MACS CARE

Parent/Carer Newsletter 7

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools

Working together for Child Safety

Child Safe Standard 7

''Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.''

As Catholic educators, we have a moral, mission-driven and legal responsibility to uphold and actively promote the wellbeing and safety of every student entrusted in our care. Our commitment to the protection of students includes ensuring that children, families and community members can raise complaints and concerns safely, are listened to respectfully, and understand how to access child-focused complaint processes that prioritise children's voices and wellbeing. Our Catholic communities uphold clear, accessible and child-centred policies and procedures for responding to complaints and concerns, supporting staff and volunteers to act promptly, lawfully and with integrity so that child safety and wellbeing are central to every response.

This newsletter series provides an overview of what the Child Safe Standards are, how they are designed to help keep children and young people safe and what schools governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) are doing to prioritise and achieve this.

Why is it important that complaints and concerns are child-focused?

Children are safest when they know that adults will **listen** to them, take their concerns **seriously**, and act in **their best interests**.

When schools have clear and child-focused processes for handling complaints and concerns, children and families are **more likely to speak up early**.

This helps schools respond **quickly**, provide **appropriate** support, and **prevent** harm.

Child-focused processes also **promote fairness, transparency, and trust**, ensuring that concerns are addressed respectfully and with care for everyone involved.

Child Safe Standard 7

Child Safe Standard 7 reminds us that children and young people have the right to be heard, listened to, and responded to with care and justice. As scripture tells us:

"Learn to do good; seek justice" (Isaiah 1:17)

This teaches us that safeguarding children is not only about protection, but about acting justly when concerns are raised. It calls us to listen attentively, respond wisely, and place the dignity and wellbeing of children at the center of our actions.

By ensuring that complaints and concerns are handled through clear, accessible, and childfocused processes, Child Safe Standard 7 supports a school culture where children feel safe to speak up, families feel confident to raise concerns, and issues are addressed promptly and fairly, strengthening trust across the whole school community.

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What does this look like in a school environment?

- **Clear and accessible policies and processes**: We provide simple, child-friendly and family-friendly ways to raise concerns or make complaints, including clear information about who to contact and what to expect.
- **Listening and taking concerns seriously**: All concerns raised by children, parents, carers, staff, or community members are treated with respect and care.
- **Timely and thoughtful responses**: Concerns are responded to promptly and thoroughly, with appropriate action taken to support safety and wellbeing.
- **Appropriate reporting and cooperation**: Where required, concerns are reported to relevant authorities, and the school cooperates fully to ensure children are protected.

How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

Child Safe Standard 7 works best when schools and families partner together to support children's safety and wellbeing. Families can help by:

- **Encouraging children to speak up**: Let your child know they can talk to you or a trusted adult at school if something doesn't feel right.
- **Knowing how to raise concerns**: Get familiar with the school's complaints and concerns policy and processes and who to contact if needed.
- **Sharing concerns early**: If you notice changes in your child or have a worry, raising it early helps the school respond quickly and appropriately.
- **Working in partnership**: Engage openly and respectfully with the school, knowing that listening, fairness, and child wellbeing guide how concerns are managed.



Want to know more?

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about how we're supporting child safety, please get in touch.

More information on the Child Safe Standards can be found via the Social Services Regulator website.

Check out these additional resources below to learn more:

The Australian Human Rights Commission offers practical guides, resources and information on how to develop, review and maintain Child Safe organisations: AHRC: Child Safe Organisation Resources

The Federal Government has a National Office for Child Safety; National Principle 6 Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused reflects Child Safe Standard 7.

Resources regarding National Principle 6 can be found here: National Office for Child Safety

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