Child Safe Standard 3

'Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously."

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 is enabled in nurturing, respectful and safe communities where the uniqueness and sacred dignity of every young person are celebrated, and they can flourish in their learning and development.

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 3:

To be aligned, schools much support the following:

- Children are informed about all their rights, including safety, information and participation
- The importance of friendship is recognized and support from peers is encouraged
- Where relevant to setting or context, young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs in an age-appropriate way
- Staff are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision making and raise their concerns
- Organisations have strategies to develop a culture that facilities participation and are responsive to input from children and young people.

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.

This standard focuses on empowering children and young people by ensuring they are informed, respected, and actively involved in decisions that affect them. This participation helps build a school culture that is safe for them and values their voice.

Working together for Child Safety

What does this look like in a school environment?

- **Creating Opportunities for Student Voice:** We create formal structures such as student councils and leadership programs, but we also include fewer formal opportunities so all students, especially the most vulnerable, can have their voice heard.

- **Acting on Student Feedback:** We listen deeply to what students are telling us and we respond to concerns, suggestions and ideas. This includes making sure students are aware when we have acted on their feedback.

- **Building Staff Capacity:** Our staff receive professional learning, so they understand the importance and benefits of listening to and responding to, student voice. This also includes training for staff regarding how to incorporate student voice, agency and empowerment in their daily interactions and decision making.

How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved!

- **Listen and talk often:** Encourage your child to share their thoughts and feelings. Let them know it's always ok to speak up.
- **Talk about rights and safety:** Help your child understand that everyone deserves to feel safe and respected.
- **Be a role model:** Show kindness, respect, and inclusion in everyday life, children learn from what they see.
- **Stay connected with the school:** Take part in conversations or surveys about student wellbeing and safety.
- **Support student voice:** Encourage your child to get involved in school activities where their ideas can make a difference.

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](#).

Working together for Child Safety