



COMMITMENT STATEMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

The Statement is intended to provide the central focus for child safety at St Mary of the Cross Catholic Primary School in Point Cook, built around a unified understanding of the moral imperative and an overarching commitment that underpins our drive for improvement and cultural change.

St Mary of the Cross Catholic Primary School holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as its central and fundamental responsibility. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

St Mary of the Cross Catholic Primary School has a commitment for the protection of children. It is resolutely committed to ensuring that all those engaged in education at our school, promote the inherent dignity of children and young people and their fundamental right to be respected and nurtured in a safe school environment. This is particularly so for the most vulnerable children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

St Mary of the Cross Catholic Primary School has a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create a nurturing school environment where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe.

When allegations of abuse concerning children and young people are raised, St Mary of the Cross Catholic Primary School will take prompt action to have these appropriately referred and investigated. We will strive for continual improvement that is responsive to emerging thinking, evidence and practice, so as to eliminate the possibility of abuse occurring in the first place.

Creating a child-safe school environment is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by the school, families and our communities. It is marked by collaboration, vigilance and proactive approaches across policies, procedures, curriculum and practices.

Every person involved in St Mary of the Cross Catholic Primary School has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all we do and every decision we make.

St Mary of the Cross Catholic Primary School commits to providing a safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people in our school through:

Upholding the primacy of the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children and young people will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a safe and nurturing culture, our school will actively and continually develop and review all policies, processes and practices, informed by emerging thinking and evidence.

Empowering families, children, young people and staff to have a voice and raise concerns.

We will empower families, children, young people and staff to have a voice and raise concerns.

Our school, in partnership with families, will ensure children and young people, are engaged and active participants in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on their safety. This means that the views of staff, children, young people and families are taken seriously and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner.

Children and young people will also be provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.

Implementing rigorous risk-management and employment practices

We will implement rigorous risk-management and employment practices.

We will systematically and continually identify and assess risks to child safety and will eliminate (where possible) or reduce all potential sources of harm.

Effective risk management will be embedded in school life through effective, transparent and well-understood policies, procedures and practices.

We will employ highly competent and professional staff that are formed and challenged to maintain the safety of all students.

The high quality of staff appointments will be upheld through rigorous employment and staff review processes and practices.

We will stay abreast of current legislation and will meet our legislative duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care, including the Victorian Child Safe Standards (Victorian Government 2016), mandatory reporting, grooming, failure to disclose and failure to protect requirements.

References:

Congregation for Catholic Education 1997
The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, Vatican, Vatican City,
State of Victoria, Department of Education and Training 2016, Child Safe Standards –
Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools Ministerial Order No. 870
Education & Training Reform Act 2006, Gazette No. S2,