



# Child Protection and Safety Policy

Marcellin College is a community where Jesus is known and loved and the dignity of each person is respected. Consistent with our values and vision, Marcellin is committed to providing a child safe environment. Our Child Protection and Safety policy provides key elements of our approach to protecting the children in our care. Our child safety code of conduct has a focus in safeguarding our students against physical, sexual, psychological, verbal, and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement child protection legislation and is supported by our College policies and professional standards.

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Child abuse includes physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect, verbal abuse, a child's exposure to family violence, sexual offences and grooming. Marcellin is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Protection Program designed to keep them safe.

At Marcellin College we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in our student's best interests and keeping them safe. The College regards its child protection responsibilities as of the utmost importance. As such, we are committed to providing the resources necessary to ensuring compliance with all relevant child protection laws, regulations and in developing and maintaining a child safe culture.

## CHILD SAFE PRINCIPLES

Our commitment to child safety is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.

1. All children have the right to be safe.
2. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
3. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
4. The views of our students and their privacy must be respected.
5. Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in our Child Safety Code of Conduct, Staff Charter and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.
6. Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within our College community.
7. Procedures are in place to screen all staff, Direct Contact Volunteers\*\* third party contractors and external education providers who have direct contact with our students.
8. Child protection training is mandatory for all staff, Advisory Council members, and Direct Contact Volunteers.
9. Child protection training is mandatory for all Advisory Council members, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers.
10. Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of our College community.
11. Students from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have the right to reasonable adjustments and support, including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
12. Children who have any kind of disability or vulnerability have the right to reasonable adjustments and support.

\*\*Direct Contact Volunteers are those volunteers that are involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and could potentially have direct unsupervised contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

Examples of Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include volunteers involved in College camps and excursions, coaching sporting teams or assisting in learning activities.

## OBJECTIVES

This policy provides the framework for:

- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection within our College;
- the creation of a positive and robust child protection culture;
- the promotion and open discussion of child protection issues within our College; and
- complying with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Victoria.

## CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAM

Marcellin College is committed to the implementation of our Child Protection Program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. We adopt a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors. These include the nature of our College's activities, physical and online environments and the needs of our community.

Our Child Protection Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse. It includes:

- clear information as to what constitutes child abuse and associated key risk indicators;
- clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse;
- strategies to support, encourage and enable staff, volunteers (direct and indirect), third party contractors, external education providers, parents/carers and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters;
- procedures for recruiting and screening staff, Advisory Council members, and Direct Contact Volunteers;
- pastoral care strategies designed to build confidence in students to keep themselves and others safe;
- policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities;
- a child protection training program;
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist children;
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality;
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards); and
- a system for continuous improvement and review.

As a part of Marcellin College's induction process, all staff, Advisory Council members and Direct Contact Volunteers are required to complete a selection of training modules on the content of our Child Protection Program.

All staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Advisory Council members are provided with additional, ongoing child protection training at least annually.

Staff, volunteers, third party contractors and external education providers are supported by our Human Resources Department to ensure that they are compliant with our approach to child protection.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. At Marcellin College all members of the staff and Advisory Council, as well as direct and indirect volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:

### MSA Governance Structure

All schools governed by Marist Schools Australia (MSA) fall under the authority of the Trustees of the Marist Brothers (the Trustees), a body corporate under the NSW Roman Catholic Communities Land Act (1942). The Trustees have delegated all oversight and governance of MSA schools to the Council of the Australian Conference of the Association of St Marcellin Champagnat (the Association).

At the level of the school, it is the Principal who has full responsibility for promoting and maintaining the school as a child-safe institution. It is also the Principal's responsibility to ensure that each of the MSA's framework for Child Protection Standards are implemented effectively.

### **The Principal**

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Protection and Safety Policy and the College's Child Protection Program are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within our College.

### **The College's Child Protection Officers**

A number of staff members are nominated as the College's Child Protection Officers. Our Child Protection Officers are the Deputy Principal, Heads of School and College counsellors and they receive additional specialised training with respect to child protection issues. They are the first point of contact for raising child protection concerns within the College. They are also responsible for advocating child protection at Marcellin and assisting in coordinating responses to child protection incidents.

Child Protection Officer – Name	Child Protection Officer - Position
Adriano Di Prato	Deputy Principal
Pauline Bellofiore	Head of Junior School
Sarah Pyle	Head of Senior School
Rosemary Chapple	Counsellor
Sherryn O'Brien	Counsellor
Christopher Pattison	Counsellor

### **Staff Members / Advisory Council Members**

All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of our Child Protection Officers.

### **Direct Contact Volunteers**

All Direct Contact Volunteers are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Safety Code of Conduct and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the College's Child Protection Officers.

### **Indirect Contact Volunteers**

Indirect Contact Volunteers are those volunteers who are involved in providing support and services whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students. Indirect contact volunteers are not responsible for supervising students and would not have 'unsupervised' contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

All indirect volunteers are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of our children in the College environment.

All indirect volunteers are required by the College to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program.

Examples of Indirect Contact Volunteer activities may include, but are not limited to, assisting with College functions or the College canteen and fundraising barbeques.

### **Third Party Contractors**

All Third Party Contractors engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of our children in the College environment.

All service providers engaged by the College are required by the College to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program.

Marcellin may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the service provider.

### **External Education Providers**

An external education provider is any organisation that Marcellin has arranged to deliver a specified course of study to a student or students enrolled at the College.

The delivery of such a course may take place on College premises or elsewhere.

All external education providers engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the College environment.

All external education providers engaged by the College are required by the College to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program.

Marcellin College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the external education provider.

### **REPORTING CONCERNS**

Our Child Protection Program provides detailed guidance for members of staff, the Advisory Council, and Direct Contact Volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our nominated Child Protection Officers. It contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Third party contractors, external education providers, indirect contact volunteers, students, parents/carers or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact one of the College's Child Protection Officers.

Communications will be treated confidentially in support of the dignity of the individuals involved.

**Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.**

### **POLICY REVIEW**

The Executive and College Leadership Teams will conduct an annual review of the Child Protection and Safety Policy.

