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Monivae
College Hamilton

Child Safety Policy

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the strong commitment of Monivae College to the care, safety and wellbeing of all students at our school. It provides an outline of the policies, procedures and strategies developed to keep students safe from harm, including all forms of abuse in our school environment, on campus, online and in other locations provided by the school.

Scope

This policy applies to school staff, including school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy.

Legislative Context

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)* and the Child Safe Standards (Vic)
- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)*
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*
- VRQA Guidelines to Minimum Standards 2015
- *Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)*

Definitions

Term	Definition
Child neglect	includes a failure to provide the child with an adequate standard of nutrition, medical care, clothing, shelter or supervision to the extent that the health and physical development of the child is significantly impaired or placed at serious risk.

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Child physical abuse	Generally, consists of any non-accidental infliction of physical violence on a child by any person.
Child sexual abuse	is when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve them in sexual activity. It can include a wide range of sexual activity and does not always involve physical contact or force.
Emotional child abuse	occurs when a child is repeatedly rejected, isolated or frightened by threats, or by witnessing family violence.
Grooming	when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. It can include communication and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent/carer.
Mandatory reporting	The legal requirement under the <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.)</i> to protect children from harm relating to physical and sexual abuse. The principal, teachers, medical practitioners and nurses at a school are mandatory reporters under this Act.
Reasonable belief	When school staff are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, they must assess that concern to determine if a report should be made to the relevant agency. This process of considering all relevant information and observations is known as forming a 'reasonable belief'. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.
School staff	means an individual working in a school environment who is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority • a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) • a minister of religion. (<u>Ministerial Order No. 870</u>)
School environment	means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • campus of the school • online school environments (including email and intranet systems) • other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

Policy Statement

Catholic schools have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe.

The following principles underpin our commitment to child safety at Monivae College:

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- All students deserve, as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- Our school works in partnership with families and the community to ensure that they are engaged in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on child safety and protection.
- All students have the right to a thorough and systematic education in all aspects of personal safety, in partnership with their parents/guardians/caregivers.
- All adults in our school, including teaching and non-teaching staff, clergy, volunteers, and contractors, have a responsibility to care for children and young people, to positively promote their wellbeing and to protect them from any kind of harm or abuse.
- The policies, guidelines and codes of conduct for the care, wellbeing and protection of students are based on honest, respectful and trusting relationships between adults and children and young people.
- Policies and practices demonstrate compliance with legislative requirements and cooperation with the Church, governments, the police and human services agencies.
- All persons involved in situations where harm is suspected or disclosed must be treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.
- Staff, clergy, volunteers, contractors, parents and students should feel free to raise concerns about child safety, knowing these will be taken seriously by school leadership.
- Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally or pastorally.

Supporting Documents

- Child Safety Procedure

Responsibility

- The Board Directors (*as the Approval Authority*) are responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this policy and its accompanying procedure/s
- The Deputy Principal (*as the Policy Sponsor*) is responsible for maintaining the content of this policy as delegated by the above title.
- The Compliance and Risk Manager is responsible for the administration support for the maintenance of this policy as directed by the above title.

Promulgation

The Child Safety Policy will be communicated throughout the School community in the form of:

1. Policies section of the Monivae website to alert the School-wide community of the approved Policy;
2. distribution of e-mails to all staff.

Implementation

The Child Safety Policy will be implemented throughout the School via:

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1. Policies section of SIMON knowledge banks to alert the School-wide community of the approved Policy;
2. Staff briefing sessions
3. Training sessions

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