STUDENTS CHILD SAFE POLICY

St Mary MacKillop College

St Mary MacKillop College aims to care for, encourage and guide the development of the whole person by empowering all students to make a positive contribution to the world. As a College we respect the unique dignity and faith of each person and strive to achieve the best outcome for each individual student in a safe and caring environment.

1.   PURPOSE OR RATIONALE

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the whole school community of St Mary MacKillop 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.

2.   COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

All students enrolled, and any child visiting, have a right to feel safe and be safe while at school or involved in school based activities. The wellbeing of children will always be the first priority of the school and the school has a zero tolerance to child abuse. The school aims 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.

3.   CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO SAFETY AND PARTICIPATION

The staff and volunteers of St Mary MacKillop College encourage students to express their views. They listen to our suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect us. They actively encourage all students to openly express their views and we feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to us.

Our teachers tell us about what they can do if we feel unsafe. They listen to and act on any concerns we, or our parents or carers, raise with them.

We have access to an online Bullying report form as well as complete a Safe Schools survey that allows us to express our levels of safety with the school environment.

4.   VALUING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We value and celebrate diversity, especially cultural diversity, and we do not tolerate discriminatory practices. To achieve this our community:
- promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students and their families
- promotes the cultural safety, participation and empowerment from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) and their families
- promotes the personal safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability and make them feel welcome and part of all aspects of school life

5. RECRUITING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

St Mary MacKillop College will apply the most thorough standards in the recruitment and research 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.

The College makes it a priority that all staff and new staff complete the Mandatory Reporting online module before entering the classroom or school environment.

6. SUPPORTING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

St Mary MacKillop College provides support and supervision to all staff and volunteers so people feel valued, respected, recognised 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.

The Code of Conduct document is presented to staff and all staff receiving a copy of the code of conduct.

7. 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 line with security and privacy requirements. Our complaints and disclosure processes are outlined and detailed in the following policies and procedures:

- BDSAC Protocol for managing allegations of abuse of students policy (Knowledge Banks)
- BDSAC Child Protection Policy (Knowledge Banks)
- BDSAC External Complaints Policy (Knowledge Banks)
- Concerns and Complaints Policy (Knowledge Banks)
- Concerns and Complaints Procedure (Knowledge Banks)

The Director of Wellbeing 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.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is an approach that minimises the potential for child abuse or harm to occur. Our school has Risk Management Plans *(refer to Risk Management Plan in Knowledge Bases)* in place that 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, our school works to prevent and manage risks of abuse and harm to us as students.

9. POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed every three years and we undertake to seek feedback from students, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.

Policy Ratified: June 2019
Next Review date: June 2022