



**ST DOMINIC'S
PRIORY COLLEGE**




EDUCATING GIRLS, INSPIRING CONFIDENCE

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

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In use from Term 2, 2021

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We acknowledge St Dominic's Priory College is situated on Kaurna Land and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.



SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE POLICY

1. RATIONALE

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy applies to all staff members and volunteers working within St Dominic's Priory College and exists to uphold the principles set out in relevant legislative and organisational obligations. St Dominic's Priory College has zero tolerance to child abuse of any kind. The rationale for this policy is the belief that a safe, supportive, inclusive and positive environment underpins a student's capacity for learning. This maximises potential for personal and social development, ultimately enhancing wellbeing and life opportunities. We acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning.

St Dominic's Priory College is committed to providing safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities that promote student rights, safety and wellbeing, including compliance with child protection obligations mandated by law, the United Conventions on the Rights of the Child and Church teachings.

We recognise that students' spiritual, psychological and physical wellbeing is paramount and that every student has a fundamental right to a safe school environment and protection from harm and the risk of harm.

This policy is supported by the following;

- 1.1 Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
- 1.2 Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement
- 1.3 Safeguarding Children and Young People Committee Terms of Reference

2. PURPOSE

College staff, volunteers and Catholic Church personnel are required to be committed to creating and maintaining a child safe institution that fosters positive and safe cultures, adopts strategies and acts to prevent harm to children and young people.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that St Dominic's Priory College adheres to all Safeguarding Children and Young People policies and procedures. This supports an organisational culture to both:

- 2.1 Safeguard against the risk of child abuse; and
- 2.2 Respond effectively if abuse is suspected or confirmed.

3. PRINCIPLES

The principles behind this policy are as follows. As a College:

- 3.1 We take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
- 3.2 We implement child safety policies and procedures which support ongoing assessment of risk;
- 3.3 We value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives and their rights;
- 3.4 We foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children;
- 3.5 We respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
- 3.6 We provide guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
- 3.7 We engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
- 3.8 We ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
- 3.9 We report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
- 3.10 We share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
- 3.11 We value the input of and communicate regularly with families and guardians.

4. COMMITMENT

St Dominic's Priory College supports students to feel and be safe through providing the care and protection necessary for their wellbeing. In alignment with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, the College will demonstrate:

- 4.1 A commitment to excellence in leadership, governance and culture
- 4.2 That all children and young people are safe and informed
- 4.3 A strong partnership with families and carers
- 4.4 That equity is promoted, and diversity is respected
- 4.5 A robust management of all human resource matters
- 4.6 Effective complaints management
- 4.7 Ongoing education and training
- 4.8 Safe physical and online environments
- 4.9 Regular reflections and reviews for improvement
- 4.10 All policies and procedures support child safety

5. DEFINITIONS

The work of safeguarding children requires a shared understanding of definitions, terms and behaviours, that may impact a young person's context.

The following are some of these.

5.1 CHILD AND YOUNG PERSON

A person under the age of 18 or any young person enrolled as a student at St Dominic's Priory College.

5.2 CHILD SAFE INSTITUTION

An institution that consciously and systematically creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to children, creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying and reporting harm, and responds appropriately to disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm.

5.3 GROOMING

The use of a variety of manipulative and controlling techniques; with a vulnerable subject; in a range of inter-personal and social settings; in order to establish trust or normalise sexually harmful behaviour; with the overall aim of facilitating exploitation and/or prohibiting exposure (McAlinden, 2012, p.11).

5.4 HARM

Any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the student's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing. It is immaterial how the harm is caused, but it may be caused by physical or psychological abuse/neglect, or sexual abuse/exploitation. It is also recognised that harm can be caused by a single incident of abuse or be a cumulative impact of multiple incidents.

5.5 ONLINE

'Online' refers to all matters of digital citizenship and technology use.

5.6 STAFF MEMBER

Any person who is employed by St Dominic's Priory College Limited on a casual, fixed term or continuing basis.

5.7 SEXUAL ABUSE

Sexual abuse can be physical, verbal or emotional behaviour which involves the student in a sexual activity or sexually exploits the student in some way. This abuse can be in person or occur indirectly (online). Sexual Abuse (includes but is not limited to) sexual behaviour involving the student and another person in the following circumstances:

- 5.7a The other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent toward the student;
- 5.7b The student has less power than the other person;
- 5.7c There is significant disparity between the student and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity.

5.8 STUDENT

Refers to any person enrolled at St Dominic's Priory College regardless of that person's age.

NOTE: Legislation defines student as being under the age of 18 years of age. An organisational decision has been made to apply all reporting obligations to any student irrespective of age.

5.9 VOLUNTEER

Refers to a person who is engaged or present at the College to undertake work, but not for financial reward.

RESOURCES

- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse – Final Report Volume 6: Making Institutions Child Safe 2017
- Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse – Final Report Volume 13: Schools 2017
- The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework (www.safeschoolshub.edu.au)
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017
- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006
- Education (General Provisions) Regulation 2017
- Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000
- Evidence Act 1977
- Disability Standards for Education (2005)
- Child Protection Act 1999

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Terms of Reference
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Agreement
- St Dominic's Priory College Staff Code of Conduct
(Code of Conduct for Staff Employed in Catholic Education South Australia)