

## Child Safe Standard 2

**“Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture”**

Rooted in the Gospel and the teachings of the Church, MACS Catholic schools uphold the sacred dignity of every child as created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). This belief places Catholic educators in a privileged and profound position to protect and nurture the most vulnerable.

### What are leaders and staff responsible for?

Creating a child safe culture is everyone's responsibility but is guided by the top down. This standard requires schools to ensure:

- **Leadership Commitment:** Leaders promote as a core value. Clear expectation, everyday practice.
- **Clear Policies:** Documents guide and create accountability at all levels. They are accessible and understood.
- **Culture of Reporting and Accountability:** Everyone is comfortable to speak up and share concerns. Staff understand their responsibilities, and this is regularly reviewed.

***“Whenever a child or vulnerable person is safe, there you serve and honor Christ”***

Pope Francis, 25 March 2025

### The Impact

When staff across a whole school environment model a child safe culture we can observe the following outcomes:

- Child safety becomes part of **everyday thinking and actions**
- **Early** identification and prevention of harm
- Shared **responsibilities and accountability**
- Children thrive academically, socially and spiritually as they feel **safe and protected**.



## What Schools Can Do

- **Public Commitment:** clearly display a zero tolerance to child abuse at your school, ensure this is visible
- **Model Behaviour:** Starting at leadership level that all staff should adopt
- **Empower staff:** Enable staff at ALL levels to speak up and contribute to discussions and feedback on child safety no matter their position. Reassure staff leadership will support them in this and ensure you do what you say you will do.
- **Clearly define expectations:** What legal obligations are required and expectations on how to behave
- **Assign Responsibility:** Assign Child Safety Officers within your school. Be realistic about what you can achieve and assign to all staffing levels who have a genuine interest in participating
- **Schedule time** in advance to discuss child safety, consider making it an ongoing agenda item
- **Ongoing Training:** Ensure that in yearly planning, time for child safety related training is accounted for.

### Still have questions about Child Safe Standard 2?

Check out the frequently asked questions section on pages 3 – 4 or visit the MACS Care microsite for comprehensive guidance.

### Need further assistance?

Email the Child Safety Team at MACS: [childsafety@macs.vic.edu.au](mailto:childsafety@macs.vic.edu.au)

## Reflect and Grow: School Staff

- Do we use **Child Link**? How might we use Child Link to increase our information sharing to support child safety and wellbeing
- Is there a thorough **induction process** for new staff at your school? Is this easily accessible in practice?
- Have all staff completed **annual mandatory reporting training**? How is this recorded and tracked?
- Are teachers comfortable **identifying** potential indicators of harm?



## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is our Child Safety Policy?

- It explains how we keep children safe, outlines responsibilities, and provides guidance for responding to concerns. It is a document intended to be available to staff, students and their families.

### What is the Code of Conduct?

- The Code of Conduct sets clear expectations for behaviour with children. All staff, volunteers and contractors must follow it.

### What should I do if I have a concern about a child's safety?

- Depending on the situation, the advice may vary.
- As a starting point, it is recommended you review the PROTECT Four Critical Actions for a step-by-step process.
- You should discuss your concerns as soon you are able to with your line manager.
- Never ignore or delay your concern.
- If you are a school staff member, you may be required to comply with Mandatory Reporting legislative requirements and therefore must ensure you take steps to meet your obligations.
- Remember to document your actions.

### How do we make sure all staff members understand these standards and their obligations under CSS2?

- Through regular training, clear communication and making policies and procedures easy to access.

### Why is leadership commitment so important?

- When leaders create an environment that enable students and staff to feel they supported, contribute to and learn about child safe practices, it sets the tone for the entire school community. This contributes to creating an overall positive child safe culture.

### How do we ensure volunteers and contractors understand our child safety expectations?

- Every volunteer and contractor should complete an induction before starting that covers child safety requirements. This will include an overview of the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Code of Conduct and adherence to reporting obligations.
- School's must ensure a valid Working with Children's check is completed prior to engagement with children
- Volunteers and contractors should sign the relevant documents pertaining to their requirements
- Prior to engagement, school's must ensure a valid Working with Children's check is held



### I don't know where to start with building on CSS2 within our school:

- A good place to start is the MACS Care dedicated microsite, which can be accessed through CEVN.
- Several pre-populated templates have been created to assist you on this journey.
- Consider making the Child Safe Standards an agenda item at your team meetings.

### What is the Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS)?

- CISS is a Victorian government initiative that allows authorised organisations (known as Information Sharing Entities/ISEs) to share confidential information about children, young people and families to support their wellbeing and safety. This is to promote increased protection for child safety and wellbeing and enable collaboration between key services. Consent is not required. The threshold requires you to believe it is necessary to promote wellbeing or safety only.
- FVISS also enables ISEs to share and request information related to assessing or managing family violence risk with the view to promote the safety of victims and/or keep perpetrators in view and accountable. Consent is also not required to make FVISS requests.

### What is Child Link and how can my school access it?

- Child Link is a digital tool in Victoria that provides authorised professions with crucial, limited information about a child to improve their wellbeing and safety. It is intended to promote better collaboration and informed decision making across early childhood, education and other government services. It shows details such as child's participation in key services, siblings, Child Protection Orders and other information that may assist professionals to provide timely support.
- To become a Child Link school/authorised Child Link user, follow the instructions via [Child Link | vic.gov.au](#). If you require assistance with setting up your access, please reach out to the Child Safety team via [childsafety@macs.vic.edu.au](mailto:childsafety@macs.vic.edu.au).

### Additional Resources:

- [Code of Conduct for MACS staff](#)
- [PROTECT Four Critical Actions](#)
- [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#)

