



FCJ COLLEGE

CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY POLICY

Ratified by the FCJ College Council on 14th June 2016

To be reviewed in 2019

Responsibility of the Principal

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

All students enrolled, and any child visiting FCJ College, 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.

PREAMBLE

The Vision of FCJ College states:

FCJ COLLEGE is a Catholic Educational Community of Companions *living in faith, nurturing with hope, serving with compassion and fostering the unique giftedness of each person, so that they are able to live.....*
For God Always.

At FCJ College, we believe in the right of every child and vulnerable adult to experience love, care and respect as an individual, and to be given the opportunity to grow to their full potential as made in the image of God.

At FCJ College, we nurture, engage and encourage all students, in a safe, respectful and positive environment.

The policy of FCJ College is to ensure that every child attending FCJ College enjoys a safe and secure learning environment free from any form of harm or abuse and that all instances whereby there are reasonable grounds to believe otherwise, are reported to the appropriate Civil Authority. It is the right of every child to live a full and productive life in an environment that builds confidence, friendships, security and happiness. Under the national *Framework for Protecting Australia's Children (2009)*, protecting children is everyone's responsibility.

Under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, acting in the best interests of the child includes:

- Reporting as soon as reasonable grounds have been established (*s.184(1)*) to Child Protection all allegations or disclosures of physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect;
- Reporting to Child Protection when a belief is formed that a child has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed and any opinions based on that belief (*s.184*).
- Reporting on each and subsequent occasions whereby awareness of any further reasonable grounds for belief are found to exist (*s.184(1)*)
- Protecting the informer from identification other than for the purpose of the protective intervenor or community-based child and family service (*s.191(1)*)

PURPOSE

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the whole school community of FCJ College 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.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To provide a safe environment free of exploitation and abuse. Child protection Policy at FCJ College strives to:

- ensure the safety and well-being of children and vulnerable adults at all times;
- recognise that all children and vulnerable adults have the right to freedom from abuse;
- have a strong commitment to the prevention of abuse and the protection of children and vulnerable adults; ensure staff and service providers adhere to VIT Code of Conduct and expectations for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

DEFINITIONS

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO SAFETY AND PARTICIPATION

The staff and volunteers of FCJ College 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.

Strategies for implementation for Child Protection and Safety Policy with a focus on student empowerment and participation see Appendix 1.

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 diverse backgrounds (CALD) and their families
- promote the personal safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability and make them feel welcome and part of all aspects of school life

RECRUITING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

FCJ College 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 volunteers and require police checks and Working With Children Checks (WWCC) for all staff and volunteers. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements for staff and volunteer positions.

FCJ College Recruitment Policy and Procedures see Appendix 2

SUPPORTING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

FCJ College 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.

FCJ College Code of Conduct see Appendix 3

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

- Child Safety Reporting and Responding Procedure
- Child Safety Reporting and Responding Procedure Flow chart
- Child Safety Reporting and Responding Procedure Report of abuse form
- The Principal has been appointed as Child Safety Officer 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 (OH&S) risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse and harm to our students.

FCJ College Risk Management Plan see Appendix 4

EVALUATION

The aims and objectives of this policy will be evaluated by the Principal in consultation with the College Council every three years and updated as necessary and/or as required by legislation.

RELATED DOCUMENTS

This policy should be read in conjunction with the other policies and procedures of FCJ College concerned with Child Safety and Pastoral Wellbeing:

1. Ministerial Order 870 – Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools
2. *Charter of Sandhurst School Improvement*
3. Child Protection – Mandatory Reporting Policy
4. Child Protection – Failure to Protect Policy
5. Child Protection – Grooming Policy
6. Child Protection – Working with Children Policy
7. Child Protection – Failure to Disclose Policy
8. Safeguarding Policy for Children and Vulnerable Adults – Sisters Faithful Companions of Jesus Victoria, Australia May 2012
9. Internal FCJ policies – Vision, Mission & Graduate Outcomes; Child Protection Policy, Anti-Discrimination & Bullying Policy; Staff Misconduct Policy; Wellbeing Policy; Students at Risk Policy; Catholic Identity & FCJ Charism Policy

APPENDIX

1. FCJ College Strategies for implementation for Child Protection and Safety Policy
2. FCJ College Recruitment Policy & Procedure
3. FCJ College Code of Conduct
4. Child Safety Reporting and Responding Procedures
5. Child Safety Reporting and Responding Flow chart
6. Child Safety Report of abuse form
7. FCJ College Risk Management Plan
8. FCJ College Flyer (see Child Safe Policy)