responsibilities of School Leadership .....	7
6.2 Guide to Responsibilities of School Staff.....	7
6.3 Organisational Arrangements .....	8
7. Expectation of our School Staff – Child Safety Code of Conduct.....	8
8. Student Safety and Participation .....	10
9. Reporting and Responding.....	10
10. Screening and Recruitment of School Staff .....	12
11. Child Safety – Education and Training for School Staff.....	13
12. Risk Management .....	13
13. Relevant Legislation .....	13
14. Related Policies .....	14
14.1 Catholic Education Melbourne Policies .....	14
14.2 School Policies.....	14
15. Breach of Policy .....	15
16. Review of this Child Safety Policy .....	15
17. References .....	15

## 1. Introduction

At St Columba's Primary School we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel ([CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety](#)).

The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: that is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school (Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, n. 9).

At St Columba's our School Mission is to create a warm, friendly, family centred environment where all work together to inspire excellence. We promote, teach and live by the Gospel values of Jesus Christ. We aim to provide a comprehensive curriculum that challenges and enhances individual student learning. We are dedicated to working collaboratively and professionally to achieve a high standard of learning and teaching that empowers students with skills for the future. We recognise the unique qualities of each person and strive to create an environment with a sense of security, happiness and wellbeing. We promote the awareness, tolerance and acceptance of all and are dedicated to the development and dignity of the whole person.

At St Columba's we are committed to creating a nurturing school environment where children are respected, their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe. It is everyone's responsibility to report information about child abuse.

## 2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the strong commitment of St Columba's Primary School to the care, safety and wellbeing of all students at our school. It provides an outline of the policies, procedures and strategies developed to keep students safe from harm, including all forms of abuse in our school environment, on campus, online and in other locations provided by the school.

This policy takes into account relevant legislative requirements within the state of Victoria, including the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in [Ministerial Order No. 870](#).

This policy applies to school staff, including school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy.

## 3. Principles

Catholic schools have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe ([CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety](#)).

**The following principles underpin our commitment to child safety at St Columba's Primary School:**

- All students deserve, as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect.

- Our school works in partnership with families and the community to ensure that they are engaged in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on child safety and protection.
- All students have the right to a thorough and systematic education in all aspects of personal safety, in partnership with their parents/guardians/caregivers.
- All adults in our school, including teaching and non-teaching staff, clergy, volunteers, and contractors, have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any kind of harm or abuse.
- The policies, guidelines and codes of conduct for the care, wellbeing and protection of students are based on honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults and children.
- Policies and practices demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements and cooperation with the Church, governments, the police and human services agencies.
- All persons involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.
- Staff, clergy, volunteers, contractors, parents and students should feel free to raise concerns about child safety, knowing these will be taken seriously by school leadership.
- Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally or pastorally.

#### 4. Definitions used in this Policy

**Child:** A child or a young person enrolled as a student at the school.

**Child abuse** includes:

- (a) any act committed against a child involving:
  - (i) a sexual offence
  - (ii) an offence under section 49B(2) of the **Crimes Act 1958** (grooming)
- (b) the infliction, on a child, of:
  - (i) physical violence
  - (ii) serious emotional or psychological harm
- (c) serious neglect of a child. ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#))

**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. ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#))

**Child neglect:** includes a failure to provide the child with an adequate standard of nutrition, medical care, clothing, shelter or supervision to the extent that the health and physical development of the child is significantly impaired or placed at serious risk. ([PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools.](#))

**Child physical abuse:** Generally, consists of any non-accidental infliction of physical violence on a child by any person. ([PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools.](#))

**Child sexual abuse** is when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve them in sexual activity. It can include a wide range of sexual activity and does not always involve physical contact or force. ([PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools.](#))

**Emotional child abuse** occurs when a child is repeatedly rejected, isolated or frightened by threats, or by witnessing family violence. ([PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools.](#))

**Grooming** is when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later date. It can include communication and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent/carer. ([PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools.](#))

**Mandatory Reporting:** The legal requirement under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)* to protect children from harm relating to physical and sexual abuse. The principal, teachers, medical practitioners and nurses at a school are mandatory reporters under this Act. ([PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools.](#))

**Reasonable Belief:** When school staff are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, they must assess that concern to determine if a report should be made to the relevant agency. This process of considering all relevant information and observations is known as forming a 'reasonable belief'. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. ([PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools.](#))

**School environment** means 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:

- (a) a campus of the school
- (b) online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- (c) 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). ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#))

**School staff** means an individual working in a school environment who is:

- (a) directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
- (b) a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary)
- (c) a minister of religion. ([Ministerial Order No. 870](#))

## 5. Policy Commitments

All students enrolled at St Columba's Primary School have the right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we do not and will not tolerate child abuse. We aim to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where children are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety. There is particular attention paid to the most vulnerable children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

### **Our commitment to our students**

- (a) We commit to the safety and wellbeing of all children enrolled in our school.
- (b) We commit to providing children with positive and nurturing experiences.
- (c) We commit to listening to children and empowering them by taking their views seriously, and addressing any concerns that they raise with us.
- (d) We commit to taking action to ensure that children are protected from abuse or harm.
- (e) We commit to teaching children and young people the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.
- (f) We commit to seeking input and feedback from children regarding the creation of a safe school environment.

### **Our commitment to parents and carers**

- (a) We commit to communicating honestly and openly with parents and carers about the wellbeing and safety of their children.
- (b) We commit to engaging with, and listening to, the views of parents and carers about our child-safety practice, policies and procedures.
- (c) We commit to transparency in our decision-making with parents and carers where it will not compromise the safety of children.
- (d) We commit to acknowledging the cultural diversity of students and families, and being sensitive to how this may impact on student safety issues.
- (e) We commit to continuously reviewing and improving our systems to protect children from abuse.

### **Our commitment to our school staff (school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy)**

- (a) We commit to providing all St Columba's Primary School staff with the necessary support to enable them to fulfil their roles. This will include regular and appropriate learning opportunities.
- (b) We commit to providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm policy and procedures in relation to child safety and young people's protection and wellbeing. This will include annual training in the principles and intent of the Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct, and staff responsibilities to report concerns.
- (c) We commit to listening to all concerns voiced by St Columba's Primary School staff, clergy, volunteers, and contractors about keeping children safe from harm.
- (d) We commit to providing opportunities for St Columba's Primary School employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy to receive formal debriefing and counselling arising from incidents of the abuse of a child.

## 6. Responsibilities and Organisational Arrangements

Everyone employed or volunteering at St Columba's Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make. ([CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety](#))

The school has allocated roles and responsibilities for child safety as follows.

### 6.1 Guide to Responsibilities of School Leadership

The principal, the school governing authority and school leaders at St Columba's Primary School recognise their particular responsibility to ensure the development of preventative and proactive strategies that promote a culture of openness, awareness of and shared responsibility for child safety. Responsibilities include:

- creating an environment for children to be safe and to feel safe
- upholding high principles and standards for all staff, clergy, volunteers, and contractors
- promoting models of behaviour between adults and children based on mutual respect and consideration
- ensuring thorough and rigorous practices are applied in the recruitment, screening and ongoing professional learning of staff
- ensuring that school personnel have regular and appropriate learning to develop their knowledge of, openness to and ability to address child safety matters
- providing regular opportunities to clarify and confirm legislative obligations, policy and procedures in relation to child protection and wellbeing
- ensuring the school meets the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in [Ministerial Order No. 870](#).
- ensuring the school takes specific action to protect children from abuse in line with the three new criminal offences introduced under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.) and in line with the [PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools](#).

### 6.2 Guide to Responsibilities of School Staff

Responsibilities of school staff (school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy) include:

- treating children with dignity and respect, acting with propriety, providing a duty of care, and protecting children and young people in their care
- following the legislative and internal school processes in the course of their work, if they form a reasonable belief that a child has been or is being abused or neglected
- providing a physically and psychologically safe environment where the wellbeing of children is nurtured
- undertaking regular training and education in order to understand their individual responsibilities in relation to child safety and the wellbeing of children
- assisting children to develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from abuse

- following the school’s Child Safety Code of Conduct.

### 6.3 Organisational Arrangements

Overseeing the implementation of this policy will be the Principal of St. Columba’s, with the support of the Deputy Principal (student wellbeing) and Leadership Team. It is the role of the Principal to ensure that the ethical imperative of keeping children safe is recognised, understood, valued, and upheld by all staff, volunteers, and community members within the school. To assist with implementation, monitoring and reviewing child safety matters, the Principal and Deputy Principal will work closely with the School Leadership Team, Student Wellbeing Team and the School Board. It is the specific role of the Principal and Deputy Principal to ensure that all staff are knowledgeable of their requirements in regards to Mandatory Reporting and that they are aware that all issues need to be handled sensitively and promptly.

Staff professional learning meetings, Student Wellbeing meetings and the weekly staff news are all avenues that assist in the communication and dissemination of information that involves issues of child safety. It is the role of the Principal and Deputy Principal to assist members of the school community, who have concerns in regards to an individual student’s safety, in reporting these concerns to the appropriate authority. The Principal and Deputy Principal will also be responsible for the reviewing of school procedures in order to gauge the effectiveness of the school in managing and revising St. Columba’s child safe strategies and to ensure that the policy is distributed to all members of the school community.

## 7. Expectation of our School Staff – Child Safety Code of Conduct

At St Columba’s Primary School, we expect school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy to proactively ensure the safety of students at all times and to take appropriate action if there are concerns about the safety of any child at the school. All school staff must remain familiar with the relevant laws, the code of conduct, and policies and procedures in relation to child protection and to comply with all requirements. We have developed a [Child Safety Code of Conduct for staff, clergy and board members](#), and a [Child Safety Code of Conduct for volunteers](#), which recognise the critical role that school staff play in protecting the students in our care and establish clear expectations of school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy for appropriate behaviour with children in order to safeguard them against abuse and or neglect.

Our Code also protects school staff through clarification of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

### Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school’s child safe policy and upholding the school’s statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone in the school community with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child

- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification).
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership team
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*
- reporting any child safety concerns to the Principal or Deputy Principal
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

### Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact which children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability, or any other forms of discrimination
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the Principal or Deputy Principal's knowledge and/or consent or the school governing authority's approval (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.
- have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary eg by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work)

- use any personal communication channels/device, such as a personal email account, to contact families/ students
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.

## 8. Student Safety and Participation

At St Columba's Primary School we actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.

We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe and enable them to understand, identify, discuss and report on child safety. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us.

At St Columba's children are provided with forums such as the Student Representative Council (SRC), regular sessions of Circletime held in each class and participation in student wellbeing surveys, conducted annually, to voice concerns or forward suggestions that can make St Columba's a safer learning environment. Students can directly approach the Principal, Deputy Principal, classroom teachers, specialist teachers, learning support officers and administration officers to seek advice or receive assistance at any time. St Columba's is a KidsMatter School. Our adherence to the Victorian Curriculum supports children to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing. We explicitly teach the Social and Emotional curriculum using the Bounce Back program and use the Daniel Morcombe Child Safety Curriculum. At St Columba's we begin each term with a focussed Wellbeing Week to ensure connectedness to school. We have a dedicated Student Wellbeing Leader/ chaplain who actively works in all classrooms and facilitates programs such as Peaceful Kids, Better Buddies and other small group sessions based on social and emotional learning, all of which supports the nurturing of student wellbeing at St Columba's and also equips children with understandings and strategies related to their personal safety. Regular Student Wellbeing meetings are structured into our staff meeting agenda and teachers can meet with the Student Wellbeing Team to discuss any concerns or needs of children in their class. Each of these promotes the empowerment of children and provides opportunities for children to contribute meaningfully and in partnership with the school community. The provision of a school psychologist ensures that children are able to access further social emotional support, should it be required.

## 9. Reporting and Responding

St Columba's records any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and stores the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements. Our school complies with legal obligations that relate to managing the risk of child abuse under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.), the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic.) and the recommendations of the [Betrayal of Trust](#) report.

Child protection reporting obligations fall under separate pieces of legislation with differing reporting requirements.

Our school's [Child Protection – Reporting Policy](#), updated on 22 July 2016, sets out the actions required under the relevant legislation when there is a reasonable belief that a child at our school is in need of protection or a criminal offence has been committed, and provides guidance and procedures on how to make a report.

Our policy assists staff, volunteers and families to:

- identify the indicators of a child or young person who may be in need of protection
- understand how a 'reasonable belief' is formed
- make a report of a child or young person who may be in need of protection
- comply with mandatory reporting obligations under child protection law and their legal obligations relating to criminal child abuse and grooming under criminal law.

Our school has also established internal processes to ensure that appropriate action is taken to respond to concerns about the wellbeing and/or safety of a student. St. Columba's staff, in partnership with families, will ensure children are engaged and active participants in the decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on their safety. This means that the views of staff, children, young people and families are taken seriously and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner. Children are also provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.

To ensure all concerns, suspicions and allegations of harm to a child the Principal will:

- Appoint a Child Safety Team, comprised of the school leadership team, whose role is to receive all complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or children
- Handle complaints in line with the existing Mandatory Reporting Policy.

Our complaints and disclosure processes are outlined and detailed in the following policies and procedures:

- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Grievance Policy and Procedures
- Privacy Policy
- Parent Code of Conduct Policy
- Duty of Care

## **Reporting child protection concerns:**

All school staff who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of:

- Protection from physical harm or sexual abuse – must report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection
- Protection from harm that is not believed to involve physical harm or sexual abuse – are encouraged to report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection.
- Therapeutic treatment – are encouraged to report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST.

**Child Protection** is the Victorian Government Agency, provided by the DHHS, that protects children at risk of significant harm. Child Protection has statutory powers and can use these to protect children.

**Child FIRST** is the Family Information Referral Support Team run by a registered community service in a local area that can receive confidential referrals about a child of concern. It does not have any statutory powers to protect a child but can refer matters to family services.

Mandatory reporters must report their concern to DHHS Child Protection if there is a reasonable belief that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

It is essential to document the concerns and observations, which contributed to the suspicion that a child is in need of protection. This information may be gathered over a period of time and should be treated confidentially and held securely. It is recommended – **not, however, a requirement** – that concerns and observations regarding suspected physical injury or sexual abuse of a child are discussed with the principal or a senior school staff member and to ensure support is provided to all involved in matters of this nature. The confidentiality of these discussions must be maintained.

If more than one mandated reporter has formed a belief about the same child on the same occasion, it is sufficient for one professional to make a report. The other is obliged to ensure the report has been made and that all grounds for their own belief were included in the report made by the other staff member.

If one mandated reporter directs another mandated reporter not to make a report, and the one professional **continues** to hold the belief that a child is in need of protection, then that professional is legally obliged to make a report to Child Protection.

The mandatory reporter may continue to suspect that a child is at risk and in need of protection. Any further observations should continue to be recorded and a report made on each separate occasion where a belief has been formed, on reasonable grounds, that a child is likely to be at risk and in need of protection. If there is any suspicion that this relates to a sexual offence involving an adult and a child under 16 then it must be reported to the police.

## 10. Screening and Recruitment of School Staff

St Columba's Primary School will apply thorough and rigorous screening processes in the recruitment of employees and volunteers involved in child-connected work. Our commitment to child safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements for such employee, contractor and volunteer positions, and all applicants are provided with copies of the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Child Safety Policy.

When recruiting and selecting employees, contractors and volunteers involved in child-connected work, we make all reasonable efforts to:

- confirm the applicant's Working with Children Check and National Police Check status and/or professional registration (as relevant)
- obtain proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications
- verify the applicant's history of work involving children
- obtain references that address the applicant's suitability for the job and working with children.

We have processes for monitoring and assessing the continuing suitability of school staff to work with children, including regular reviews of the status of Working with Children Checks and staff professional registration requirements such as Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration.

## 11. Child Safety – Education and Training for School Staff

St Columba's Primary School provides employees, volunteers and clergy with regular and appropriate opportunities to develop their knowledge of, openness to and ability to address child safety matters. This includes induction, ongoing training and professional learning to ensure that everyone understands their professional and legal obligations and responsibilities, and the procedures for reporting suspicion of child abuse and neglect.

All new and returning staff are provided with an induction prior to the commencement of their position at St Columba's. During this time all relevant policies are issued and discussed in detail. All staff at St Columba's are issued annually the Staff Handbook. Obligations regarding mandatory reporting and child safety etc, are clearly defined within this and their legal obligations and responsibilities are discussed in detail prior to commencing the year. Throughout the year during staff meetings and/or wellbeing meetings staff are provided opportunities for further ongoing training and professional learning in child safety.

## 12. Risk Management

At St Columba's Primary School we are committed to proactively and systematically identifying and assessing risks to student safety across our whole school environment, and reducing or eliminating (where possible) all potential sources of harm. We document, implement, monitor and periodically review our risk management strategies for child safety and ensure that the strategies change as needed and as new risks arise.

The Principal, Deputy Principal - student wellbeing and School Child Safety Team will work with staff through general staff meetings and dedicated student wellbeing meetings to monitor and develop risk management strategies.

## 13. Relevant Legislation

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.)
- *Working with Children Act 2005* (Vic.)
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic.)
- *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth)
- *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic.) – Three new criminal offences have been introduced under this Act:

- a) **Failure to disclose offence:** Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.

- b) **Failure to protect offence**: The offence will apply where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
- i) **Grooming offence**: This offence targets predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with a child. Grooming can be conducted in person or online, for example via interaction through social media, web forums and emails.

## 14. Related Policies

### 14.1 Catholic Education Melbourne Policies

- [Policy 2.19: Child Protection – Reporting Obligations](#)
- [Policy 2.19a: School Guidelines –Police and DHHS Interview Protocols](#)
- [Policy 2.20: Complaints Policy](#)
- [Policy 2.26: Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools](#)
- [CEM Guidelines for Behaviour Support](#)
- [CECV Whole School Approaches to Supporting Positive Behaviour](#)

### 14.2 School Policies

- Child Protection – Reporting Obligations
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Responsible Use of Social Media Policy
- Student Supervision Policy
- Grievance Policy and Procedures
- Duty of Care
- Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Anti bullying Policy for students and staff
- Cyberbullying Policy
- Internet use Policy
- Camp and Excursion Policy
- Critical Incident Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Parent, Volunteer and Visitor Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Staff Induction Policy
- Student Wellbeing Policy
- Student Services Procedures Policy
- Staff Wellbeing Policy
- Working with Children Policy

This policy must be read in conjunction with:

- ❖ The law of the Commonwealth or of the relevant state or territory
- ❖ The St Columba's Primary School Code of Conduct
- ❖ Termination of Employment Policy and Misconduct Procedures

## 15. Breach of Policy

Where an **employee** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this Policy, St Columba's Primary School may start the process under clause 13 of the *Victorian Catholic Education Multi Enterprise Agreement 2013* (VCEMEA) for managing employment concerns. This may result in disciplinary consequences.

Where the **principal** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this policy, the concerned party is advised to contact the parish priest. Relevant notification should also be made to Catholic Education Melbourne (Office of Professional Conduct, Ethics and Investigation).

Where any **other member of the school community** is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this policy, the school is to take appropriate action, including in accordance with: Child Protection – Reporting Obligations, Complaints Resolution Policy and/or contact Catholic Education Melbourne (Office of Professional Conduct, Ethics and Investigation).

## 16. Review of this Child Safety Policy

At St Columba's Primary School we are committed to continuous improvement of our child safety systems and practices. We intend this policy to be a dynamic document that will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is working in practice and updated to accommodate changes in legislation or circumstance.

We will maintain a history of updates to the policy.

### History of Updates to Policy

Date	Comment (e.g. major review, minor review)
July 2016	Development of the Child Safety Policy
28 March 2017	Minor review addition of PROTECT

## 17. References

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) 2016, [\*Commitment Statement to Child Safety: A safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people in Catholic schools.\*](#)

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) 2013, [Victorian Catholic Education Multi Enterprise Agreement 2013](#), CECV.

Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, [The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium](#), Vatican.

Department of Education, 2016, [PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools](#)

State of Victoria 2016, [Child Safe Standards](#) – *Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools: Ministerial Order No. 870*, Education & Training Reform Act 2006, Victorian Government Gazette No. S2.

Victorian Government Department of Justice 2016, [Betrayal of Trust Implementation](#).

Parliament of Victoria, Family and Community Development Committee, 2013, [Betrayal of Trust](#)