



Child Safe Standard 5

"Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice."

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 children and young people is grounded in fairness, inclusion, and respect for diversity, ensuring every child is treated with dignity and care. Our Catholic communities strive to create welcoming and inclusive environments where diversity is honoured, equity is embedded, and the unique needs of every child and young person are respected.

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 school governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) are doing to prioritise and achieve this.

Overview of Child Safe Standard 5:

To be aligned, schools must support the following:

- Families participate in decisions affecting their child
- The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
- Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and practices.
- Families, carers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.

The Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards are a set of guidelines that help organisations create safe environments for children and young people.

They make sure that children are protected from harm, listened to, and respected. These standards require organisations to have strong leadership, clear policies, and a culture that puts children first.

As a parent or carer, you can expect organisations to involve families, empower children, train staff properly, and respond to concerns quickly and respectfully.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

(Galatians 3:28)

How do our schools ensure every child is treated fairly and their unique needs are respected?

- In our schools, we believe that every child has the right to be treated fairly, included, and supported according to their individual needs and background. These three principles are part of **Child Safe Standard 5**, which focuses on equity and diversity.
- **Equity** is about fairness, recognising that children may need different levels of support to participate fully in learning, activities, and school life.
- **Inclusion** means creating environments where all children, regardless of culture, ability, language, or background, feel valued, respected, and welcomed.
- **Respect for diversity** is about honouring and celebrating the unique identity of every child, ensuring that differences are recognised as strengths and that everyone's rights and dignity are upheld.

How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

Child Safe Standard 5 is about making sure schools, families, carers and the wider community work together to keep children safe. Here are some simple ways families can help:

- **Talk about inclusion and fairness:** Discuss diversity, equity, and respect with your child, and encourage them to appreciate differences in others.
- **Share insights about your child:** Let staff know if your child has specific needs or cultural practices that should be considered in school activities.
- **Participate in school programs and events:** Support initiatives that celebrate diversity and inclusion, such as cultural festivals, learning programs, or wellbeing initiatives.
- **Provide feedback:** Take part in surveys or discussions about school policies and practices, ensuring the school considers diverse perspectives.
- **Model respect and inclusion:** Demonstrate equitable, respectful, and inclusive behaviour at home and in community activities, children learn these values through example.



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 [Commission for Children and Young People \(CCYP\) website](#).

Check out these additional resources from below to learn more:

National Catholic Education Commission (NCEC) Resource Centre: [Explore NCEC Resource Centre \(inclusive education & wellbeing\)](#)

Catholic School Parents Australia (CSPA): [Visit Catholic School Parents Australia \(family support & engagement\)](#)

Parents & Families - Catholic School Parents: [Family Resources for Supporting Diverse Learning \(Catholic School Parents ACT/NSW\)](#)

Australian Catholics Magazine & Education Hub: [Read Australian Catholics \(family & faith resources\)](#)

Inclusive School Communities Toolkit (Australian education resource): [Access Inclusive School Communities Toolkit \(parent & school collaboration\)](#)

