



Child Safeguarding Program

Strategies to Embed a Culture of Child Safety at the school

Our school is deeply committed to fostering a culture of child safety and wellbeing, ensuring these values are deeply embedded within its leadership, governance, and culture, as mandated by Standard 2 of the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Clause 6 of Ministerial Order 1359. Our holistic approach to child safety is guided by the CES Ltd Child Safeguarding Program, which outlines clear policies, procedures, and work systems designed to protect all students, with particular attention given to vulnerable groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities, and LGBTIQ+ students.

Key strategies include the appointment of Child Safety Officers, the establishment of clear behavioural expectations through the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and comprehensive training for staff and volunteers. We have robust reporting mechanisms for child safety incidents and concerns, both internally and externally, and are committed to ongoing reviews and improvements of our safeguarding practices. We actively communicate these strategies to the school community through accessible documentation, training sessions, and regular updates, ensuring that every member of our community is informed and engaged in maintaining a safe environment for all children.

Source of Obligation

Standard 2 of the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Clause 6 of Ministerial Order 1359 require CESL Board to ensure that child safety and wellbeing are embedded in St Mary's Echuca leadership,

governance and culture.

Our Child Safeguarding Strategies

The following work systems, practices, policies and procedures are St Mary's Echuca strategies for creating and embedding a child safety and wellbeing culture at the school:

- implementing, at the school level, Community Wellness team Child Safeguarding strategies
- a holistic approach to child safety through this Child Safeguarding Program
- appointing one or more Child Safeguarding Officers and at least one Senior Child Safeguarding Officer(s)
- establishing key Child Safeguarding standards in our Child Safeguarding Policy
- establishing clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with students through our Child Safe Code of Conduct and Staff and Students Professional Boundaries Policy, and clear expectations for appropriate behaviour by students in the Student Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- educating our Management/Executive Team, Staff and Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors through our Child Safeguarding Training
- clear procedures for Reporting a Child Safety Incident or Concern Internally, including alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse or other harm
- clear procedures for reporting child safety concerns externally, including Mandatory Reporting to Child Protection, Non-Mandatory Reporting to Child Protection, Reporting to Police, Reportable Conduct and Reporting Teacher Misconduct to the Victorian Institute of Teaching
- recognition that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disability and LGBTIQ+ students are particularly vulnerable and have the right to special care and support
- clearly defining the Child Safeguarding Responsibilities of personnel involved in protecting students and allocating roles and responsibilities for implementing our child safe strategies
- establishing comprehensive Child Safeguarding Record Keeping procedures to ensure that the school can evidence reasonable precautions taken to prevent abuse and other harm at the school in accordance with our Child Safeguarding Risk Management strategies
- implementing Child Safeguarding Human Resources Management to ensure that our human resources practices and procedures promote child safety
- Regular Reviews and Continuous Improvement of the Child Safeguarding Program and our Child Safeguarding practices

Implementing Our Child Safeguarding Strategies

Roles and responsibilities relevant to implementing the Strategies to Embed a Culture of Child Safety are set out in [Child Safeguarding Responsibilities](#).

Communicating Our Child Safeguarding Strategies

CESL Board requires the school to inform the school community about these strategies. The school does this in the following ways:

- The following documents are available on the school's public website to ensure they are readily accessible by all members of the community:
 - Child Safeguarding Policy
 - Child Safeguarding Codes of Conduct
 - the CESL Making a Complaint - school level
 - public-facing Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns
 - public-facing Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns at or Involving the school or its staff.
- Hard copies of these documents are also available at the school's Reception.
- Hard copies of the school's other Child Safeguarding policies and procedures, including those that set out the above strategies, are available on request.
- St Mary's Echuca Child Safeguarding Program and our strategies for embedding a culture of child safety are also communicated in the following ways:
 - the school's induction training for staff members and relevant Volunteers and Contractors
 - regular information sessions for staff members about specific child safety issues at the school
 - the provision of refresher Child Safeguarding training sessions at least annually for staff members, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors, including during professional development days
 - the provision of Child Safeguarding information, including reporting procedures, to parents, carers and the school community through parent communication methods
 - inclusion of Child Safeguarding information, including the Child Safeguarding Codes of Conduct, reporting procedures and students' right to participate in the [Educating Students About Child Safety](#) curriculum
 - the provision of child-friendly versions of Child Friendly Child Safeguarding Policy and Child Friendly Student Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct to students through posters around the school and in newsletter..