



Child Safe Program (New Policy Format)

Child Safe Policy

Introduction

St Mark's has a strong commitment to high-quality education that not only equips students with knowledge, skills and understanding, but also empowers them to live and act with love, courage and curiosity.

School Board has approved the Child Safe Policy on 26th May 2025. It will be reviewed on 26th May 2028.

Purpose

The Child Safe Policy demonstrates the School's strong commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child friendly environment, and to complying with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles) and non-government school registration requirements relevant to child safety and child protection. It summarises the policies and practices that we have developed to keep our students safe, including from abuse and other harm.

The Child Safe Policy outlines the key elements of our approach to:

- implementing the National Principles
- complying with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child safety in South Australia, including the Children and Young Persons (Safety) Act 2017 (SA)
- complying with the Department for Education's Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people: Guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings (Protective Practices), Managing allegations of sexual misconduct in SA education and care settings (Managing Sexual Misconduct), Sexual behaviour in children and young people: Procedure and Guideline (Sexual Behaviour Guidelines), and Responding to

online safety incidents in South Australian Schools (Managing Online Safety Incidents) guidelines

- creating a safe, supportive and child-friendly School environment
- promoting the open discussion of child safety issues within the School .

It informs the School community about everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards students and guides the policies, processes and practices for the safety, wellbeing and protection of students across all areas of our work.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

In the Lutheran learning communities the gospel is to "inform all programs, relationships and activities" (LCA and Its School statement). The love of God in Jesus Christ is to govern all that is done, in response to this love, people in the school community are directed to their fellow human beings. Where they love others, they love him. Christ's promise is that whatever is done for others is done for him. Informed and transformed by God's creative, redemptive and sanctifying love, God's people are concerned with the total needs of their fellow human beings.

The Child Safe Program in place at each learning community defines power as the capacity to set and care for boundaries. Boundaries are the structures which support human development within community; boundaries may be personal, communal, spiritual, psychological or physical. In Christ, there is an empowerment by the gospel to recognize boundaries and prevent their destructive crossing and to care for those who have been violated. Our responsibility of leadership is to care for professional boundaries through the establishment of structures that protect them. Structures provide for support, examination, and action to ensure that leaders, staff and students act according to boundaries that help, protect and uphold the dignity, worth and safety of each individual. (Valuing Safe Communities: Statement of values)

All children and young people who come to the Learning Community have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We are committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We have a zero tolerance for harm to children and young people and are committed to acting in students' best interests and keeping them safe from harm.

The Learning Community regards its child safety responsibilities with the utmost importance and is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child

protection laws and regulations and maintaining a child safe culture.

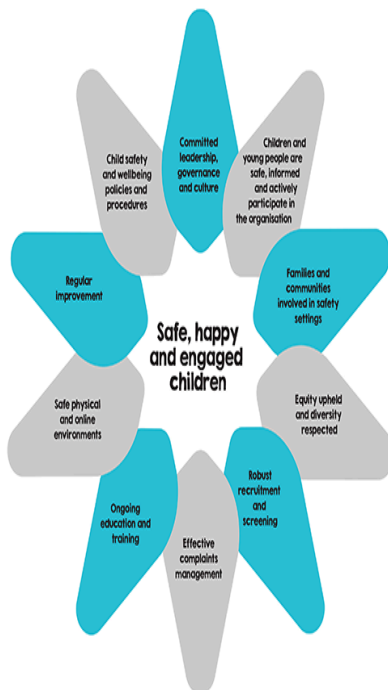
Each member of the Learning Community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role that they play individually, and collectively, to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all that they do, and every decision that they make.

Child Safe Principles

The School's commitment to child safety is based on the National Principles, which set out the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect students from harm.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

The National Principles were developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission in response to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The National Principles are comprised of 10 Principles that were informed by, but go further than, the 10 Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission. They are:



Australian Human Rights Commission, National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Scope

The Child Safe Policy promotes the safety and protection of all students at the School .

It applies to all adults in the School community, including Staff, Volunteers, Contractors (including External Education Providers) and Visitors (including parents/carers and other family members when they are on School grounds, attending a School event or in a School environment).

It applies in all School environments, including physical and online environments, and on-site and off-site School grounds (e.g. camps and excursions, and interstate and overseas travel).

Roles and Responsibilities

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. All adults in the School community have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of students.

Of particular importance to this Policy is the role of Child Safety Contact Officer. Additional roles and responsibilities are summarised in the **Procedures** subsection at the end of this Policy.

The School's Child Safety Contact Officer/s

The School has nominated one or more senior staff members as the School's Child Safety Contact Officers. They receive additional specialised training about child safety and protection issues.

They:

- can support Staff, Volunteers and Contractors making a report to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) (if required)
- are a point of contact for raising child safety concerns within the School, subsequent to reporting directly to CARL
- champion child safety within the School
- assist in coordinating responses to child safety incidents
- ensure that the School responds appropriately to students involved in child safety incidents and concerns
- provide assistance and advice to other members of the School community who receive or make a disclosure about harm to a child or young person.

Our Child Safety Contact Officer/s are:

Name	Position	Contact No.	Email Address
Principal	Senior Child Safety Officer	(08) 8391 0444	principal@stmarks.sa.edu.au
Deputy Principal	Child Safety Officer	(08) 8391 0444	rharrip@stmarks.sa.edu.au

The Senior Child Safety Contact Officer

The School has also appointed the Principal as the School's Senior Child Safety Contact Officer. They can be contacted by phone on (08) 8391 0444 or by emailing principal@stmarks.sa.edu.au.

The Senior Child Safety Contact Officer has additional child safe responsibilities, such as being a first point of contact for all child safety concerns or queries for the wider community and coordinating the School's response to child safety incidents in consultation with the Leadership team and School Board.

Policy Statement

Child Safe Codes of Conduct

The School's **Child Safe Code of Conduct** sets boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults associated with the School and students, including in physical and online environments.

We also have a **Student Code of Conduct**, which includes child safe standards of behaviour for students.

Together, we refer to these as the **Child Safe Codes of Conduct**.

The Child Safe Codes of Conduct include clear processes to report inappropriate behaviour. We publish the Child Safe Codes of Conduct on our public website so that everyone can easily find out what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable at our School and how to report inappropriate behaviour.

We also provide additional information about the Child Safe Codes of Conduct to students and families, to ensure that they know what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable and how to report inappropriate behaviour.

Children and Young People's Rights to Safety, Information and Participation

St Mark's is a child safe and child-centred organisation. We ensure that our physical and online environment is friendly and welcoming to all children and young people.

We actively seek to include students in decisions that affect them. We do this through SRC, Buddy program, letters from students and surveys as well as informal mechanisms such as class meetings and circle time.

We ensure that students know about their rights to safety, information and participation, through age-appropriate education, and by providing age-appropriate, simple, and accessible information to students about how to raise, and the School's procedures for responding to, child safety concerns.

We recognise the importance of, and have implemented specific strategies to support friendships and support from peers. We actively seek to understand what makes students feel safe in our School and regularly communicate with students about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

Parents/Carers, Families and Community Involvement at the School

The School recognises that parents and carers have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their children. We ensure that they have opportunities to participate in decisions affecting their children.

In addition, we:

- ensure that families and relevant communities (the variety of communities that are relevant to the School, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and other communities that make up our Staff and student cohorts) know about the School's operations and policies, including this Child Safe Policy and the Child Safe Codes of Conduct, record keeping practices, risk management, and complaints and investigation processes
- actively seek to include families and relevant communities in decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and learning and assessment environments

- build cultural safety at the School through partnerships with relevant communities.

Cultural Safety and Valuing Diversity in the School Community

The School values diversity and does not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:

- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families
- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
- support students with disability and their families and act to promote their participation
- support other vulnerable students and their families and act to promote their participation
- seek to recruit a workforce that reflects a diversity of cultures, abilities and identities
- ensure that all Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors have training about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, disability, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and those with particular experiences or needs
- have a physical environment that actively celebrates diverse cultures and recognises cultural difference
- commit to ensuring that our facilities promote the inclusion of students of all abilities.

We also recognise that some children and young people face additional vulnerabilities to harm, as well as additional barriers to disclosing child safety incidents or concerns. We:

- provide guidance to Staff, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors, about identifying additional vulnerabilities/barriers; and
- implement strategies for supporting students who face additional vulnerabilities/barriers to participate in the School community and for enabling them to disclose child safety incidents or concerns to the School.

Child Safe Human Resources Management

Recruitment and Screening

The School applies best practice standards to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with our students. Our practices include:

- making our commitment to child safety and wellbeing clear in recruitment advertising and documentation

- meeting the requirements of the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 (SA) by:
 - requiring all Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors at the School to have a current Working with Children Check (WWCC), be “not prohibited” from working with children, and renew their WWCC every five years, in order to work or volunteer at the School
 - being registered with the DHS Screening Unit and linking all WWCCs
 - verifying the accuracy of all WWCCs with the DHS Screening Unit, before employing or engaging a staff member, Direct Contact /Regular Volunteer or Direct Contact Contractor, and again every five years, as required by law
 - advising the DHS Screening Unit when the School becomes aware of certain information relevant to WWCCs about any staff member, Volunteer or Contractor (such as serious criminal offences, child protection information, and disciplinary/misconduct information)
- using additional selection criteria, background checking and screening processes for all Staff, and for relevant Volunteers and Contractors, that take into account child safe considerations.

Training On and Information About the Child Safe Program

As a part of St Mark's Lutheran School's induction process, all Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors, must complete our child safe induction program, which includes:

- Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (RRHAN-EC) training, provided by the Department for Education
- an induction in our child safe policies, practices and procedures.

All Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors, must also complete refresher and ongoing child safe training at least annually, and refresher RRHAN-EC training every three years.

Our child safe induction and ongoing training programs include information about:

- this Child Safe Policy
- the Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- recognising harm and identifying key indicators, including harm caused by other children and young people
- our policies and procedures for responding to and reporting (both internally and to external authorities) all child safety incidents and concerns, including mandatory reporting obligations
- our policies and procedures for information sharing and record keeping about child safety incidents and concerns
- Working with Children Checks, and other child safe human resources practices.

The School provides all Visitors to the School, including Casual Volunteers and Contractors, with information about the Child Safe Code of Conduct and how to report child safety incidents or concerns to the School and to relevant external authorities.

Ongoing Supervision, Management and Support

The School's Child Safety Contact Officers, Leadership team and/or an appointed Line Manager provide supervision and support to all Staff, Direct Contact/Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact/Regular Contractors to ensure that they comply with the School's approach to child safety and wellbeing.

Our child safe supervision and support program includes:

- immediately contacting the DHS Screening Unit when we become aware of information regarding any staff member, Volunteer or Contractor that is relevant to their WWCC (such as serious criminal offences, disciplinary information or other misconduct or child safe information)
- probationary periods for new staff members, where these are permitted by law or under an Enterprise Agreement
- annual performance reviews for all staff members
- appointing a supervising staff member to Direct Contact Volunteers/Contractors and to those Regular Volunteers/Contractors who work when students are present or expected to be present
- professional development programs for Staff that include child safe education.

Complaints and Reporting Processes

Reporting Harm or Risk of Harm

St Mark's fosters a culture that encourages everyone in the School community to raise concerns and complaints about child safety. We have:

- clear pathways for raising child safe-related complaints and concerns with the School, set out in the **Procedures** below; and
- clear procedures that all Staff, Volunteers and Contractors must follow whenever they witness, suspect or receive a complaint about a child safety incident or concern involving a student, a staff member, a Volunteer, a Contractor or the School, set out in the **Responding and Reporting Obligations (Child Safe) Policy and Procedures**.

These pathways and procedures make clear that all Mandated Notifiers at the School must report a child safety incident or concern to CARL in the first instance if it reaches the threshold for Mandatory Reporting to the Department for Child Protection (Department for Child Protection's). They also make clear that anyone can, at any time, report a child safety incident or concern directly to CARL and/or the Police.

These pathways and procedures are also summarised for students, parents/carers and other members of the School community in the **Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Involving the School or its Staff Members (Summary)** which is available on our public website.

The School's Response to Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

The School will take appropriate, prompt action in response to all child safety incidents or concerns, including:

- complaints, allegations or disclosures of harm or risk of harm
- breaches of the Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- inappropriate behaviour by Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, students, parents/carers or anyone else

whenever these are reported to the School.

The safety and wellbeing of the student/s involved in the matter will be the paramount consideration when responding to child safety incidents and concerns. The School follows the National Office of Child Safety's [Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people](#) when investigating and responding to child safety incidents and concerns.

The School's response will include:

- reporting all matters that meet the relevant thresholds externally (if not already reported) to CARL, the Police and/or the Teachers Registration Board, depending on the issues raised
- reporting all child safety incidents or concerns that occur at or involve the School or its Staff, Volunteers and Contractors to LESNW
- fully cooperating with any resulting investigation by an external agency and/or LESNW
- complying with the Department for Education's **Protective Practices, Managing Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Behaviour Guidelines** and **Managing Online Safety** guidelines

- protecting any student connected to the child safety incident or concern until it is resolved and providing ongoing support to those affected
- taking particular measures in response to child safety incidents or concerns about an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student, a student from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, a student with disability, and other vulnerable students
- sharing information with, or requesting information from, external people or agencies as permitted or required by law
- securing and retaining records of the child safety incident or concern and the School's response to it
- taking broader actions to improve child safety at the School (including systemic reviews and resulting improvements).

Child Safe Risk Management

St Mark's recognises the importance of a risk management approach to child safe and to minimising the risk of harm to children and young people in all School environments, without compromising their rights to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

We have a comprehensive **Risk Management Program** to assist in the identification, assessment and management of child safety risks in all School environments.

We identify, assess and manage child safe risks in all School environments, based on a range of factors including the nature of our School's activities, its physical and online environments and the characteristics of our student cohort.

We use this information to inform our policies, procedures and activity planning.

The School's child safe risks, and the actions that we take to minimise and manage them, are :

tasks and register checks outlined in Assurance, which assist in identification, assessment and management of child safety risks within all School environments.

Child Safe Privacy, Information Sharing and Record Keeping

The School collects, uses and discloses information about students and their families in accordance with federal and South Australian privacy laws and other relevant laws, including laws that permit the School to disclose information about child safety to external people and agencies. For information

about how the School collects, uses and discloses this information, refer to the [St Mark's Lutheran School Privacy Policy](#).

In particular, the School is committed to best practice record keeping about child safety incidents and concerns.

The School records all internal and external reports of child safety incidents and concerns, as well as any other responses by the School.

When keeping records of child safety incidents or concerns, the School maintains confidentiality and privacy for students and families in accordance with federal and South Australian privacy legislation.

Child Safe Program and Practice Review

St Mark's is committed to the continuous improvement of our child safe policies, procedures and practices. We review the Policies and Procedures that make up our Child Safe Environments Compliance Statement every 5 years (or earlier if a significant child safety incident occurs at the School or legislation changes) for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection and child safety related laws, regulations and standards.

We review the remaining Policies and Procedures in our Child Safe Program (explained in the **Procedures** below) every 5 years, or earlier if recommended.

When undertaking these reviews, the School:

- actively seeks, actions, and incorporates feedback from students, families, the wider School community, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- analyses complaints, concerns and child safety incidents that may have occurred
- communicates any adjustments or amendments to policy and practice widely throughout the School community.

On behalf of all Learning Communities, the Executive Director of LESNW has lodged a Child Safe Environments compliance statement with the Department of Human Services. It lodges further compliance statements whenever any policy included in the Child Safe Environments Compliance Statement is reviewed, updated or amended, which must occur at least every five years.

Communication

St Mark's is committed to communicating our child safety strategies, policies and procedures to the School community. We do this through the measures set out in the **Implementation** subsection below, as well as:

- make available the Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct on our School's website.
- make available the Parent Grievance Policy on our School's website.
- make available the Community Code of Conduct on our School's website. This form outlines the School's expectations of appropriate behaviour from Parents, Students and people within the wider School Community. This form is circulated to parents and completed forms are saved to students PC School file records.

Procedures

Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

If you are concerned that a child, young person or student aged 18 or over is in immediate danger, call the Police on 000.

Any person, including all Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, parents/carers and students, can at any time contact CARL if they suspect that a child or young person (aged under 18) is being or has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

You can contact CARL on 13 14 78 or [online](#) (if you are registered for online reporting). CARL is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

If you need guidance on or support when making a report, or have questions regarding child safety, contact a Child Safety Contact Officer.

Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

All Staff, Volunteers and Contractors **must** follow the **Responding and Reporting (Child Safe) Policy and Procedures**.

In particular:

- the following people are Mandated Notifiers and **must** report reasonable suspicions about harm or risk of harm to a child or young person directly to CARL (or to the Police if the child or young person is at immediate risk):

- members of School Board
- the Principal and Leadership team
- teachers, including student teachers
- all other School staff who provide services directly to students
- Direct Contact Volunteers
- Direct Contact Contractors
- a minister of religion
- a manager or supervisor of roles at the School that provide services directly to students
- **all** Staff, Volunteers and Contractors who are adults (aged 18 or over) **must**:
- report the sexual abuse of **any** child or young person by other current or former Staff, Volunteers or Contractors directly to the Police
- take steps to protect students from sexual abuse by current Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- **all** Staff, Volunteers and Contractors **must also**, after fulfilling their legal obligations to report harm or risk of harm to CARL and/or to Police as their first priority, report all child safety incidents or concerns internally to a Child Safety Contact Officer, the Principal or, if the incident or concern involves the Principal, to the Chair of the Board by emailing chair@stmarks.sa.edu.au.

Students, Parents/Carers and Community Members

Students at the School who have child safety concerns about themselves or any other child, young person or student aged 18 or over can:

- contact CARL on 13 14 78
- disclose the child safety incident or concern to a School Child Safety Contact Officer
- disclose the child safety incident or concern to any other staff member, Volunteer or Contractor. This might be done:
 - verbally
 - in writing
 - through electronic means (such as email)
 - indirectly (such as in written assignments, in artworks or in any other way)
- disclose anonymously, using the School's suggestion box/ letters to the Principal, which is located at the Front office
- contact Teachers, peers, parents..

Parents/carers, family members and other community members who have child safety concerns or who suspect that a child or young person associated with the School , or a student aged 18 or over,

is being or has been harmed or may be at risk of harm should immediately contact CARL on 13 14 78.

After contacting CARL, or if they need guidance on or support when contacting CARL, they can contact:

- the Principal, who is the School's Senior Child Safety Contact Officer, by phoning (08) 8391 0444 or emailing principal@stmarks.sa.edu.au
- if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of the Board by emailing chair@stmarks.sa.edu.au.

Any person can also contact the Principal or the Chair of the Board if they have concerns regarding the School's leadership in relation to child safety.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

Responding to and External Reporting of Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

The **Responding and Reporting Obligations (Child Safe) Policy and Procedures** sets out the procedures that the School will follow when notified of any child safety incident or concern that occurs at or involves the School or that involves a student, staff member, Volunteer, Contractor, Visitor or any other person connected to the School.

It also provides guidance for all Staff, Volunteers and Contractors on their obligations to respond to child safety incidents and concerns and to report them to relevant external authorities. These obligations include:

- their duty to protect students
- mandatory reporting to Department for Child Protection's (via CARL)
- mandatory reporting to the Police (the Failure to Report offence)
- reporting to Department for Child Protection's or the Police in other situations where a student has been or is being harmed
- reporting teacher misconduct to the Teachers Registration Board
- reporting child safety incidents or concerns that occur at or involve the School or its Staff, Volunteers and Contractors to LESNW.

Support for Students, Families and Staff Following Child Safety Incident or Disclosure

Child safety incidents or concerns can cause trauma and significantly impact on the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people, and students aged 18 or over, as well as on their families. In addition to reporting and referral to the relevant authorities, the School plays a central role in addressing this trauma and has a duty of care to ensure that students feel safe and supported at School.

The School employs a range of measures to support students affected by a child safety incident or concern, depending on the particular circumstances of the matter and of the student and their family:

- Child Safety Contact Officers may work with the student and their family to develop a student Support Plan
- support strategies that could be considered for students and/or their families might include offering or organising referrals to internal or external support, such as a School Pastoral Care Worker, bi-cultural workers and/or translators, or an external support agency and/or child advocacy organisation that specialises in supporting children and young people impacted by harm.

The School offers similar support to former students who disclose historical child safety incidents or concerns from their time at the School.

Witnessing a child safety incident or receiving a disclosure of harm or risk of harm can be a distressing experience for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors involved. The School assists impacted Staff, Volunteers and Contractors to access necessary support.

Embedding a Culture of Child Safety: Our Child Safe Program

We call the full collection of the School's child safe policies and procedures the "Child Safe Program". It is itself one of the strategies employed by St Mark's to embed a culture of child safety at the School.

The Child Safe Program relates to all aspects of child safety and protecting children, young people and students aged 18 or over from harm. It establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe environment and culture at the School. It includes:

- policies and procedures for complying with the Protective Practices, Managing Sexual Misconduct and Managing Online Safety Incidents guidelines
- Child Safe Codes of Conduct

- clear information about what is “harm” and associated key indicators of different forms of harm
- clear procedures for reporting to external agencies (including mandatory reporting to Department for Child Protection’s and reporting to the Police) which make clear that all Staff, Volunteers and Contractors must, as their first priority, fulfill their legal obligations to report harm or risk of harm to a child or young person to CARL and/or the Police
- clear procedures for reporting child safety incidents and concerns internally, and for responding to incidents or allegations of harm
- strategies to support, encourage and enable Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, parents/carers and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
- procedures for recruiting and screening members of the Leadership team, Staff, students on placement at the School, Volunteers and Contractors
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe
- strategies to support and encourage the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disability and other vulnerable students
- child safe training
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of harm or risk of harm to protect, support and assist children, young people and students aged 18 or over
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the National Principles)
- a system for continuous review and improvement.

Additional Child Safe Responsibilities at the School

School Board Senior Child Safe Responsible Officer

One member of School Board is appointed or identified as a Senior Child Safe Responsible Officer. They are responsible for ensuring that School Board prioritises, models and champions a child safe culture for LESNW-governed schools.

Executive Director of LESNW

The Executive Director of LESNW is responsible for lodging a new Child Safe Environment Compliance statement with the Department of Human Services on behalf of the School whenever

this Policy, or any other policy in the Child Safe Program, is amended (or at least every five years, whichever is earlier).

The Principal

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable, for the operational management of the School. They are responsible for taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Safe Policy and the School's Child Safe Program are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within the School.

The School Board

The School Board is responsible for approving our Child Safe Program and ensuring that the School has appropriate resources to effectively implement the National Principles, and our Child Safe Program.

The Leadership team

Each member of the School Leadership team is responsible for ensuring that appropriate resources are made available in their area of operations to allow the School's Child Safe Program to be effectively implemented within the School, and for supporting the Principal in the practical application of the School's child safe strategies, policies, procedures and work systems.

Staff

All Staff must:

- comply with the Child Safe Policy, the Child Safe Codes of Conduct and the Responding and Reporting Obligations (Child Safe) Policy and Procedures
- be familiar with the other Policies and Procedures in the Child Safe Program; and
- understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of harm and risk of harm, and Working with Children Checks.

All Staff must be aware of key indicators of harm and risk of harm, be observant, meet their legal obligations to report harm and risk of harm directly to CARL and the Police, and subsequently report all child safety incidents and concerns internally to the School.

To meet these obligations, all Staff must:

- have a current Working with Children Check and be “not prohibited” from working with children, in order to work at the School (St Mark's will verify all WWCCs in the DHS Screening Portal)
- acknowledge in writing or online/electronically that they have read and understood the Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- participate in child safe induction and ongoing training provided by the School
- follow the Policies and Procedures in the Child Safe Program
- act in accordance with the Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- identify, respond to and report child safety incidents and concerns in accordance with the Responding and Reporting Obligations (Child Safe) Policy and Procedures
- ensure that students’ views are taken seriously and their voices are heard when making decisions that affect them
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students
- comply with all relevant child safe human resources policies and procedures.

Volunteers and Contractors

All Volunteers and Contractors at the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the School environment.

To meet these obligations:

- all Volunteers and Contractors must:
 - comply with the Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct
 - understand and comply with any legal obligations that apply to them with respect to the reporting of harm and risk of harm directly to CARL and the Police
 - after making any required external reports to CARL and the Police, raise all child safety incidents and concerns that involve the School with a Child Safety Contact Officer
 - comply with all relevant child safe human resources policies and procedures
- certain Volunteers and Contractors (those who are so required by law or by the School must, as set out in the Child Safe Human Resources Management section above, have a current Working with Children Check and be “not prohibited” from working with children, in order to work or volunteer at the School (St Mark's will verify all WWCCs in the DHS Screening Portal)
- Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors (and, if required by the School, other Volunteers and Contractors) must:
 - participate in child safe induction and ongoing training provided by the School or, in the case of a Contractor, provide evidence of other training

- acknowledge in writing or online/electronically that they have read and understood the Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- be aware of key indicators of harm and risk of harm to children and young people.
- Direct Contact Contractors that are a business providing services to children and young people (including all External Education Providers) must:
 - provide evidence that they have lodged a Child Safe Environments Statement with the Department of Human Services prior to being engaged by the School
 - ensure that their personnel have a current Working with Children Check and are "not prohibited" from working with children, in order to work at the School (the School will either itself verify all WWCCs in the DHS Screening Portal, or may require the Contractor to do this and to provide the School with evidence of the WWCC status of every person engaged to provide the service).

For Contractors, the School may include these requirements in the written agreement between it and the Contractor.

Implementation

The Child Safe Policy is published on our public website.

It is provided to:

- new Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors at their induction or prior to them commencing their work at the School.
- to parents/carers on enrolment.

The School provides all Visitors to the School, including Casual Volunteers and Casual Contractors, with information about the Child Safe Policy, the Child Safe Code of Conduct and how to report child safety incidents or concerns to CARL and the Police, and subsequently to the School, through directing to the School's website or providing copies of policies from individual requests.

The School also communicates the Child Safe Policy to Staff, Volunteers, Contractors and other members of the School community through our School's website.

The School provides all students with a child-friendly version of the Child Safe Policy and the Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, found Child-Friendly Child Safe Policy (in development)., and also communicates these to students through directing to the School's website or providing copies of policies from individual requests.

Breach

St Mark's enforces the Child Safe Policy and the Child Safe Codes of Conduct. In the event of any non-compliance, we will instigate a review that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- the restriction of duties
- suspension
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement.

Definitions

Definitions of particular terms used in the Child Safe Policy can be found in **Child Safe Program Definitions**.

Of particular importance to this Policy are the following key definitions:

Term	Definition
<u>Child/Child and Young Person</u>	The term “child” and the phrase “child and young person” refer to a person who is under the age of 18.
<u>Student</u>	The term “student” refers to all students enrolled at the School, including those aged 18 and above.
<u>Harm</u>	<p>“Harm” is defined in section 17 of the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA) (Safety Act), and for the purposes of this Policy, as “physical harm or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission)”.</p> <p>It includes (but is not limited to) "harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect”.</p> <p>It does not matter how the harm occurs or by whom.</p>

Child Safety Incident or Concern

St Mark's uses the phrase, "child safety incident or concern", which includes, but goes further than, the Safety Act's definition of "harm".

Child safety incidents or concerns can take many forms. These include not only harm or risk of harm to a child or young person by their parents/carers, but also conduct by other people that can cause harm to a child or young person or to a student aged 18 or over.

We define a "child safety incident or concern" as:

- "harm", as defined in the Safety Act, to a child, a young person or a student aged 18 or over
- a child or young person being "at risk", as defined in the Safety Act
- a criminal offence against any child or young person, or against a student aged 18 or over, under the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 (SA) (Criminal Law Act)
- conduct by Staff, Volunteers and Contractors that may be "reportable conduct"
- a breach of the Child Safe Codes of Conduct.

For more information about each of these concepts, refer to the full definition of "child safety incident or concern" in the Responding and Reporting Obligations (Child Safe) Policy and Procedures.

-

Source of Obligation

- Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA), section 114
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011 (SA)

- Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Regulation 2011 (SA), regulation 36A
- Standards for Registration and Review of Registration of Schools in South Australia

Related Policies

- [Codes of Conduct \(Child Safe\) Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Responding and Reporting Obligations \(Child Safe\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Sharing Information About Students' Safety, Welfare or Wellbeing Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Working with Children Checks Policy and Procedures](#)
- [WWCC Procedures for Staff](#)
- [Risk Management \(Child Safe\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Compliance, Review and Improvement \(Child Safe\) Policies and Procedures](#)
- Complaints Handling Procedures

Related Documents

- child-friendly version of/information about the Child Safe Policy
- Parent Grievance Policy, Complaints Handling Procedures
- Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Involving the School or its Staff Members (Summary)

References

- Department of Human Services, [Guideline to Writing a Child Safe Environments Policy](#)
- National Office of Child Safety, [Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people](#)

Policy Administration

School Board reviews the Child Safe Policy at least every five years, or earlier if required (such as due to changes in legislation), in light of experience, the effectiveness of its procedures and the publication of relevant research.

A new Child Safe Environments compliance statement is lodged with the Department of Human Services each time this Policy is reviewed and updated.

Version	Date Implemented	Proposed review	Author/ Responsible Person
New version	20 June 2022	June 2024	CompliSpace/Principal & School Board
1	TBA - multiple program updates	February 2025	LESNW