

Sacred Heart Girls' College is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS).

## Introduction

Catholic education is an active partnership between family and school, where families are recognised as the first and ongoing educators of their children. Schools and families partner in the shared privilege and responsibility for children and young people's faith formation, learning, safety and wellbeing.

At Sacred Heart Girls' College, 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 to 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).

### College Mission

Sacred Heart Girls' College is a Catholic secondary school inspired by the charism of the Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions (RNDM). We nurture an inclusive and diverse culture, fostering life-long learning and a commitment to social justice. The College provides a dynamic environment that educates young people to be compassionate, discerning, resilient and true to our motto, *Always Striving Upwards*.

### College Vision

In the spirit of the RNDM Sisters, we aspire to honour the uniqueness and gifts of each person by:

- Enriching spirituality and celebrating our Catholic identity and heritage
- Promoting excellence in learning and wellbeing
- Adopting ethical and responsible practices that ensure sustainable use of resources
- Demonstrating outward looking leadership and service
- Fostering a safe community where all are treated with respect and dignity
- Providing opportunities to be innovative and responsive to a changing world
- Challenging each student to discover their personal attributes and strengths to engage with local and global issues

### Families as Partners

Parents/carers, teachers and students come together in a three-way learning and wellbeing relationship to support the full flourishing and development of each young person. The young person is central to the partnership and each person within the relationship has a responsibility to participate in and enrich the partnership. Teachers and school staff reach out to families. Families advocate for their child/ren and remain in relationship with the school. Students link home and school, demystifying school, sharing school experiences and are empowered by the relationship between home and school.

## Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the strategies and actions that we have in place at Sacred Heart Girls' College 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.

This Policy takes into account the specific requirements of the Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 1359.

## Scope

This Policy applies to school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy. It should be read in conjunction with related school policies and procedures, including:

1. Child Safety Framework
2. Child Safety Code of Conduct
3. Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
4. School Reportable Conduct Policy

## Principles

At Sacred Heart Girls' College, the following principles underpin our commitment to family engagement:

- Families and carers should have the opportunity to participate in decisions relating to child safety and wellbeing which affect their child.
- Our school engages and openly communicates with families, carers and other members of the school community about our child safe approach.
- All members of the school community should have access to information relating to child safety and wellbeing.
- Families, carers and other members of the school community must have the opportunity to provide input into the development and review of the school's policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing.
- Families, 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.

## Policy

Sacred Heart Girls' College 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 at Sacred Heart Girls' College.

We implement the following strategies and actions to ensure that we are able to meet this commitment.

### Strategies / actions used by school leadership

The Principal, the school governing authority and school leaders at Sacred Heart Girls' College recognise their particular responsibilities to communicate and engage with families, carers and other members of the school community in relation to issues regarding child safety and wellbeing. Strategies and actions used to carry out this responsibility include:

- utilising the Sacred Heart Girls' College Engaging Families in Child Safety Policy to inform and guide curriculum planning, policies and practices
- supporting staff, through appropriate professional learning, to strengthen their communication and engagement skills and to understand the value and importance of effective communication and engagement
- identifying opportunities for parents and carers to participate in decisions that affect their child's safety and wellbeing
- ensuring that existing policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing are made publicly available so that they are easily accessible to families, carers and other members of the school community
- engaging with families, carers and other members of the school community to collaboratively develop and periodically review policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing
- creating opportunities to ensure that members of the school community are adequately informed about the school's operations and governance relating to child safety and wellbeing
- providing opportunities for families to engage in child safety and parenting support learning opportunities (such as webinars, SchoolTV special reports, Welcome Evenings, etc)
- providing child safety standards information to families via Parent Access Module (PAM)

## Strategies / actions used by school staff, volunteers, contractors and clergy

School staff, volunteers, contractors and clergy at Sacred Heart Girls' College also have a responsibility to support the school governing authority and school leaders in communicating and engaging with families, carers and other members of the school community regarding child safety and wellbeing. Strategies and actions used to carry out this responsibility include:

- creating and maintaining open lines of communication with families, carers and other members of the school community, particularly with respect to child safety and wellbeing matters
- liaising with parents and carers in relation to any concerns and/or decisions that affect their child and giving them the opportunity to contribute to any discussions, where appropriate
- ensuring that parents, carers and others in the school community are updated and involved in child safety and wellbeing
- ensuring they act in accordance with the principles set out in this Policy when managing issues relating to child safety and wellbeing

## External references

### Related Resources – Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools

[eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities](#)

[Horizons of Hope: Vision and Context](#)

[Horizons of Hope: Families as Partners](#)

[Horizons of Hope: Wellbeing](#)

## Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed in consultation with members of the wider community as part of the school's two-year review cycle of its child safety practices.
- Update of the policy will occur if any new requirements come to hand.

<b>Responsible director</b>	Director, Learning and Regional Services
<b>Policy owner</b>	General Manager, Student Wellbeing
<b>Approving body/individual</b>	MACS Board
<b>Approval date</b>	13 April 2022
<b>Risk rating</b>	High
<b>Date of next review</b>	April 2023

POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION	
<b>Related documents</b>	
<b>Superseded documents</b>	
<b>New policy</b>	New