



St Mary MacKillop School

Child Protection Policy Responding to Abuse and Neglect – Mandatory Notification

“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me”.

Mark 9:37

In all actions concerning children

whether undertaken by Public or Private Welfare Institutions,

Courts of Law, Administrative Authorities or Legislative Bodies,

the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration

The Convention on the Rights of the child

Article 3 (1)

Introduction

St Mary MacKillop School affirms the SACCS Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children and Young People (2011) and Procedures for Reporting Child Abuse and the Protective Practices Policy (2010).

Rationale

This policy is designed to meet the organisational and individual responsibilities for all community members as outlined in the Children’s Protection Act (1993).

The Policy is based on the Gospel values of freedom and justice for all people and an underlying belief in their dignity and uniqueness. Safety, a basic human right, is a pre-requisite for the Catholic School to be able to carry out its mission to educate. All school personnel, paid and voluntary, should be aware of their legal responsibility as mandated notifiers. St Mary MacKillop School operates in a wider community context where legal requirements exist and where they have an obligation to:

- Protect children
- Provide a secure, safe environment where children can be safe and feel safe
- Intervene on behalf of children
- Actively work towards empowering children
- Ensure that principles of care, protection and safety are implemented
- Implement a Child Protection Curriculum into the teaching and learning programs.

Aims

The purpose of this policy is to promote and ensure that our school is a place where children can be safe and feel safe. Education and care workers employed at St Mary MacKillop School will regard the interests of children as paramount.

St Mary MacKillop School is committed to addressing the issue of child abuse and continuing to improve child protection, abuse and neglect prevention programs. Children need to experience programs designed to develop skills and strategies for personal safety.

Scope

All education, care workers and volunteers will act in a positive way to develop a safe environment for children in their care and will take the required action to fulfill their duty of care and they are required to fulfill the following key responsibilities:

- Exercise a duty of care to protect children and keep them safe.
- Be aware of the definitions and indicators of abuse and neglect as contained in the Children's Protection Act 1993, Section 6(1) and (2).
- Report suspicion of child abuse and neglect as required by the Children's Protection Act, 1993, Section 11 (1) & (2).
- Deliver and teach students the child protection and abuse prevention programs through the *Keeping Safe: Child Protection* curriculum.

Roles and Responsibilities

Children and young people are our present and our future. They have the right to grow and to develop their full potential physically, emotionally and spiritually. That potential is their families' and communities' responsibility to nurture and fulfil. South Australian Catholic Child Protection Council, Charter, 2006.

It is the role of the Principal:

- To provide a safe school environment, which ensures that children are protected.
- To ensure school personnel and volunteers understand the definitions and indicators of child abuse and neglect and carry out their legal obligations and responsibilities.
- To support school personnel and volunteers directly involved with the handling of disclosure and notification.
- To ensure that policies and organisational procedures provide children with a safe school environment.
- To regularly update and inform the School Board of child protection matters.
- To promote models of behaviour between school personnel and children based on mutual respect and consideration.
- To ensure that student management practices respect the dignity of children.
- To provide training and development for school personnel in child protection and abuse prevention curriculum.

- To initiate and support the implementation of child protection and abuse prevention at the classroom level and to ensure that all children have access to these programs throughout their school years.
- To monitor and evaluate child protection and abuse prevention curriculum.
- To provide families with information about and opportunities to participate in the protection and abuse prevention curriculum.
- To ensure appropriate confidentiality of information concerning children in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

It is the role of School Personnel and Volunteers

- To treat children with dignity and respect, to act with propriety, provide a duty of care and protect children in their care.
- To report if, in the course of their work, they suspect, on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected as contained in the Children's Protection Act 1993, Section 11(1) and (2) (Child Abuse Report Line ph 131478 or make an e-CARL report online).
- To provide a physically and psychologically safe environment for children.
- To participate in training and development opportunities which provide knowledge and skills in mandatory notification and the definition and indicators of abuse and neglect.
- To teach children skills and understanding which will empower them to achieve and maintain personal safety.
- To assist 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.

To fulfill these responsibilities St Mary MacKillop School will undertake the following essential activities:

- Provide access to ongoing training and development for staff and volunteers to enable them to fulfill their key responsibilities.
- Inform and consult with parents and encourage the participation of families in child protection issues.
- Establish supportive procedures for fulfilling mandatory reporting obligations.
- Provide ongoing child protection and abuse prevention programs monitor, evaluate and review child protection and abuse prevention programs.
- Ensure our Child Protection Policy is reviewed annually by all staff.
- Integrate the *Keeping Safe: Child Protection* curriculum with the *Made In The Image Of God : Human Sexuality* curriculum.
- Provide *Responding to Abuse and Neglect* training and refresher courses to all staff.
- Include information about Child Protection and Mandatory Notification in the Volunteer's Induction Program.
- Adhere to all appropriate screening procedures established by the Catholic Education Office, as they apply to all staff and volunteers working in the school.

St Mary MacKillop School will, at all levels, operate in a spirit of cooperation and consultation with other relevant agencies and with institute, school and children's services communities in matters concerning child protection.

Resources

Staff members are encouraged to seek support in dealing with Child Protection Issues, if they feel this is necessary. Useful contacts include:

1. Child Abuse Report Line - 131478
2. Principal
3. Information sharing guidelines
4. Children's Protection Act 1993