

Child Safe Standard 11

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

As Catholic educators, our commitment to child safety is not only expressed in our values, but clearly articulated in the policies and procedures that guide our daily practice. Child Safe Standard 11 ensures that our approach to safeguarding is transparent, structured, and consistently applied across all aspects of school life.

We recognise that strong intentions alone are not enough. Our child safety policies clearly outline expected behaviours, reporting processes, complaint handling procedures, and support pathways for children and families. These documents ensure that every member of our school community understands their responsibilities and knows how to respond if concerns arise.

By maintaining clear, accessible, and well-communicated policies, we create a safe and predictable environment where children's wellbeing is prioritised, and families can feel confident in the systems that protect their children.

This newsletter series provides an overview of what the Child Safe Standards are, how they help keep children and young people safe, and how schools governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) are prioritising and achieving this.

Overview of the Child Safe Standards:

The Victorian Child Safe Standards are a set of 11 minimum requirements that all organisations working with children must adhere to.

These standards are designed to:

- Promote the participation and empowerment of children, young people and their families
- Prevent harm and abuse of children and young people
- Ensure child safety is a shared responsibility
- Support the wellbeing of all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children with disabilities

These standards apply to all school staff, volunteers, contractors, and anyone working with children in schools.

Child Safe Standard 11 reminds us that safeguarding requires more than good intention, it requires clear action. As Scripture tells us in James 2:17, "Faith by itself, if not accompanied by action, is dead." In the same way, our commitment to child safety must be reflected in practical, documented procedures that guide how we prevent, identify, and respond to concerns. Our policies translate our values into action. They set clear expectations for behaviour, outline reporting pathways, and ensure that every adult in our school community understands how to act in the best interests of children. When policies are visible, understood, and consistently applied, they create clarity, accountability, and protection.

Why is it important that our child safety policies are clearly documented?

Clearly documented policies ensure that everyone in our school community understands how child safety is upheld in practice. They provide consistent guidance, reduce ambiguity, and ensure that concerns are handled in a fair and transparent way. Written procedures also strengthen accountability, ensuring that safeguarding does not depend on individual judgement alone, but is embedded across the whole organisation.

Spotlight on Child Safe Standard 11

“Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.”

Child Safe Standard 11 ensures that safeguarding is embedded in formal documentation that is accessible, clear, and consistently applied. These policies outline codes of conduct, complaint processes, reporting obligations, and risk management strategies. By documenting how we act to protect children, we strengthen transparency, promote shared understanding, and ensure continuity, even as staff or leadership change.

What does this look like?

- **Clear Codes of Conduct:** Expectations for appropriate behaviour and professional boundaries are documented and communicated to all staff and volunteers
- **Accessible reporting pathways:** Step-by-step processes outline how concerns are raised, recorded, and escalated.
- **Complaint handling procedures:** Transparent procedures explain how complaints are assessed, investigated, and resolved.
- **Mandatory reporting guidance:** Staff receive clear written guidance on legal and organisational reporting obligations.
- **Regular communication:** Policies are made accessible to families via school websites, enrolment materials, and community updates.

How Parents, Carers and Guardians can get involved:

Child Safe Standard 11 works best when families understand and engage with the school's policies and procedures.

Families can help by:

- Familiarising themselves with the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Raising questions if any process is unclear
- Using established complaint and feedback channels if concerns arise
- Encouraging children to speak openly about their experiences at school
- Partnering with the school to ensure shared understanding of expectations and boundaries

When schools and families work together within clear and transparent frameworks, children benefit from consistent, coordinated support.



Want to know more?

If you have any questions or would like to learn more about how we document and implement our child safety processes, please get in touch.

More information on the Child Safe Standards can be found via the [Commission for Children and Young People \(CCYP\) website](https://www.ccyp.org.au).

