

Creek Street
Christian College



Creek Street Christian College

Child Safe Procedure

Procedure No. 27
Procedure Owner: College Council
Responsible Person: Principal

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Creek Street Christian College Vision, Mission and Philosophy Statements

College Vision

Creek Street Christian College (hereafter 'the College') is a ministry of the Creek Street Church and has been established to provide Christian education and training to students so that they are equipped to impact their community, our nation, and the world for the Lord Jesus Christ.

College Mission

The College has been established to provide families with a Christian education, within a caring and disciplined environment that will enable students to fully develop their God-given talents and academic abilities, so that they are able to contribute effectively to the changing society of which they are a part.

The College encourages and supports students to develop a positive and wholesome outlook on life, to become self-disciplined people and to be responsible and caring members of the community, both locally and internationally.

College Philosophy

At the College, our approach to learning is holistic in nature. We have a commitment to the development of the whole student in a Christian environment. A Christian education provides unparalleled opportunities for students to discover their passions and nurture their talents. We teach, equip, activate, and release the students with the wisdom which comes from God.

Our four foundations of a true Christian Education are to learn to:

Know and Understand...

Our programs are designed to engage the learners by stimulating wonder and dynamic educational experiences. The students develop a deeper connection to content, understand that learning areas are related to each other and the world beyond the classroom. Our students take risks, become independent thinkers in a rapidly changing world, seeking and acquiring new skills and knowledge at every stage of life.

Apply/do...

Learning is developed through experience, action, and engagement. Through real-life experiential learning students at the College understand how to put their knowledge and skills into action in meaningful and positive ways locally, nationally, and globally. We believe the Bible is God's revelation to man and that it contains the principles and values that show us how to live and do what God has called us to do.

Collaborate...

God created us for relationships. In fact, the greatest commandment - love your God with all heart, all your soul, and all your mind (Matthew 22:37) helps us build, maintain, and expand our relationship with God and others. At the College, much of what we learn is about ourselves in relation to experiences with others. Through this our students develop collaborative, interpersonal, social and language skills to help them develop an appreciation for the wider world and their place within it.

Become...

From Early Learning Centre (ELC) to Year 12, the students begin on a journey of discovering and embracing all God has made them to be and are helped to become their best versions of themselves. Students graduate from the College as open-minded, compassionate, balanced, resilient global citizens.

Introduction

This procedure is required and informed by clause 8 of *Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in Schools*, which sets out what the Child Safe Standards mean in a school environment.

All Victorian schools must have a Child Safety Procedure or statement of commitment to child safety under Child Safe Standards.

Purpose

The Child Safety Procedure sets out the College's commitment and approach to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe and provides the procedure framework for the College's approach to the [Child Safe Standards](#).

Scope

This procedure applies to all staff, volunteers, and contractors in the College environment, whether they work in direct contact with children or young people or not. This procedure also applies to College council members where indicated.

The procedure will apply to the College environment (see Definitions section). The procedure covers both school hours and outside of school hours.

Definitions

Child abuse

Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving:
 - a sexual offence; or
 - grooming; and
- the infliction, on a child, of:
 - physical violence; or
 - serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work

Child-connected work means work authorised by the College, College Council, or Secretary of the Department of Education and Training and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child safety

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.

College environment

The College environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the College for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the College
- online College environments (including email and intranet systems)
- other locations provided by the College for students' use.

College staff

College staff means an individual working in a College environment who is:

- employed by the College
- directly appointed by the College Council or
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary or not).

Statement of commitment to child safety and child safety principles

The College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

The College's approach to creating and maintaining a child safe College environment is guided by our College philosophy and values.

At the College our values guide the decisions and behaviours of all members of our College community, including in relation to child safety:

D Devotion	'Till I come, devote yourself to reading, to exhortation and to teaching and instilling doctrine.' 1 Timothy 4:13 AMP
I Integrity	'Joyful are people of integrity, who follow the instructions of the Lord.' Psalm 119:1 NLT
S Service	'God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.' 1 Peter 4:10 NLT
C Compassion	'Therefore as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.' Colossians 3:12 NIV
O Optimism	'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.' Philippians 4:13 NKJV
V Vision	'Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.' Proverbs 29:18 KJV
E Excellence	'And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritances; for you serve the Lord Christ.' Colossians 3:23-24. NKJV
R Respect	'Show proper respect to everyone, love the family of believers, fear God, honour the king.' 1 Peter 2:17 NIV

The College has zero tolerance for child abuse.

We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, procedures, strategies, and practices will be inclusive of the needs of all children, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable.

Every person involved in the College has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Child safety principles

In its planning, decision-making and operations, the College will:

- Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
- Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
- Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
- Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount

- Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
- Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
- Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such concerns
- Report suspected abuse, neglect, or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities
- Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk and
- Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Procedure

Strategies to embed a child safe culture

The College's culture encourages staff, students, parents, and the College community to raise, discuss and scrutinise child safety concerns. This makes it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. **All College staff** are required to:

- Act in accordance with the College's Child Safety procedure, which clearly sets out the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- Act in accordance with the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Procedure, Mandatory Child Safe Reporting and Responding Procedure, Emergency Management Procedure, Critical Incident Management Plan and Procedure, Working with Children Procedure, Child Safety Code of Conduct Procedure and Procedures at all times, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Colleges](#) where necessary
- Undertake annual guidance and training on child safety
- Act in accordance with their legal obligations, including:
 - Failure to disclose offence (applies to all adults)
 - Duty of care (applies to all College staff)
 - Mandatory reporting obligations (applies to all mandatory reporters, including teachers, principals, registered psychologists, and registered doctors and nurses)
 - Failure to protect offence (applies to a person in a position of authority within the College)
 - Reportable conduct obligations (applies to all College staff in reporting conduct to the principal, and applies to the principal in reporting to Employee Conduct Branch)
 - Organisational duty of care (applies to the College as an organisation)
 - For more information on these obligations, see [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Colleges](#).

As part of The College's child safe culture, **College leadership** (including the Principal and Assistant Principals) will:

- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, when implementing the Child Safe Standards
- Ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at College leadership meetings and staff meetings
- Encourage and enable staff professional learning and training to build deeper understandings of child safety and prevention of abuse
- Ensure that no one is prohibited or discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the College or from making records of any allegation.

As part of the College's child safe culture, **College mandatory reporting staff** are required to:

- Complete the [Protecting Children – Mandatory reporting and other obligations](#) online module every year (Note that it is a DET requirement that mandatory reporters complete this training annually. It also helps with demonstrating compliance with the Child Safe Standards)
- Read the College's Child Safety Code of Conduct on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document
- Read the College's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Procedure and Procedures on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document
- Read the College's Child Safety Procedure (this document) on induction and maintain familiarity with that document.

As part of the College's child safe culture, in performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, **College Council members** will:

- Ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at College council meetings (Note that there is no requirement to discuss child safety at every College council meeting, but it is best practice to have child safety on the agenda at some meetings to show that the College is embedding a culture of child safety and College council members are informed and understand the issues)
- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable, when making decisions regarding the Child Safe Standards
- Undertake annual guidance and training on child safety.
- Approve the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to College council employees and members, and if updated, note the new document in its College council meeting minutes
- When hiring employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe (unless delegated to the principal).

College leadership will maintain records of the above processes.

Roles and responsibilities

College leaders will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the College's Child Safety Code of Conduct, which sets out clearly the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

Specific child safety responsibilities:

- The Principal or delegate is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety Procedure every 3 years.
- The Assistant Principal: Student Well-Being is responsible for monitoring the College's compliance with the Child Safety Procedure. The College community should approach the College if they have any concerns about the College's compliance with the Child Safety Procedure.
- The Principal or delegate is responsible for informing the College community about this procedure and making it publicly available.
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in the College's other child safety policies and procedures.

Recruitment

The College uses the Department's Recruitment process, available on the Department's website, to guide

us to ensure child safe recruitment practices are used.

All prospective volunteers are required to comply with our College's Volunteers Procedure, including in relation to assessing the suitability of prospective volunteers and obtaining checks required under this procedure.

Training and supervision

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone in the College understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our College culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in coming forward with any allegations or suspicions of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. This training occurs annually or more often as required.

Ministerial Order on Child Safe Standards requires Colleges to ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to their staff and College council members "at least annually" on roles and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse, child abuse risks in the College environment, and the College's current child safety standards.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse, to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability and vulnerable children.

New employees and volunteers will be inducted into the College, including by being referred to the Child Safety Procedure (this document), and other document related to child safety.

They will also be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our College's commitment to child safety, and that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. All employees of our College will be monitored and assessed via regular performance review to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported by College staff to the Principal or Assistant Principals and will be managed in accordance with child safety procedures where required.

Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The College has clear expectations for all staff and volunteers (including homestay providers) in making a report about a child or young person who may need protection. All staff (including College council employees) must follow the College's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Procedure and Procedures, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) if there is an incident, disclosure or suspicion of child abuse. Immediate actions should include reporting their concerns to DHHS Child Protection, Victoria Police and/or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the College leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.

The College will never prohibit or discourage College staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse. The College will always take action to respond to a complaint in accordance with the College's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Procedure and Procedures. In accordance with Action 4 of the Four Critical Actions for Schools, the College will provide ongoing support for students affected by child abuse.

Risk reduction and management

The College believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes, found in the College's risk assessment register. The College recognises

there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures.

We will identify and mitigate the risks of child abuse in College environments by considering the nature of each College environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment and the characteristics and needs of all children expected to be present in that environment.

The College monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the actions it takes to reduce or remove risks to child safety.

Listening to, communicating with, and empowering children

The College has developed a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe College operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities. Our College is committed to supporting and encouraging students to use their voice to raise and share their concerns with a trusted adult at any time of need. Students can access information on how to report abuse with their Homeroom teachers, Assistant Principal: Student Well-Being, as well as Chaplains and the Principal.

When the College is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with or abuse of a child, the College will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (and/or their parents/carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

The College will promote the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children, including:

- All our child safety policies and procedures will be available for the students and parents at the College to read
- College newsletters will inform students and the College community about the College's commitment to child safety, and strategies or initiatives that the College is taking to ensure student safety
- Child Safe Standards will be discussed at most internal and external meetings.

The College will use its health and wellbeing programs to deliver appropriate education to its students about:

- standards of behaviour for students attending the College
- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality)
- resilience
- child abuse awareness and prevention.

Communications

This College is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the College community through:

- Ensuring that the Child Safety Procedure (this document), Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Procedure and Procedure
- Once per term reminders in the College newsletter of our College's commitment to child safety
- Ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at College leadership meetings and staff meetings for discussion

Confidentiality and privacy

This College collects, uses and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law and other relevant laws. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the Department of Education and Training's [Colleges' Privacy Procedure](#).

Related policies and documents

Related policies and documents include:

- Code of Conduct
- Mandatory Child Safe Reporting and Responding Procedure
- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Colleges](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Colleges' Privacy Procedure](#).

Procedure evaluation and review

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this procedure will be reviewed every 3 years. The review will include feedback from students, parents/carers, and the College community.