



# Engaging Families in Child Safety Policy

## Preamble

This Engaging Families in Child Safety Policy has been developed in the light of the Mission and Values Statement of Whitefriars College, in which we seek to live by and teach those values which the Catholic Church upholds and to celebrate our Catholic identity in the Carmelite Tradition. In line with the College vision “to educate and develop gentle men in the Catholic Carmelite tradition of contemplation, community, and service”, the College seeks staff who will be supportive of our faith community and be involved in the celebration of that community. It promotes a spirit of mutual trust and respects the gifts of others. It honours the contributions which each individual makes to the enrichment of the community. The College prioritises child safety and wellbeing, and a diverse community in which the contribution of each individual is encouraged, valued and respected. Whitefriars aims to develop and maintain a staff that is committed to the ethos of the College, professional in its approach to learning and teaching and diverse in the range and scope of the skills and experiences it provides. Whitefriars College acknowledges the Wurundjeri People, the Traditional Custodians of the land on which the College resides, and pays respect to Wurundjeri Elders past and present as well as future generations.

## Purpose

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.

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the strategies and actions that we have in place at Whitefriars 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 religious staff. It should be read in conjunction with related school policies and procedures, including:

1. Staff, Volunteers and Contractors Student Safety Code of Conduct
2. Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
3. Parents/Guardians Concerns and Resolution Policy

## Principles

At Whitefriars 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 have access to information relating to child safety and wellbeing.
- Families, carers and other members of the school community 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**

Whitefriars 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 the College.

#### Strategies / actions used by school leadership

The Principal, the College Board and school leaders at Whitefriars 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 this 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

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

School staff, volunteers, contractors and religious staff at Whitefriars College also have a responsibility to support the College Board 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



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- ensuring they act in accordance with the principles set out in this Policy when managing issues relating to child safety and wellbeing

#### **External references**

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

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

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

[Horizons of Hope: Wellbeing](#)

**Approved by:** College Leadership Team / Board

**Date:** 22/06/2022

**Last update:**

**Next review date:** 22/06/2024