



St. Mary's School - Swan Hill

Building a Culture of Child Safety Supporting our Volunteers



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge that DOBCEL staff work on unceded lands- what always was and always will be the country of our First Nations People. We acknowledge the Wemba Wemba people, traditional owners of the region.

We recognise First Nations Peoples enduring connection to land and community and we offer our respect to elders past and present.

We make this offer as a member of a Catholic organisation committed to the pursuit of social, educational and political justice. We acknowledge that institutions and systems have a lot of work to do to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are afforded culturally co-designed education and support to transform educational experiences which truly enable flourishing for all.

Thank you

St. Mary's School would like to thank you for taking the time to support our school community.

The ongoing safety of our children, volunteers, staff and contractors is paramount.

We have implemented a range of policies and procedures to ensure all children feel safe. This Induction will address areas of knowledge required in order to volunteer and participate in activities at our School.





13 11 14

1800RESPECT
NATIONAL DOMESTIC FAMILY AND
SEXUAL VIOLENCE **COUNSELLING** SERVICE
1800 737 732

Volunteer Participation Requirements

- *Sign in and out at the Office*
- *Wear a visitor label whilst on the school premises*
- *Familiarise yourself with restricted areas of the school eg. student toilets*

Pre-Authorisation Requirements

- *Make an informed decision to work as a volunteer within our school*
- *Undertake work induction and training as required*
- *Provide a copy of your current Working with Children Check (please note you are not permitted to volunteer without providing a current WWCC)*
- *Read and sign a copy of our schools Child Safety Code of Conduct*
- *Provide relevant contact information*

Responsibilities of our Volunteers

- *Follow Emergency Management procedures and directions from staff*
- *Keep school matters confidential, including those relating to students.*
- *Behave in an ethical manner*
- *Be committed to the school aims and objectives*
- *Treat everyone within the school community with an understanding of Cultural Safety and respect*
- *Do not speak aggressively, use inappropriate language or discipline students*
- *Do not work in isolation with a student*
- *Inform the supervisor when unable to undertake or complete a task*
- *Use appropriate information channels within the school when needing information, support, back-up, supervision or review*



Responsibilities of our Volunteers cont.

- *Be aware of the limits of your role within the school*
- *Be aware of your duty of care to students*
- *At NO TIME take photos or videos of students or staff members whilst volunteering*
- *Do NOT post any photo, comment or opinion on electronic platforms (social media, internet or email) relating to students, staff members or activities that you have participated in as a volunteer*
- *Consult with a school staff member if concerned about any child safety issues*
- *Comply with Occupational Health and Safety policies and practices*

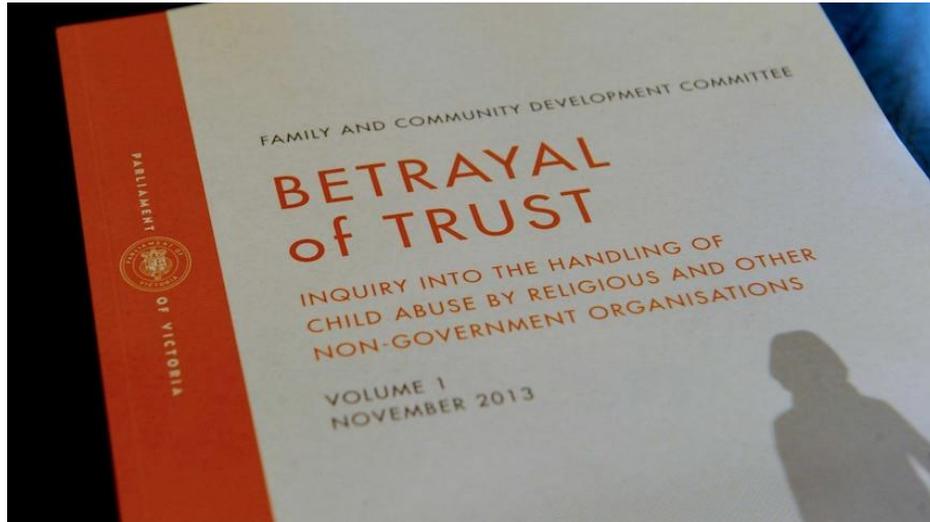


UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Includes provisions to protect children from all forms of abuse and neglect.



Understanding Our Work



2012 – 2013

Victoria

2013 – 2017

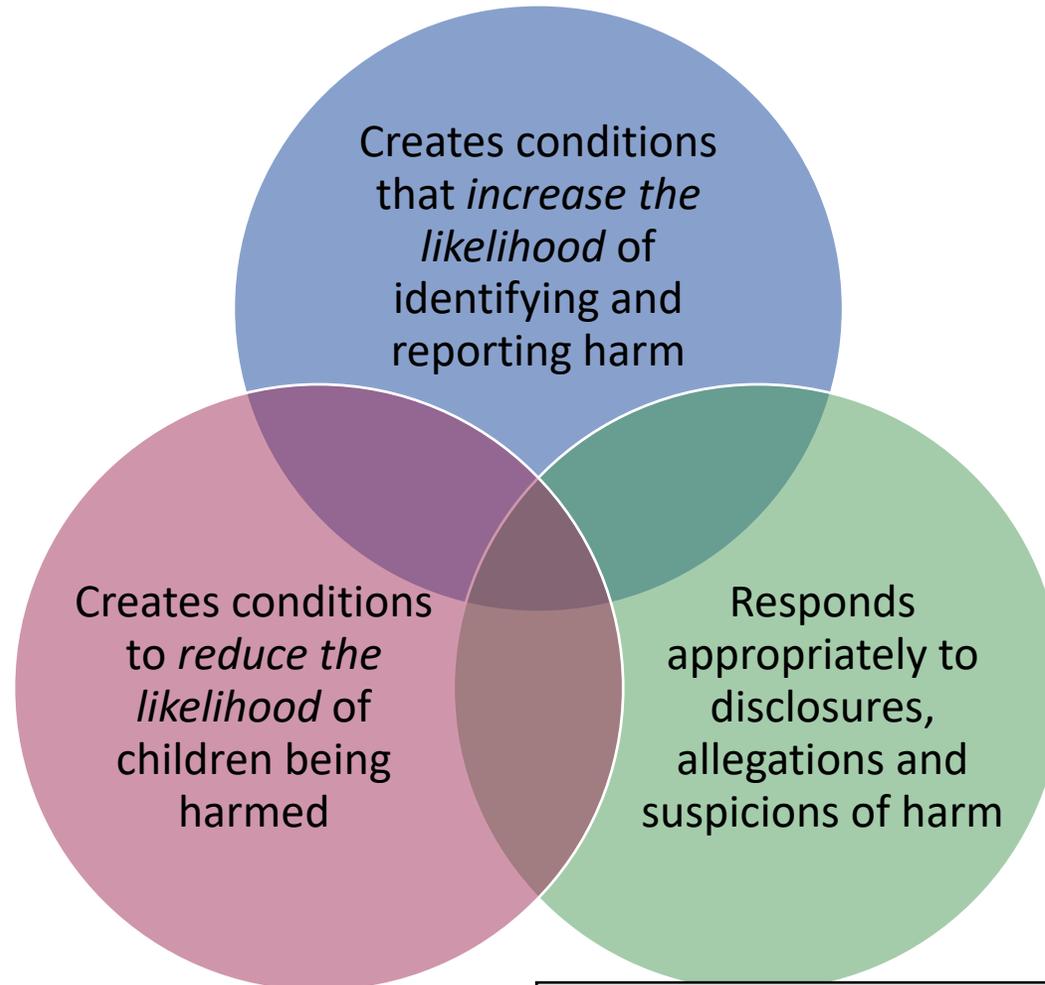
Commonwealth



Creating a Culture of Child Safety

- Shared attitudes, beliefs, values and practices that prioritise safety and wellbeing
- Everyone's responsibility
- Child safety as 'business as usual'
- Hearing the voices of children and young people
- Intentional, deliberate and planned

Three Elements of a Child Safe Culture



The Australian and New Zealand Children's Commissioners and Guardians (ANZCCG)



What actions can you take to contribute to a culture of child safety?



Build Your Knowledge of the Child Safe Standards

At St Mary's School we have a range of policies in place in the area of Child Safety which are available on our school website. These include:

- *Child Safety Policy*
- *Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA) Commitment Statement to Child Safety*
- *St. Mary's School Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct*
- *Reporting Obligations*
- *Cultural Safety and Inclusion Action Plan*
- *Child Safety Officer Role Description*
- *Participation and Empowerment of Students*

Induction

Any concerns related to child safety should be immediately reported to the Principal principal@smswanhill.catholic.edu.au or our designated Child Safety Officer kdoran@smswanhill.catholic.edu.au

Our school has a focus on child safety and to fulfil the legislative requirements within the state of Victoria. In February 2022 the Ministerial Order No. 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises (MO 1359) was released. The 11 Child Safe Standards outlined in MO 1359 came into effect on 1 July 2022 in all Victorian schools. DOBCEL, as governing authority, and the Principal have direct responsibility for ensuring that the requirements of MO (Ministerial Order) No 1359 are met within the school.

Why Child Safe Standards?



Child Safe Standards

Standard 1

Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued

Standard 2

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture



Child Safe Standards

Standard 3

Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decision affecting them and are taken seriously

Standard 4

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing



Child Safe Standards

Standard 5

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

Standard 6

People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice



Child Safe Standards

Standard 7

Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focussed

Standard 8

Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training



Child Safe Standards

Standard 9

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed

Standard 10

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved



Child Safe Standards

Standard 11

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people



Can you identify any activity/actions taken in the school that reflect the child safe standards?



Child Safety

Child Safety processes and protocols used at our School are supported by:

PROTECT - The resource developed jointly by the Department Of Education and Training and the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria.

It is located on the Department of Education and Training's child safety site. It is available at <https://www.vic.gov.au/protect> and provides information and resources to support the implementation of Ministerial Order No. 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises

Types of Abuse

Categories of Child Abuse

- Sexual Abuse
- Grooming (Including on-line)
- Physical Abuse
- Serious emotional or psychological harm
- Neglect
- Family Violence

Children and young people can be harmed by other children, students or adults in their homes, at school or in the community.

Signs of Harm and Abuse

- There are a range of common signs that children and young people may be experiencing harm or abuse.
- These can present as both *physical* and *behavioural*.
- Being aware of these signs is important, as children and young people may not disclose that they are being harmed or abused.

PROTECT

Protecting children & young people
from abuse is our responsibility

<https://www.schools.vic.gov.au/media/863564>



Understanding our Responsibilities

Code of Conduct

Provides adults with a clear guide on the behaviour that is expected within the school environment

- Lists acceptable and unacceptable behaviours
- Identifies professional boundaries and ethical behaviour
- Applies to all school activities – both on and off site - and the use of online digital technologies
- Under the Commission for Children and Young People Reportable Conduct Scheme you are obligated as a volunteer to comply with its requirements



Understanding our Responsibilities

Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct

Please read through the Code of Conduct and acknowledge you have read and understood it at the end of this presentation.

St. Mary's School Swan Hill Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct

Understanding our Responsibilities

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

[St Mary's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#)

- Participate in child safety and wellbeing induction training
- Follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- Act in accordance with Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Identify and raise concerns according to reporting obligations
- Ensure views of students are taken seriously

Responding to a Disclosure

- Volunteers **must not** ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- You must report any concerns to a teacher or the school leadership team as quickly as possible
- Everyone has a role to ensure children are safe – if something doesn't feel right, you must speak up



Responding to children and young people's disclosures of abuse

Listen, reassure and respect

Listen

- Move to a suitable environment, free of distractions.
- Be calm and patient—allow for the child or young person to be heard.
- Let the child or young person use their own words—avoid asking leading questions.
- Avoid “quizzing” the child or young person about details of the abuse.
- Don't be afraid of saying the “wrong” thing. Listening supportively is more important than what you say.

Reassure

- Reassure the child or young person that it is OK that they have told you what's been happening.
- Address any concerns about the child or young person's safety.
- Reassure the child or young person that he or she is *not* at fault, and *not* the cause of any distress you may feel.

Respect

- Respect that the child or young person may only reveal some details.
- Acknowledge the child or young person's bravery and strength.
- Avoid making promises you can't keep—manage the child or young person's expectations.
- Explain to the child or young person that in order for them to be safe you will need to report their experience to someone else.

What happens next?

If a child or young person discloses abuse, you should report it to the relevant authorities.

Mandatory reporting requirements vary throughout Australian states and territories. For information about mandatory reporting requirements including who is mandated to report, see CFCA Resource Sheet *Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect* <www3.aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/mandatory-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect>

State and territory contact details for reporting abuse and neglect are available on the CFCA Resource Sheet *Reporting Abuse and Neglect: State and Territory Departments Responsible for Protecting Children* <www3.aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/reporting-abuse-and-neglect>



What concerns do you have about responding to any form of harm or abuse?

What other support might you need?



Key Things to Remember

- **Child Safety is everyone's responsibility**
- Volunteers have a responsibility to:
 - Always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
 - Act in accordance with our school's Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
 - Take students' views seriously, especially when they raise concerns or worries about their safety or the safety of a friend
 - Raise concerns about a child's safety or any inappropriate behaviours in the school community with the school principal immediately, (unless it is the principal then contact Manager Safeguarding Jacqui Righetti 0409 114 268)
 - Recognise and respect all children and young people regardless of their background or lived experience.



Occupational Health and Safety

All volunteers, contractors & employees:

- *have a duty to take care of their own health and safety and of others affected by their actions of work.*
- *should comply with the safety procedures and directions agreed between the Principal, employees and with the elected Occupational Health and Safety representative.*
- *will not wilfully interfere with or misuse items or facilities provided in the interests of health, safety and welfare of school employees and students.*
- *must act in accordance with agreed school procedures for accident and incident reporting and report potential hazards to the Principal.*



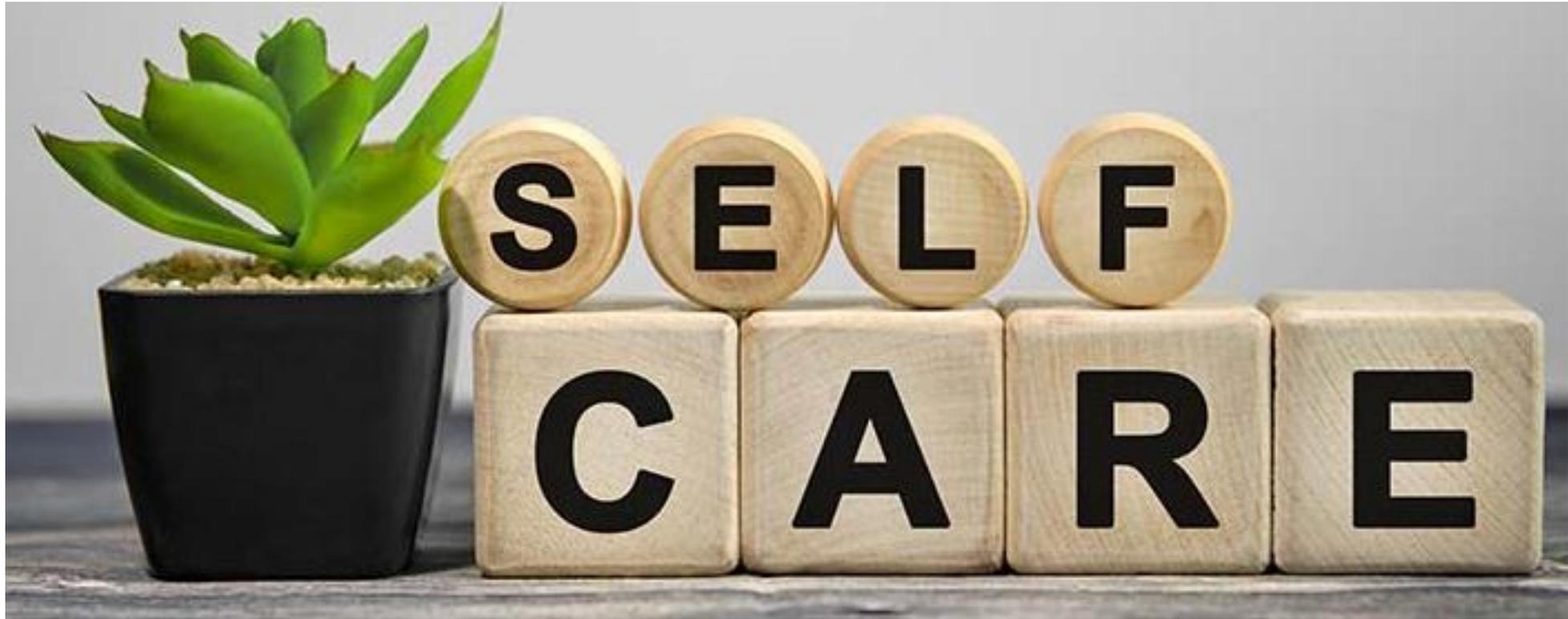
Occupational Health and Safety

Occupational Health & Safety

Any accidents or incidents or potential hazards should be brought to the immediate attention of the Principal or Leadership Team

First Aid

Our First Aid area is located in the sick bay in the Administration building



Completing your Volunteer Induction

Please complete the St.Mary's School Volunteer Induction Application by clicking the link below.

[Volunteer Induction Application](#)

