



ST JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILD SAFE POLICY

Vision Statement

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School is a Christ-centred community, within the Bunbury Parish, which aspires to educate and develop the whole child in a caring, Catholic environment, recognising and respecting the uniqueness, dignity and the rights of others.

1 Rationale

"From the moment they join St Joseph's Catholic school community, students should learn of their value as human persons. Every aspect of the school's life should reflect a Christian pastoral dimension... The pastoral dimension of our Catholic school needs to include the mutual care and support staff demonstrate both towards each other and for their students." (Mandate, 37)

The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) is responsible for creating child safe organisations in Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA). The CECWA recognises parents as first educators and partners in education.

By creating and maintaining child safe schools and care centres, CECWA acknowledges children and young people have the right to be safe and feel safe to be able to flourish in their learning and development. Every child has a right to dignity, safety and an inalienable right to education (Declaration of Rome 2017).

Through this policy statement, Catholic schools must fulfil the responsibilities to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

2 Definitions

Child Safety

Child Safety is defined as empowering children to feel welcome, included and not discriminated against, and creating an environment for children to feel comfortable raising their concerns and being taken seriously.

Wellbeing

Wellbeing is the combination of a person's spiritual, physical, emotional and mental health. Feeling safe, stable, and secure is central to our health and wellbeing.

Child Safe Organisations are environments that promote a culture where the safety, wellbeing and participation of children and young people are reflected in policies and day-to-day practices at all levels of the organisation. Greater detail on the definitions related to child safe organisations (schools and care centres) are found in the Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia.

CEWA means CECWA and all other Catholic schools in the System Agreement with the State Government.

Catholic School refers to an educational venue as defined in the Teacher Registration Act 2012 that is a part of the Catholic Education system in Western Australia. This includes schools as well as Early Learning and Care Centres.

Historic Allegations refers to any information alleging child abuse where the child is a former student of any Catholic school.

Principal refers to a principal of a Catholic school and includes the director of an early years education centre.

School community includes, but is not limited to, the school staff, students, parents and Parish Priest.

3 Scope

This policy applies to all Catholic schools and care centres, including boarding facilities, in Western Australia.

4 Principles

- 4.1 Catholic schools are committed to promoting access and respecting diversity, particularly for the poor, marginalised and vulnerable children and young people.
- 4.2 Catholic school communities witness Christ's love and redemption, therefore focus is on support and healing for any person that has been harmed, the accused and the school community.
- 4.3 A child safe organisation requires the voice of the child to be heard and validated.
- 4.4 All members of the school community are responsible for a safe and supportive environment that prioritises the best interests of the child or young person.
- 4.5 Principals are required to understand, promote and implement the many elements that create an environment where children and young people are safe and can flourish.
- 4.6 School policies, procedures and programmes are to be consistently implemented, evaluated and accessible to all, particularly children and young people, throughout the school community.
- 4.7 Processes for the recruitment, appointment and management of staff, including ongoing support and development, must demonstrate commitment to child safety.
- 4.8 Experience and knowledge will be applied to new and ongoing situations, in order to mitigate or prevent risk of harm to a child or young person, inclusive of online and physical environments.
- 4.9 Investigation and reporting processes are transparent, fair, reasonable and clearly understood by the school community.
- 4.10 Continual improvement processes are in place in the CEWA system to assess the impact of strategies to ensuring child safe Catholic schools.

5 Procedures

- 5.1 The principal must implement and regularly evaluate the following:
 - Code of Conduct that promotes positive behaviours, relationships, attitudes and responsibilities for all in the school community.
 - Induction Procedures to ensure that all staff understand the Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia and Mandatory Reporting within the first 3 months of appointment, and Child Safe - 2018 Page 3 of 4
 - The requirements contained within the Registration Standards for Non-Government Schools in Western Australia.
 - School-based policy on bullying, harassment, aggression and violence reflective of the CECWA template provided.
- 5.2 Catholic school staff who identify concerns regarding the sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect of a child must respond according to the Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia. This includes any historic allegations of child abuse.

- 5.3 In addition to 5.2, Allegations of Misconduct and Serious Misconduct against Staff – Processes and Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia is to be followed when an allegation is directed against Catholic school staff. These include teachers, administrative staff, grounds staff or any other staff member.
- 5.4 In addition to Procedures 5.2 and 5.3, the relevant diocesan authority must be informed of any allegations involving clergy or members of religious institutes.

6 References

Bishops of Western Australia 2009, Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia 2009 – 2015
CEWA Framework for the Development of Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools
CEWA Child Safe Framework, 2018
CECWA Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia
Allegations of Misconduct and Serious Misconduct Against Staff – Processes and Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia
Commissioner for Children and Young People (CCYP) 2018
Department of Education Services, Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools, 2018
National Safe Schools Framework, 2018
Towards Healing, Principles and Procedures in Responding to Complaints of Sexual Abuse Against Personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia

7 Related Documents

Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA) National Catholic Safeguarding Standard

8. Related Forms

Template – Code of Conduct
Template – Bullying Policy