



## Child Protection and Safety Policy

Sacred Heart Primary School, Yarrowonga is a CHILD SAFE SCHOOL. This means that we have in place a set of policies and procedures that promote keeping the students in our care as safe as we possibly can.

The key elements of our Child Safe Policy are set out below:

### Purpose and Rationale

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the whole school community of Sacred Heart Primary School leaders, staff, volunteers, students, their families, to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and procedures developed to keep everyone safe from harm, including all forms of abuse.

### Commitment to Child Safety

All students enrolled, and any child visiting, have a right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety.

### Children's Rights to Child Safety

The staff and volunteers of Sacred Heart Primary School encourage students to express their views.

We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them. We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us.

### Valuing Diversity and Inclusion

We value and celebrate diversity, especially cultural diversity, and we do not tolerate discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students and their families;
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment from culturally and/or linguistically; and
- promote the personal safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability and diverse backgrounds and their families and make them feel welcome and part of all aspects of school life.



## **Recruiting staff and volunteers**

Sacred Heart Primary School will apply the most thorough and rigorous standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and require police checks and Working with Children Checks (WWCC) for all staff and volunteers. All volunteers that have direct contact with children are required to sign a code of conduct and have a current WWCC. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements for staff and volunteer positions.

## **Supporting Staff and Volunteers**

Sacred Heart Primary School provides support and supervision to all staff and volunteers so people feel valued, respected, affirmed in their work and fairly treated. We have a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

## **Reporting a Child Safety Concern or Complaint**

Our school records any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Code of Conduct, and store the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements. Our complaints and disclosure processes are outlined and detailed in the following policies and procedures:

- Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement (CoSSI);
- Child Safe Policy;
- Child Protection – Mandatory Reporting;
- Child Protection – Failure to Disclose Policy;
- Child Protection – Failure to Protect Policy;
- Child Protection – Working with Children;
- Sacred Heart Primary School Pastoral Wellbeing; and
- Catholic Education Sandhurst Information for schools – Child Safe Organisations.

The Principal of Sacred Heart Primary and the Leadership team have been appointed as Child Safety Officers with specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or students in relation to Child Safety.

## **Risk Management**

Risk management is an approach that minimises the potential for child abuse or harm to occur. Our Risk Management Plan outlines and details all aspects of risk across our whole school environment (on site and off site school activities) with specific activity risk assessments. In addition to our general Occupational Health and Safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse and harm to our students.

## **Policy Review**

This policy is reviewed every three years and we undertake to seek feedback from students, parents, carers, staff and volunteer.