



CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING

Policy

“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but Him who sent me.” Mark 9:37

1. INTRODUCTION

As a Religious Institute school, Our Lady of Sion College is conducted in accordance with the teachings of the Catholic Church as interpreted by the Archbishop of Melbourne. At Our Lady of Sion College, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of the College. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel (CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety).

The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ’s teaching: this is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school (The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, n.9).

The College also maintains a strong commitment to the charism and educational mission of the Sisters of Our Lady of Sion. This charism enlivens and guides all our practices, structures and relationships and is critical to the realisation of the mission of the College.

Our Lady of Sion College also recognises the importance of applying additional measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all vulnerable children and young people under its care. Subsequently, the College will assess child safety and wellbeing arrangements and implement additional measures to protect vulnerable children and young people. This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (the Policy) is structured and guided by Ministerial Order 1359 Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools (Ministerial Order 1359) and the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

2. PURPOSE

This Policy sets out Our Lady of Sion College’s commitment, strategies, practices and expectations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in our College and to enable the College Board, Principal and all other Our Lady of Sion College staff, including contractors, and those involved in religious ministry and volunteers (Staff) to effectively manage the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people under our care.

3. SCOPE

This Policy applies to Our Lady of Sion College, and to all Staff.

4. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Our Lady of Sion College is committed to creating a child safe community grounded in our Catholic and Sionian tradition. We uphold the dignity of every student and work to foster a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment where each young person can flourish.

We recognise and respect the diverse needs and identities of our students, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, and support them to feel safe, valued and empowered within our community.



We have zero tolerance for child abuse and expect everyone to contribute to safeguarding children and young people. We work proactively to prevent all forms of abuse and harm and respond with action, compassion and care.

5. PRINCIPLES

Guided by Ministerial Order 1359, the Victorian Child Safe Standards and our Catholic faith, the overarching principles supporting the management of child safety and wellbeing at Our Lady of Sion College are:

- A culturally safe and inclusive environment will be established in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued, together with the inherent dignity and diversity of all children.
- Child safety and wellbeing will be embedded in governance, school leadership and decision making practices.
- Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and have a right to feel safe and be safe in the College community.
- Equity is upheld and diversity is respected across the College with emphasis on the dignity of each child and young person under our care.
- The College will partner with families and members of the school community to promote child safe and wellbeing practices and be active participants in decisions that impact the safety and wellbeing of their child.
- The College is committed to maintaining a safe physical and online environment for all children and young people under its care.
- The College policies and procedures foster openness so that all persons, and in particular children and young people, may feel safe to disclose concerns or risks of harm to children and young people.
- The College staff will be equipped with the appropriate child safety and wellbeing training to keep children and young people safe; and
- All complaints, concerns and disclosures of child abuse are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.

6. CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING FRAMEWORK

Our Lady of Sion College is committed to developing a Child Safety and Wellbeing Framework (the Framework) that is fit for purpose and provides protection to children and young people under its care. The foundation of the Framework will be supported by our Catholic identity and values and the Victorian Child Safe Standards. The approach to child safety and wellbeing to be documented in the Framework document and should be referred to understand how Our Lady of Sion College has embedded child safety and wellbeing across its practices.

7. CHILD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND AWARENESS

Our Lady of Sion College recognises that initial induction and ongoing training and awareness is critical for ensuring that our Staff understand their roles and responsibilities to protect and empower children and young people. Our Staff will participate in a range of training to reinforce their skills and knowledge to establish and maintain a child safe environment. Our Lady of Sion College Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually across the organisation. Training may include but is not limited to:



- College child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and the OLSC Code of Conduct
- Completing the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations
- Recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by adults, children and students
- Responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- How to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- Information sharing and recordkeeping obligations, and
- Identifying and mitigating child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other learning and training on child safety and wellbeing will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities.

8. SCHOOL CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICIES

This Policy, and all policies for child safety and wellbeing, must be published on the Our Lady of Sion College website.

The Principal:

- will ensure the development of a College Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and procedures, to outline the child safety and wellbeing strategies and practices in place at their school.
- is responsible for ensuring the induction process for all School Staff and Volunteers includes child safety and wellbeing, and annual training is made available to ensure the ongoing suitability of all Staff.
- are responsible for ensuring full and accurate reporting of child safety and wellbeing matters.

9. REPORTABLE CONDUCT

We are committed to ensuring all Staff understand their obligations to report child safety incidents and concerns.

Our Lady of Sion College will:

- educate staff on the Reportable Conduct Scheme during the induction process and through ongoing training.
- immediately act to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing and report the matter internally to the Reportable Conduct Team and relevant authorities and
- provide clear guidelines on the reporting process and ensure it is accessible to all Staff.

Our Lady of Sion College will ensure any allegations of Reportable Conduct involving Staff are addressed promptly and appropriately. We will:

- report any allegations of reportable conduct to the Social Services Regulator (SSR), which oversees the Reportable Conduct Scheme within three business days and
- conduct thorough investigations and take appropriate actions based on the findings.



10. CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT AND REVIEW

Our Lady of Sion College is committed to regularly reviewing its approach to child safety and wellbeing including a review of this Policy, compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, Ministerial Order 1359 and its overarching approach to managing child safety and wellbeing risk.

11. LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

This Policy and supporting documents are guided by all relevant legislative and regulatory requirements.

12. RECORDKEEPING

Child Safety and Wellbeing policies and records will be kept in line with Ministerial Order 1359 and Our Lady of Sion College policies and procedures for information and records management.

Staff and Volunteers should receive appropriate training about the collection, use, storage and disposal of child safety and wellbeing records. Where there is any inconsistency between the Ministerial Order 1359 and Our Lady of Sion College policies, the Ministerial Order will prevail.

All child safety and wellbeing records are to be kept in a secure manner in accordance with the Our Lady of Sion College recordkeeping policies and procedures, which must detail the processes the school has in place to meet the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards.

13. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Child Safety and Wellbeing Recordkeeping Procedures
Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedures
PROTECT: Identifying and Responding to Abuse – Reporting obligations
Child Safety Code of Conduct
Reportable Conduct Policy
Acceptable Use of Technology Guidelines
Camps Policy
Code of Belonging
Duty of Care Guidelines
eSafety Policy (Students)
Electronic Communication (Staff) Policy
Emergency Management Plan and Procedures
Excursion and Incursion Policy
Grievance Resolution Policy
Guest Presenters Policy
Interstate and International Trips Policy
Pastoral Care of Students Policy
Risk Management Policy
School Supervision Policy
Staff Recruitment Policy
Student Anti-Bullying Policy
Student Behaviour Policy



14. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) – including three criminal offences under this Act:

1. **Failure to disclose offence:** Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence.
2. **Failure to protect offence:** This offence will apply where there is a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16 under the care, supervision or authority of a relevant organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with that organisation. A person in a position of authority in the organisation will commit the offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
3. **Grooming offence:** This offence targets predatory conduct designed to facilitate later sexual activity with a child. Grooming can be conducted in person or online, for example via interaction through social media, web forums and emails.

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)

Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)

Ministerial Order 1359: Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises

15. CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY STATUS AND REVIEW

STATUS OF POLICY	
College Leader Responsible	Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing
Approving Authority	College Board
Approval Date	July 2026
Date of next review	2028
Publication	Website; Staff Portal; Staff Handbook

Record of Review

Details of Amendments	By Whom	Date
	Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing	July 2026