



Scope	All School community members - staff, students, parents / guardians, School Board members.
Responsible Officer	Principal
Contact Officer	Principal
Authorisation	School Board
Date Introduced	July 2011
Next Review Date	Sep 2022 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or as required by legislation.
Relevant Legislation or Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) • Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) • Ministerial Order 870 — Child Safe Standards — Managing the risk of child abuse in schools
Linked SPLS Policy	Child Safe Code of Conduct, Staff Employment Policy, Staff and Student Professional Boundaries, Working With Children Check Policy
Linked SPLS Procedure / Guidelines / Plans	Child Safe Standards Action Plan, Four Critical Actions- Responding to Incidents Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse, Four Critical Actions- Responding to Student Sexual Offending, Making a Child Safe Report, Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse Procedures
Linked SPLS Forms / Checklists / Registers	Child Safe Officers, Child Safe Posters, Child Safety Risk Register, Responding to Suspected Child Abuse Template, Responding to Suspected Students Sexual Offending Template, Working With Children Check Card Register
Key Words	Child Safe, Child Safe Program, Abuse, Mandatory Reporting, Failure to Disclose, Failure to Protect, Grooming
Destination / Storage	School Website, Shared Google Drive, Staff Room
Communication	Staff induction, cyclical staff training/meetings

Revision / Modification			
Date	Version	Summary	Policy/Procedure
01/07/2011	1.0	New Policy	Child Protection Policy
19/3/2020	1.2	Annual Review	Child Protection Policy
10/06/2021	2.0	Name change of Child Protection Program to Child Safe Program	Child Safe Policy / Child Safe Procedures



POLICY STATEMENT

1. RATIONALE / PURPOSE

The Child Safe Program in place at St Peter's Lutheran School 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 recognise 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 School 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)

St Peter's Lutheran School has developed the following Child Safe Policy. This policy is an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse.

The policy forms the foundation of the School's procedures, practices, decision-making processes and ultimately the School's culture with respect to child safety. It is designed to be communicated through our public website, as well as through other mediums such as newsletters, our annual report and in induction and welcome packs for School Board members, staff and volunteers.

The School's Child Safe Policy has been approved and endorsed by the School's School Board and is regularly reviewed by the Board.

2. DEFINITIONS

Child abuse - Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving:
 - a sexual offence; or
 - grooming; and
- the infliction, on a child, of:
 - physical violence; or serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- serious neglect of a child.

Child Safe - encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

School - means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, homestays, and other school activities or events)

Staff - means an individual working in a school environment who is employed by the St Peter's Lutheran School.

Direct Contact Volunteers - The working with Children Act 2005 (Vic) defines 'direct contact' as any contact between a person and a child (aged under 18) that involves:

Child Safe Policy

St Peter's Lutheran School



- physical contact; or
- face to face contact; or
- contact by post or other written communication; or
- contact by telephone or other oral communication; or
- contact by email or other electronic communication.

Examples of Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include volunteers involved in School camps and excursions, coaching sporting teams or assisting in learning activities.

3. POLICY

The Child Safe Policy provides the framework for:

- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child safe within the School;
- the creation of a positive and robust child safe culture;
- the promotion and open discussion of child safe issues within the School, and;
- compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child safe in Victoria.

3.1 Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence. St Peter's Lutheran School is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Safe Program designed to keep children safe.

At St Peter's Lutheran School we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The School regards its child safe responsibilities with the utmost importance, and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child safe laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture.

3.2 Child Safe Values & Principles

The School's commitment to child safety is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse:

1. All children have the right to be safe.
2. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
3. The views of the child and a child's privacy must be respected.
4. Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in our Child Safe Code of Conduct and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.
5. The safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture.
6. Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within our School community.
7. Procedures are in place to screen all Staff, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers, who have direct contact with children. (There may be some specific circumstances where a third-party contractor may not be screened by the School. If this occurs specific processes will be put in place to ensure that the un-screened contractor will not be left unsupervised in the School grounds at any time.)
8. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
9. Child safe training is mandatory for all School Board members, staff and volunteers, on an annual basis.
10. Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of the School community.

Child Safe Policy

St Peter's Lutheran School



11. All children, especially those who are vulnerable for whatever reason, have a right to care and support.
12. Children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
13. Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.
14. Direct Contact Volunteers are those volunteers who are involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and could potentially have direct contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

3.3 Child Safe Program

St Peter's Lutheran School is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Safe Program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. We adopt a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors including the nature of our School's activities, physical and online environments and the characteristics of the student body.

Our Child Safe Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse. It includes:

- clear information as to what constitutes child abuse and associated key risk indicators;
- clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse, including Mandatory Reporting;
- strategies to support, encourage and enable Staff, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, Parents/Guardians and Students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters;
- procedures for recruiting and screening School Board members, staff and volunteers;
- procedures for reporting reportable conduct and/or misconduct;
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe;
- policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities;
- a child safe training program;
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist children;
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality;
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards); and
- a system for continuous improvement and review.

As a part of St Peter's Lutheran School's induction process, all staff and Direct Contact Volunteers are required to complete a selection of training modules on the content of our Child Safe Program.

All Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and School Board members are provided with additional, ongoing child protection training at least annually.

Staff, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers are supported and supervised by the School's Child Safety Officers to ensure that they are compliant with the School's approach to child protection.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. At St Peter's Lutheran School all members of the School Board and staff, as well as volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:



4.1 School Board

Each member of the School Board is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to allow the School's Child Safe Policy and the Child Safe Program to be effectively implemented within the School and are responsible for holding the Principal and Leadership team accountable for effective implementation.

4.2 Principal

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable 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.

4.3 School's Child Safe Officers

A number of senior staff members are nominated as the School's Child Safe Officers. Our Child Safe Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child safe issues. They are the first point of contact for raising child safe concerns within the School. They are also responsible for championing child safe within the School and assisting in coordinating responses to child safe incidents.

4.4 Staff Members

All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Safe Officers.

4.5 Volunteers

All Volunteers, as defined in this policy, are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Code of Conduct and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Safe Officers.

4.6 Direct Contact Volunteers

All Direct Contact Volunteers, as defined in this policy, are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safe Policy, our Child Safe Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Safe Officers.

4.7 Indirect Contact Volunteers

Indirect Contact Volunteers (or 'Indirect Volunteers') are those volunteers who are involved in providing support and services whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students.

All Indirect Volunteers are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

All Indirect Volunteers are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Examples of Indirect Contact Volunteer activities may include assisting with School administrative functions.



4.8 Third Party Contractors

All Third Party Contractors (service providers) engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment. Third Party Contractors include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches and School cleaners.

This also includes music teachers and other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the School, but have an agreement with the School to use the School's facilities.

The School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the service provider.

4.9 Direct Contact Contractors

Direct Contact Contractors are:

- those who have direct contact with students during the normal course of their work;
- those who may be in a position to establish a relationship of trust with a student notwithstanding that unsupervised access to students would be rare (for example full-time maintenance personnel); and
- any contractors whom a school is legally required to screen.

All service providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be appropriately screened and to be familiar with our Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Safe Officers.

The School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the service provider.

4.10 Indirect Contact Contractors

Indirect Contact Contractors are those contractors who do not meet the definition of "Direct Contact Contractor".

Refer to Third Party Contractors' responsibilities above.

All service providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Program.

The School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the service provider.

4.11 External Education Providers

An External Education Provider is any organisation that the School has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the School.

The delivery of such a course may take place on School premises or elsewhere.

All External Education Providers engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

All External Education Providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Program.



St Peter's Lutheran School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Reporting Child Safe Concerns

Our Child Safe Program provides detailed guidance for members of the School Board, staff and volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our School's nominated Child Safe Officers. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Students or parents/guardians who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse or grooming are asked to report concerns to one of our School's nominated Child Safe Officers.

Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, and other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse or grooming are asked to contact the School's Senior Child Safe Officer, Mr Tim Reimann, by phoning 03 538901626 or emailing principal@spls.vic.edu.au.

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

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000