

St Paul Apostle North is a school which operates with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and is owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS).

Introduction

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.

At St Paul Apostle North, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our 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 (CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety).

The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: this is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school
([The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium](#), n. 9).

At St Paul Apostle North, our Child Safety Policies are underpinned by our Catholic Faith with the belief that we are all children of God (1 John 3) and therefore have an inherent value and dignity. Our school's vision, mission, school values and rules promote respect and safety for all.

"We aim to create an environment that is inclusive of diversity, promotes gender equality and respectful relationships for all members of our school community" (St Paul Apostle North Mission Statement).

Our school values of Respect, Responsibility and Compassion are actively promoted to ensure an inclusive, safe environment for all students, regardless of religion, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexuality or any other factor. Our unique qualities and differences are celebrated as something that enriches our community. Our staff handbook which includes our Commitment as Educators at St Paul Apostle North states:

"We are committed to building a school environment that promotes the Child Safety Standards in which we build positive relationships with our students so they feel safe, respected, nurtured and engaged with a sense of belonging" (St Paul Apostle North Commitment as Educators).

Purpose

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

1. Child Safety Framework

2. Child Safety Code of Conduct
3. Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Principles

At St Paul Apostle North, 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 should have access to information relating to child safety and wellbeing.
- Families, carers and other members of the school community must 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

St Paul Apostle North 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 St Paul Apostle North.

We implement the following strategies and actions to ensure that we are able to meet this commitment.

Strategies / actions used by school leadership

The Principal, the school governing authority and school leaders at St Paul Apostle North 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 the St Paul Apostle North Engaging Families in Child Safety 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 including parent information nights and online workshops
- 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
- using the online platform Seesaw to maintain communication to all parents, including but not limited to, child safety and wellbeing issues, educational information, school events etc.
- using the schools social media platforms to communicate about child safety and wellbeing issues and initiatives and promote the school values
- creating safe spaces for parents to voice concerns and ensure they are followed up on

Strategies / actions used by school staff, volunteers, contractors and clergy

School staff, volunteers, contractors and clergy at St Paul Apostle North also have a responsibility to support the school governing authority 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
- ensuring they act in accordance with the principles set out in this Policy when managing issues relating to child safety and wellbeing
- using the online platform Seesaw to communicate with parents and carers in a respectful manner

External references

Related Resources – Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools

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

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

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

[Horizons of Hope: Wellbeing](#)

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed in consultation with members of the wider community as part of the school's two-year review cycle of its child safety practices.
- Update of the policy will occur if any new requirements come to hand.

Responsible director	Director, Learning and Regional Services
Policy owner	General Manager, Student Wellbeing
Approving body/individual	MACS Board
Approval date	13 April 2022
Risk rating	High
Date of next review	April 2023

POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION	
Related documents	
Superseded documents	
New policy	New