



Child Safe Program (New Policy Format)

Child Safety Policy

If you are a non-English speaker who needs help to understand this Policy, please contact the Principal, Maureen Theobald - 0402 685 409.

Introduction

Heritage College is a Christian school with commitment to the values embodied by our Heavenly Father and his son, Jesis Christ. Children are an "heritage from the LORD" and as such are precious. No child should be subject to abuse or discrimination.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the model for behaviour in the college. His care for children is documented in his ministry where he condemns those who cause harm to children. Christ was caring of those who are vulnerable. The care and protection of our children is fundamental as we seek to faithfully implement the values and teaching of our Lord.

Heritage College is committed to safeguarding our children to enjoy the joys of childhood; and supporting our youth as they grow to adulthood to expect and show respect, care, acceptance, responsibility and forgiveness.

The Board of Governors is Heritage College Knox's governing body and has approved the Child Safety Policy on 1 July 2026. It will be reviewed on 1 July 2027.

Purpose

The Child Safety Policy demonstrates Heritage College Knox's strong commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly environment, and to complying with the Victorian Child Safe Standards (Child Safe Standards) and non-government school registration requirements

relevant to child safety and wellbeing. It summarises the policies and practices that we have developed to keep our students safe, including from abuse or other harm.

The Child Safety Policy outlines the key elements of our approach to:

- implementing Ministerial Order 1359 (MO 1359), which sets out how the Child Safe Standards apply in school environments
- developing and implementing policies, procedures and practices that promote child safety and wellbeing, consistent with PROTECT 4 Critical Actions to identify and respond to child abuse
- creating a safe, supportive and child-friendly College environment
- promoting the open discussion of child safety and wellbeing issues within the College
- complying with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child safety and wellbeing, including child protection, in Victoria.

It informs the College community about everyone's obligation to act safely and appropriately towards students, and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

All children and young people who come to Heritage College Knox have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and can actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We have a zero tolerance for child abuse and other harm and are committed to acting in students' best interests and keeping them safe from harm.

The College regards its child safe expectations responsibilities with the utmost importance and is committed to providing the necessary resources to maintain a child safe culture and ensure compliance with all relevant child safe organisation and child protection laws and regulations.

Each member of the College community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role that they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all that they do and every decision that they make.

Child Safety Principles

The College's commitment to child safety and wellbeing is based on the Child Safe Standards and MO 1359.

The Child Safe Standards and MO 1359

The Child Safe Standards were developed in response to the Victorian Parliament's Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Organisations. In 2022, the original version was replaced by new Child Safe Standards based on the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles), to support greater national consistency.

The Child Safe Standards can be found [here](#).

MO 1359 sets out how the Child Safe Standards apply in school environments. It can be found [here](#).

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) monitors and enforces compliance with the Child Safe Standards and MO 1359 for registered schools in Victoria.

Scope

The Child Safety Policy applies to all adults in the College community, including:

- all employed Staff and Direct Contact Contractors, including External Education Providers (because they are “school staff” as defined in MO 1359)
- other types of Contractors
- Volunteers
- Visitors.

It does not matter whether their work involves direct contact with students.

The Child Safety Policy applies in all physical, virtual and online College environments that are used by students during or outside of school hours, including all locations provided for a student's use (for example, on-site and off-site College grounds, at sporting events, camps, or excursions, approved homestay accommodation and environments provided by External Education Providers and other Contractors).

Definitions

Definitions of the following terms used in the Child Safety Policy can be found in the [Child Safety Program Definitions List](#), which is annexed to the [Reporting and Responding Obligations \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#).

- abuse and other harm

- child/young person
- child safety and wellbeing
- child safety incident or concern
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- contractor
- school environment
- school governing authority
- school staff
- staff/staff member
- student
- visitor
- volunteer.

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Governors

- affirm commitment to Child Safe Principles

Principal

- maintain and implement Child Safe policy

Child Safe Wellbeing Team

Policy Statement

Child Safety Codes of Conduct

The College's **Child Safety Adult Code of Conduct** sets boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults associated with the College and students, including in physical, virtual and online environments.

We also have a **Student Code of Conduct**, which includes child safe expectations standards of behaviour for students.

Together, we refer to these as the Child Safety Codes of Conduct.

The Child Safety Codes of Conduct include clear processes to report inappropriate behaviour. We publish our Child Safety Codes of Conduct on our public website so that everyone can easily find out what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable at our College and how to report inappropriate behaviour.

We also provide additional information to students and families about the Child Safety Codes of Conduct, to ensure that they know what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable and how to report inappropriate behaviour.

Cultural Safety

Heritage College Knox is committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe College where the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, values and practices are respected.

We identify, confront and do not tolerate racism, and we address any instances of racism within the College environment with appropriate consequences.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, we recognise the link between culture, identity and safety, and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, their families and their communities (including local Aboriginal communities relevant to the College) to have a voice and presence in our College's planning, policies, and activities.

The specific strategies that we have adopted to promote cultural safety in our College community are set out in our [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#).

Student Empowerment and Participation

Heritage College Knox is a child safe and child-centred organisation, and we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We ensure that our physical, virtual and online environments are friendly and welcoming to all children and young people.

We actively seek to include students in decisions that affect them. This includes decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and learning and assessment environments.

We ensure that students know about their rights to safety, information and participation. We actively seek to understand what makes students feel safe in our College and regularly communicate with students about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

We recognise the importance of friendships and encourage respectful relationships, strong friendships and support from peers.

The specific strategies that we have adopted to promote the participation of and empowerment of students, and to implement all of the above obligations, are set out in the Student Participation and Empowerment (Child Safety) Policy and Procedures.

Parent/Carer, Family and Community Engagement at the College

Heritage College Knox recognises that parents and carers have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their children. We ensure that they participate in decisions affecting their children.

In addition, we:

- ensure that families and relevant communities know about the College's operations and policies, including the Child Safety Policy and the Child Safety Codes of Conduct, record keeping practices, risk management, and complaints and investigation processes ("relevant communities" means the variety of communities that are relevant to the College, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and other communities that make up our Staff and student cohorts)
- actively seek to include families and relevant communities in decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and learning and assessment environments
- build cultural safety at the College through partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, as well as with culturally and linguistically diverse communities that make up our Staff and student cohort.

The specific strategies that we have adopted to promote the engagement of parents/carers, families, and relevant communities in child safety and wellbeing at the College, to make information about child safety and wellbeing available and accessible, and to implement all of the above obligations, are set out in the Family and Community Involvement in Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures.

Diversity and Equity

Heritage College Knox values diversity and does not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:

- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families
- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
- support students with disability and their families and act to promote their participation
- support other vulnerable students and their families (such as students who are unable to live at home or students and family members who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex) and act to promote their participation
- seek to recruit a workforce that reflects a diversity of cultures, abilities and identities
- ensure that all Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors have training about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, disability, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and communities with particular experiences or needs
- have a physical environment that actively celebrates diverse cultures and recognises cultural difference
- commit to ensuring that our facilities promote the inclusion of students of differing abilities.

We also recognise that some children and young people face additional vulnerabilities to abuse and other harm, as well as additional barriers to disclosing child safety incidents or concerns. We:

- provide guidance to Staff, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors, about identifying additional vulnerabilities/barriers; and
- implement strategies for supporting students who face additional vulnerabilities/barriers to participate in the College community and for enabling them to disclose child safety incidents or concerns to the College.

The specific strategies that we have adopted to promote equity and respect diversity at the College, and to address additional vulnerabilities and barriers, are set out in the following Policies and Procedures:

- [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Students with Disability \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#)

Suitable Staff, Volunteers and Contractors and Child Safety Knowledge, Skills and Awareness (Child Safety Human Resources Management)

The specific human resources management strategies that we have adopted at the College to promote child safety and wellbeing are set out in the [Human Resources Management \(Child Safety\) Policies and Procedures](#). They include the following:

Recruitment and Screening

Heritage College Knox applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors, to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with our students.

In particular, our practices include:

- making our commitment to child safety and wellbeing clear in recruitment advertising and documentation
- requiring relevant Staff, Volunteers and Contractors to maintain a valid Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Registration or WWC (working with children) Clearance, and sighting, verifying and recording this information[^]
- using additional selection, background checking and screening processes that take into account child safe expectations considerations.

[^] If an individual has already participated in the College's specified screening requirements within the previous 12 months, they are exempt from having to do so again.

Child Safety Training and Information

As a part of Heritage College Knox's induction process, all Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors, must complete our child safe expectations induction program, which includes information about our child safe expectations policies, practices and procedures.

All Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors also receive refresher and ongoing child safe expectations training at least annually.

Our child safe expectations induction and ongoing training program includes information about:

- this Child Safety Policy and how to implement it in practice (within the individual's particular roles and responsibilities)

- the Child Safety Codes of Conduct
- recognising abuse and other harm and identifying key indicators, including harm caused by other children and young people
- the Reporting and Responding Obligations (Child Safety) Policy and Procedures, which includes our policies and procedures for responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns (such as mandatory reporting to DFFH Child Protection, reporting to the Police and Reportable Conduct obligations)
- how to manage complaints and concerns related to abuse and other harm
- responding effectively to child safety incidents and concerns, including supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- our policies and procedures for information sharing and record keeping about child safety incidents and concerns
- WWC Clearances and other child safety and wellbeing human resources practices
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the College's environments without compromising a child, young person or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities
- whistleblower requirements
- how to build culturally safe environments for students
- responsibilities to children and young people.

The College provides all Visitors to the College, including Casual Volunteers and Contractors, with information about the Child Safety Adult Code of Conduct and how to report child safety incidents or concerns to the College and to relevant external authorities.

The Board of Governors also receives child safe expectations training at least annually, to ensure that its members are equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the College's environment. Its training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing MO 1359 and the Child Safe Standards and for managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and wellbeing risks in the College's environments
- the College's child safe expectations policies, procedures, codes and practices.

Ongoing Supervision, Management and Support

The College's Child Safety Officers and Executive Management Team provide supervision and support to all Staff, Direct Contact/Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact/Regular Contractors to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child safety and wellbeing. Our child safe expectations supervision and support program includes:

- annual performance reviews for all staff members
- appointing a supervising staff member to Direct Contact Volunteers/Contractors and to those Regular Volunteers/Contractors who are engaged in "child-connected work"
- professional development programs for Staff that include child safe expectations education.

The College swiftly manages any inappropriate behaviour towards students, in accordance with our policies and legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing is the paramount consideration when managing inappropriate behaviour.

Complaints and Reporting Processes: The College's Response to Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

Heritage College Knox fosters a culture that encourages everyone in the College community to raise concerns and complaints about child safety and wellbeing. We have:

- clear pathways for raising child safe expectations-related complaints and concerns, set out in the **Procedures** below; and
- clear procedures that all Staff, Volunteers and Contractors must follow whenever they witness, suspect or receive a complaint about a child safety incident or concern involving a student, staff member, Volunteer, Contractor or the College, set out in the Reporting and Responding Obligations (Child Safety) Policy and Procedures.

These pathways and processes are summarised for students, parents/carers and other members of the College community in the **Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures, Child Protection Reporting Obligations: Summary of the College's Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns** and **Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Involving the College or its Staff Members (Summary)**, which are available on our public website.

Our Student behaviour policy and procedures cover complaints and concerns relating to physical violence, bullying and other harmful student behaviours.

The College will take appropriate, prompt action in response to all child safety incidents or concerns, including all complaints, allegations or disclosures of abuse or other harm, when Staff, Volunteers,

Contractors, students, parents/carers or anyone else reports these to the College.

The safety and wellbeing of the student/s involved in the matter are the College's paramount consideration when responding to child safety incidents and concerns. It follows the National Office of Child Safety's [Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people](#) and the Commission for Children and Young People's [Including Children and Young People in Reportable Conduct Investigations resources](#) when investigating and responding to child safety incidents and concerns.

The College's response will include:

- externally reporting all matters that meet the required relevant thresholds to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH Child Protection) (Mandatory Reports), the Police (Child Sexual Offences and other criminal offences against students), the Social Services Regulator (Reportable Conduct), and/or the VIT (Teacher Misconduct), depending on the issues raised and consistent with PROTECT 4 Critical Actions to identify and respond to child abuse
- fully cooperating with any resulting investigation by an external agency
- protecting any student connected to the child safety incident or concern until it is resolved and providing ongoing support to those affected
- taking particular measures in response to child safety incidents or concerns about an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student, a student from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, a student with disability, or other vulnerable student (such as a student who is unable to live at home or a student who identifies as lesbian gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex)
- sharing information with, or requesting information from, external people or agencies as permitted or required under the Child Information Sharing Scheme and/or the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme
- securing and retaining records of the child safety incident or concern and the College's response to it
- taking broader actions to improve child safety at the College (including systemic reviews and resulting improvements).

Child Safety Risk Management

Heritage College Knox recognises the importance of a risk management approach to child safety and wellbeing and to minimising the risk of harm to children and young people without

compromising their rights to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

Our **Child Safe Procurement Policy** makes sure that we ensure the safety of children, young people and students when we purchase facilities, goods and services.

We also have a **Risk Management Policy and Procedures** to assist in the identification, assessment and management of child safety risks in all College environments.

We identify, assess and manage child safe expectations risks in all College environments, based on a range of factors including the nature of our College's activities, its physical and online environments and the characteristics of our student cohort.

We use this information to inform our policies, procedures and activity planning.

We record all identified risks to child safety and wellbeing in a Child Safety Risk Register, along with the actions in place at the College to manage these risks. The Board of Governors, the Principal and/or the Executive Management Team monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these actions at least annually.

Child Safety Record Keeping, Privacy and Information Sharing

The College collects, uses and discloses information about students and their families, including information in child safe expectations records, in accordance with Victorian privacy laws and other relevant laws, including laws that permit the College to disclose information about child safety and wellbeing to external people and agencies. For information about how the College collects, uses and discloses this information, refer to the Privacy Policy and Procedures.

In particular, Heritage College Knox is committed to best practice record keeping about child safety incidents and concerns in accordance with Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards (including minimum retention periods).

The College records all internal and external reports of child safety incidents and concerns, as well as any other responses by the College, using PROTECT Reporting Forms and retains and secures records of complaints and concerns in line with the [Record Keeping \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#).

Communications

Heritage College Knox is committed to communicating our child safety and wellbeing strategies, policies and procedures to the College community through the measures set out in **Implementation** below. In addition, we:

- display PROTECT and other posters around the College
- provide child safe expectations information and updates through Website, Newsletter, Facebook, COMPASS Parent Portal, Community Information sessions.
- include child safety and wellbeing as a regular agenda item at Executive Management Team meetings and staff meetings.

Child Safety Policy and Practice Review

Heritage College Knox is committed to the continuous improvement of our child safe expectations policies, procedures and practices. We review the policies and procedures required for compliance with MO 1359 and the Child Safe Standards annually (or earlier if a significant child safety incident occurs at the College or legislation changes) for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child safety and wellbeing related laws, regulations and standards.

When undertaking these reviews, the College:

- actively seeks, actions, and incorporates feedback from students, families, the wider College community, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- analyses any complaints, concerns and child safety incidents that may have occurred
- communicates any learnings, adjustments or amendments to policy and practice widely throughout the College community.

Procedures

Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns to the College

If you are concerned that a child, young person or student aged 18 or over is in immediate danger, call the Police on 000.

Any person, including all Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, parents/carers and students, can at any time, contact DFFH Child Protection if they are concerned about the wellbeing of a child aged under 17.

You can do this by:

- during business hours (8:45am-5:00pm, Monday to Friday), contacting the Child Protection intake service for the local government area where the child resides, listed [here](#)
- after hours, telephoning 13 12 78.

Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

All Staff, Volunteers and Contractors **must** follow the [Reporting and Responding Obligations \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#) and [Complaints Management \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#). In particular, they **must** report all child safety incidents or concerns internally to a Child Safety Officer or the Principal.

If the incident or concerns involves the Principal, internal reports should instead be made to the Chair of the Board by chairman@heritage.vic.edu.au.

Students, Parents/Carers and Community Members

Students at the College who have child safety concerns about themselves, or about any other child, young person or student aged 18, or over can:

- disclose the child safety incident or concern to a College Child Safety Officer
- disclose the child safety incident or concern to any other staff member, Volunteer or Contractor. This might be done:
 - verbally
 - in writing
 - through electronic means (such as email)
 - indirectly (such as in written assignments, in artworks or in any other way)
- disclose anonymously, using the College's An anonymous Student Feedback box, which is located outside the Wellbeing Office
- contact
Kids Help Line 1800 55 1800
<https://kidshelpline.com.au>

For more information, students can refer to the child-friendly version of our Child Safety Complaints Management Policy and Procedures, available CS Child Safety Policy.

Parents/carers, family members and other community members who have child safety concerns or who suspect that a child or young person associated with the College may be subject to abuse or

other harm can contact:

- the Principal, who is the College's Senior Child Safety Officer, by phoning 0402 685 409 or emailing principal@heritage.vic.edu.au
- if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of the Board by chairman@heritage.vic.edu.au.

Any person can also contact the Principal or the Chair of the Board if they have concerns regarding the College's leadership in relation to child safety.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

Responding to and External Reporting of Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

The Reporting and Responding Obligations (Child Safety) Policy and Procedures sets out the procedures that the College will follow when notified of any child safety incident or concern involving the College or a student, staff member, Volunteer, Contractor, Visitor or any other person connected to the College or the College environment. These procedures align with the PROTECT 4 Critical Actions to identify and respond to child abuse.

It also provides guidance for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors on their obligations to respond to child safety incidents or concerns and to report them to relevant external authorities. These obligations include:

- their duty to protect students
- mandatory reporting to DFFH Child Protection
- reporting to DFFH Child Protection in other situations where a student has been or is being harmed
- mandatory reporting to the Police of sexual offences against children
- reporting to the Police in other situations where a student has been or is being harmed
- reporting Reportable Conduct to the Social Services Regulator
- reporting teacher misconduct to the VIT.

Support for Students, Families and Staff Following Child Safety Incident or Disclosure

Child safety incidents or concerns can cause trauma and significantly impact on the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people, and students aged 18 or over, as well as on their families. In addition to reporting and referral to the relevant authorities, the College plays a central role in

addressing this trauma and has a duty of care to ensure that students feel safe and supported at College.

The College employs a range of measures to support students affected by a child safety incident or concern, depending on the particular circumstances of the matter and of the student and their family:

- Child Safety Officers may work with the student and their family to develop a student Support Plan
- support strategies that could be considered for students and/or their families might include offering or organising referrals to internal or external support, such as a College Principal, bi-cultural workers and/or translators, or an external support agency and/or child advocacy organisation that specialises in supporting children and young people impacted by abuse or other harm.

The College offers similar support to former students who disclose historical child safety incidents or concerns from their time at the College.

Witnessing a child safety incident or receiving a disclosure of abuse or other harm can be a distressing experience for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors involved. The College assists impacted Staff, Volunteers and Contractors to access necessary support.

Embedding a Culture of Child Safety: Our Child Safety Program

We call the full collection of the College's child safe expectations policies and procedures the "Child Safety Program". It is itself one of the strategies employed by Heritage College Knox to embed a culture of child safety at the College.

The Child Safety Program relates to all aspects of child safety, wellbeing, and protecting children, young people and students aged 18 or over from abuse and other harm. It establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe environment and culture at the College. It includes:

- the Child Safety Codes of Conduct
- clear information about what is abuse and other harm and associated key indicators of abuse and other harm
- clear procedures for responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns internally, and for responding to incidents or allegations of abuse or other harm, that are consistent with

the PROTECT 4 Critical Actions to identify and respond to child abuse

- strategies to support, encourage and enable Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, parents/carers and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
- procedures for recruiting and screening members of the Executive Management Team, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- procedures for reporting to external agencies (including Mandatory Reporting to DFFH Child Protection, reporting Reportable Conduct to the Social Services Regulator and reporting sexual offences against children to the Police), that are consistent with PROTECT 4 Critical Actions to identify and respond to child abuse
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe
- strategies to support and encourage the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disability and other vulnerable students
- child safe expectations training
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse or other harm to protect, support and assist students
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality
- a system for continuous review and improvement.

Additional Child Safety Responsibilities at the College

Child safety and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility. Specific responsibilities include:

The Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is Heritage College Knox's "school governing authority" for the purposes of MO 1359.

It is responsible for:

- approving and reviewing the College's child safe expectations policies and procedures required for registration as a non-government school, including those required for compliance with MO 1359
- ensuring that the College has and implements processes to comply with its child safe expectations legal and regulatory obligations
- ensuring that the College has appropriate resources to effectively implement the Child Safe Standards and MO 1359; and

- championing and promoting a child safe culture within the College.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable, for the operational management of the College. They are responsible for:

- taking all practical measures to ensure that the Child Safety Policy, and other policies and procedures in the College's Child Safety Program, are implemented effectively and followed
- ensuring that a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within the College, including by:
 - modelling the Child Safety Adult Code of Conduct, and reinforcing high standards of child safe behaviours between adults and students and between students
 - facilitating the participation of students, families, Staff and other members of the College community in promoting and improving child safety and wellbeing at the College
 - promoting regular and open discussion of child safety and wellbeing issues within the College community
 - facilitating regular professional learning for Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors about child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and preventing and responding to child safety incidents and concerns
 - creating an environment where child safety incidents, concerns and complaints are readily raised with the College and where no one is discouraged from reporting child safety incidents or concerns to relevant external authorities.

They are also the "head" of the College for the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

The Executive Management Team

Each member of the College Executive Management Team is responsible for ensuring that appropriate resources are made available in their area of operations to allow the College's Child Safety Program to be effectively implemented within the College, and for supporting the Principal in the practical application of the College's child safe expectations strategies, policies, procedures and work systems.

Staff

All Staff are "school staff" for the purposes of MO 1359.

They must:

- comply with the Child Safety Policy, the Child Safety Codes of Conduct and the Reporting and Responding Obligations (Child Safety) Policy and Procedures
- be familiar with the other policies and procedures in the Child Safety Program
- understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm, and WWC Checks.

All Staff must be aware of key indicators of abuse and other harm, be observant, and report all child safety incidents and concerns internally to the College and to the appropriate external authorities.

To meet these obligations, all Staff must:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and ongoing training provided by the College
- follow the Policies and Procedures in the Child Safety Program
- act in accordance with the Child Safety Codes of Conduct
- identify, respond to and report child safety incidents and concerns in accordance with the Reporting and Responding Obligations (Child Safety) Policy and Procedures and the PROTECT 4 Critical Actions to identify and respond to child abuse
- ensure that students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard when making decisions that affect them
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students
- comply with all relevant child safe expectations human resources policies and procedures.

Volunteers

A Volunteer is someone who performs work for the College in a College environment without remuneration or reward. Volunteers may be family members of students, or from the wider College or local community. Volunteers are not "school staff" for the purposes of MO 1359.

All Volunteers at the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment.

To meet these obligations:

- all Volunteers must comply with the Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Codes of Conduct
- Direct Contact Volunteers (and, if required by the College, other Volunteers such as Regular Volunteers who are engaged in "child-connected work") must:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and ongoing training provided by the College
- be aware of key indicators of abuse and other harm
- understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of abuse and other harm
- raise all child safety concerns with a Child Safety Officer.

Contractors

A Contractor is someone engaged by the College to perform specific tasks. Contractors are not employees of the College. However, Contractors who have direct contact with children are “school staff” for the purposes of MO 1359.

Contractors may include maintenance and building personnel, consultants, music tutors, sports coaches and cleaners as well as external education providers (organisations that the College has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the College).

All Contractors are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment.

To meet these obligations:

- all Contractors must comply with the Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Codes of Conduct
- Direct Contact Contractors (and, if required by the College, other Contractors such as Regular Contractors who are engaged in “child-connected work”) must:
 - participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and ongoing training provided by the College
 - be aware of key indicators of abuse and other harm
 - understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of abuse and other harm
 - raise all child safety concerns with a Child Safety Officer
 - The College may include these requirements in the written agreement between it and the Contractor.

Implementation

The Child Safety Policy is published on our public website.

It is provided to new Staff, to Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and to Direct Contact and Regular Contractors at their induction or prior to them commencing their work at the College.

The College provides all Visitors to the College, including Casual Volunteers and Casual Contractors, with information about the Child Safety Policy, the Child Safety Adult Code of Conduct and how to report child safety incidents or concerns to the College and to relevant external authorities, through the annual induction process.

Breach

Heritage College Knox enforces the Child Safety Policy and the Child Safety Codes of Conduct. In the event of any non-compliance, we will instigate a review that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- the restriction of duties
- suspension
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement.

Source of Obligation

- Victorian Child Safe Standards, Standard 2
- Ministerial Order 1359, Clause 6

Related Policies

- [Codes of Conduct \(Child Safety\) Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Reporting and Responding Obligations \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Complaints Management \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Record Keeping \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Student Participation and Empowerment \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Family and Community Involvement, Cultural Safety and Equity-Diversity \(Child Safety\) Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Human Resources Management \(Child Safety\) Policies and Procedures](#)
- [Risk Management \(Child Safety\) Policy and Procedures](#)

- [Regular Reviews and Continuous Improvement \(Child Safety\) Policies and Procedures](#)

Related Documents

- [Template - for identifying and responding to child abuse by an adult engaged by an independent school, including grooming](#)
- [Template - for identifying and responding to student-to-student abuse](#)
- [Template - for identifying and responding to child abuse in the family](#)
- [Template - for identifying and responding to child abuse in the community](#)
- Child-friendly Child Safe Policy
- Child Protection Reporting Obligations: Summary of the College's Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns
- Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Involving the College or its Staff Members (Summary)
- Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures
- child-friendly version of/information about the Complaints Management (Child Safety) Policy and Procedures

References

- Commission for Children and Young People, [Victorian Child Safe Standards](#)
- Commission for Children and Young People, [Resources and Support for the Child Safe Standards](#)
- Department of Education, [Child Safe Standards Templates and Resources](#)
- Victorian Government, [PROTECT for schools](#)
- National Office of Child Safety, [Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people](#)
- Commission for Children and Young People, [Including Children and Young People in Reportable Conduct Investigations resources](#)

Policy Administration

The Board of Governors reviews the Child Safety Policy annually or earlier if required, such as if a significant child safety incident occurs at the College or due to changes in legislation.

Status	Document Owner	Approver(s)	Approval Date	Version Number	Last Reviewed	Review Frequency	Next Review Date
Current	Maureen Theobald	Board of Governors	1 July 2026	2	1 July 2023	12 months	1 July 2027