

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Vision

St Martin's Catholic Primary School is a school community that recognises the uniqueness of every person, nurturing faith and wellbeing, and pursuing excellence in education.

Introduction

Catholic schools educate young people in all dimensions of life by developing the whole person (South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Vision Statement)

The St Martin's Catholic Primary School Child Protection Policy is framed within the VISION STATEMENT for South Australian Catholic Schools.

1.1 St Martin's Catholic Primary School places the highest priority on the care, wellbeing and protection of children and young people.

1.2 This policy supports a proactive role in the care, wellbeing and protection of children and young people, the provision of child safe environments and intervention procedures for responding to abuse and neglect.

1.3. The Archdiocese of Adelaide, in partnership with the Diocese of Pt Pirie, established the South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council to oversee the safety and wellbeing of children and young people within the South Australian Catholic Church community, in partnership with families.

1.4. The Council developed a Charter and Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People and continues to develop Implementation Guidelines for all agencies of the Catholic Church including Catholic schools and the Catholic Education Office.

1.5. The SACCS Policy for the Care Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People is informed by the South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council Charter, Policy and Implementation Guidelines and the Children's Protection Act 1993.

1.6. The Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People draws on the wisdom, guidance and texts from a range of documents and replaces the SACCS Child Protection Policy 2000 and the Catholic Education SA Procedures for dealing with Child Abuse 2002. (Please refer to the References section)

1.7. St Martin's Catholic Primary School has a responsibility for the care, wellbeing and protection of children and young people and in providing a child safe environment.

Our responsibilities include:

- a duty of care to students
- responsibilities as mandated notifiers
- the provision of child protection curriculum for every student
- a code of conduct to promote respectful and caring relationships.

Underlying Principles

St Martin's Catholic School espouses the view that the safety and well being of the child must be the paramount consideration in every situation. This policy is based on the underlying principles that:

2.1. Respectful relationships that support the dignity of each person including children and young people are central to the life and teachings of the Catholic Church.

2.2. Children and young people deserve safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect as a fundamental right.

2.3. Primary responsibility for children and young people resides with the family and schools work in partnership with families.

2.4. In Catholic schools guidelines and codes of conduct for the care, wellbeing and protection of children and young people require honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults and children and young people.

2.5. Adults have the responsibility to protect children and young people.

2.6. Children and young people have a right to be heard regarding decisions that affect their life.

2.7. Children and young people are encouraged to participate in all dimensions of life and to develop skills to contribute to their own safety and wellbeing.

2.8. Policies and practices demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements and co-operation with Church, government, police and human service agencies.

2.9. Complaint processes are consistent with the principles of natural justice and fairness and the SACCS Policy for Responding to Concerns, Complaints, Grievances and Allegations of Misconduct 2005.

2.10. All people involved in child protection issues and incidents are to be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.

Policy Statement

St Martin's Catholic Primary School is a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives.

St Martin's Catholic Primary School recognises it plays a significant role in the prevention of child abuse and neglect and are responsible for implementing policies and practices including child protection curriculum, for the care, wellbeing and protection of children and young people.

Staff at St Martin's Catholic School will be educated in the area of child protection and mandatory notification.

As legal mandators the staff at St Martin's Catholic Primary School will report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

A Guide to Responsibilities

The responsibility of all people at St Martin's Catholic School is to ensure that there is a total community approach towards the protection of children from abuse.

4.1 Responsibilities of School Leader

The Principal of St Martin's Catholic Primary School is committed to:

- providing a safe school environment that ensures that children are protected.
- ensuring school personnel understand the definitions of child abuse and neglect and carry out their legal obligations, responsibilities and correct procedures when notifying suspicion of child abuse and neglect.
- supporting school personnel directly involved with the handling of disclosure and notification.
- ensuring that policies and organizational procedures provide children with a safe school environment. This will be done in consultation with St Martin's Catholic School Board.
- promoting models of behaviour between school personnel and children based on mutual respect and consideration.
- ensuring that student management practices respect the dignity of children.
- providing training and development for all involved in child protection at St Martin's Catholic Primary School
- providing training and development for all involved in abuse prevention curriculum.
- initiating and supporting the implementation of child protection and abuse prevention curriculum at the classroom level to ensure that all children have access to these programs throughout their school years.
- monitoring and evaluating child protection and abuse prevention curriculum.

- providing families with information about and opportunities to participate in the protection and abuse prevention curriculum.
- ensuring appropriate confidentiality of information concerning children in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

4.2 Responsibilities of School Personnel

The staff at St Martin's Catholic School are committed to:

- treating children with dignity and respect, to act with propriety, provide a duty of care and protect children in their care.
- notifying the appropriate child protection agencies (telephone 13 14 78) if, in the course of their work, they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.
- providing a physically and psychologically safe environment for children.
- participating in training and development opportunities which provide knowledge and skills in mandatory notification.
- teaching children skills and understanding which will empower them to achieve and maintain personal safety.
- assisting children to develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from both harassment and abuse.

4.3 Responsibilities of Parents, Visitors, Volunteers and Wider Community

It is an expectation that all parents and other adults who visit or volunteer at St Martin's Catholic Primary School conduct themselves in a manner that reflects Catholic values and maintain appropriate boundaries with all children. As outlined in the Adult/Positive Resolution Policy under no circumstances is a parent to approach another child when issues arise. As outlined in the above stated policy all matters relating to children are to be referred to the class teacher in the first instance and then the Principal or member of the School leadership team.

REFERENCES

5.1. South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council Charter

<http://www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/ProfessionalStandards/media/files/985.pdf>

5.2. South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People, 2006

<http://www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/ProfessionalStandards/media/files/1031.pdf>

5.3. South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council Implementation Guidelines for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People

5.4. South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools Vision Statement 1991 and reprinted 1996

<http://online.cesanet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-8376/SACCS+Vision+Statement.pdf>

5.5. South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools, Duty of Care Policy 2004

<http://online.cesanet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-3015/DutyofCare.pdf>

5.6. Charter for Teachers in Catholic Schools SA

<http://online.cesanet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6554/Charter+for+Teachers+BROCHURE+.pdf>

5.7. Child Protection Curriculum, Teacher Support Module for SA Catholic Schools, CEO 2009

5.8. *Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum*, DECS, 2008

<http://decs.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/childprotection/childProtectionCurric/?reFlag=1>

5.9. 'Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Students – Guidelines for Schools, Preschools and Out of School Hours Care' DECS, CEO and AISSA 2009
<http://online.cesanet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-6076/Protective+Practices+edited+April+2009+version.pdf>

5.10. Information Sharing: Guidelines for Promoting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children, Young People and their Families, Govt of SA <http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/InformationSharingGuideli.pdf>

5.11. National Safe Schools Framework, accessed at
http://www.mceecdya.edu.au/verve/_resources/natsafeschools_file.pdf

5.12. Child Wise, Choose with Care, Building Safe Organisations <http://childwise.net/downloads/12Steps.pdf>

5.13. Responding to Abuse and Neglect: education and care mandatory training and update training 2009-2011 <http://online.cesanet.adl.catholic.edu.au/docushare/dsweb/View/Collection-3500>

5.14. Safe School Environments, Department for Families and Communities
<http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/tabId/281/itemId/484/moduleId/1106/Safe-school-environments.aspx>

5.15. The Children's Protection Act, 1993
<http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au/lz/c/a/childrens%20protection%20act%201993/current/1993.93.un.pdf>

5.16. Working Together to Keep Children Safe: South Australian Interagency Child Protection Information Book

Mandatory Notification: Child Abuse Report Line | 13 14 78

Implemented:	2010
Ratified by School Board:	2010
Reviewed:	2018
Next Review:	2021