MACS CARE

# Parent/Carer Newsletter 8

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools

**Working together for Child Safety**

# Child Safe Standard 8

**"Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training."**

As Catholic educators, we have a moral, mission-driven, and legal responsibility to ensure the safety and wellbeing of every student entrusted to our care.

Our commitment to child safety includes equipping all staff and volunteers with the knowledge, skills, and awareness they need to recognise, prevent, and respond to risks of harm. Through ongoing education and training, our school communities foster a culture where safety is central, children's voices are valued, and staff feel confident and capable in promoting wellbeing.

Catholic schools maintain clear policies, procedures, and professional learning programs to support staff and volunteers in their child-safe roles. By embedding child safety knowledge and skills across every aspect of school life, we ensure that children are protected, supported, and nurtured in a safe environment.

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

## Overview of the Child Safe Standards:

The Victorian Child Safe Standards are a set of 11 minimum requirements that all organisations working with children must adhere to.

These standards are designed to:

- Promote the participation and empowerment of children, young people and their families
- Prevent harm and abuse of children and young people
- Ensure child safety is a shared responsibility
- Support the wellbeing of all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children with disabilities

These standards apply to all school staff, volunteers, contractors, and anyone working with children in schools.

***Child Safe Standard 8*** *reminds us that children are safest when the adults around them have the right knowledge, skills, and awareness to protect them. As scripture says, "Those with knowledge grow in strength" (Proverbs 24:5). This means that keeping children safe isn't just about having rules or policies, it's about making sure all staff and volunteers receive ongoing training and support. When adults are well-informed and prepared, they can spot risks early, respond appropriately to concerns, and create learning environments where children feel safe, supported, and valued.*

## Why is it important that staff and volunteers are trained in child safety?

Children are safest when the adults around them know how to recognise risks, respond to concerns, and act in ways that protect their wellbeing. Ongoing training and professional learning help staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities, stay up to date with best practices, and feel confident in keeping children safe. When schools have well-trained staff, they can respond quickly to any concerns, prevent harm before it happens, and build trust with children and families.



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## Spotlight on Child Safe Standard 8

***"Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills andawareness to keepchildren and young people safe through ongoing education and training."***

**Child Safe Standard 8** reminds us that keeping children safe depends on adults having the right knowledge, skills, and awareness. Training and ongoing learning help staff and volunteers understand how to recognise risks, respond to concerns, and create safe, supportive environments. When adults are well-prepared, children feel protected, listened to, and valued, and the whole school community grows stronger in keeping safety at the centre of everything we do.

## What does this look like?

- **Clear and accessible 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 8 works best when schools, families, and staff work together to ensure children's safety. Families can help by:

- **Supporting learning at home**: Encourage children to talk about their day, their feelings, and any concerns they may have.
- **Understanding school training initiatives**: Ask about the professional learning programs staff undertake and how they support child safety.
- **Reinforcing safety skills**: Discuss safety and wellbeing practices with your child, helping them recognise trusted adults and safe behaviours.
- **Collaborating with the school**: Engage respectfully with staff, recognising that ongoing training strengthens the school's ability to protect children.

## 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

**Check outthese 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; resources on training, education, and implementing child-safe practices under National Principles can be found here:
National Office for Child Safety

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