

St. Mary Magdalene's School



Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children

Developed by: Staff and School Board

Note: All references to 'Staff members' include Administration Staff, Support Teachers, Teachers and Temporary Relieving Teachers, ESO's and Registered Volunteers.

Introduction

The St Mary Magdalene Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children is framed within the Vision Statement for South Australian Catholic Schools. St Mary Magdalene's school. Our values centre on Respect and Safety:

- for self
- for others
- for the environment

This policy is based on the Gospel values of freedom and justice for all people and an underlying belief in the child's dignity and uniqueness. Safety is a basic human right and a pre-requisite for St Mary Magdalene's School community to be able to carry out its mission to educate. Safety and protection from all forms of abuse are fundamental rights of all children.

St Mary Magdalene's School operates in a wider community context where legal requirements exist and where we have an obligation to:

- protect children
- provide a secure environment where children can be safe and feel safe
- intervene on behalf of children
- actively work towards empowering children
- ensure that the principles of care, protection and safety are implemented

Underlying Principles

St Mary Magdalene's School espouses the view that the safety and well being of the child must be the paramount consideration in every situation. This policy is based on the underlying principles that:

- the dignity of the human person is fundamental to Catholic teaching
- children have the right to be safe at all times
- children's development is dependent on the quality of care provided by the significant adults in their lives
- the family is recognised as being the unit primarily responsible for the care and protection of the child
- where families are not providing the care consistent with their obligations or where a child's welfare is at risk, or suspected to be at risk, intervention on behalf of the child is mandatory
- the prevention and treatment of child abuse requires a multi-disciplinary response which is sensitive to cultural diversity and special needs
- cultural or other reasons notwithstanding, school personnel must intervene on behalf of children
- cooperation with various agencies including government, Catholic Education and human service organisations in the community are essential in child protection
- people who are involved in situations where abuse occurs or is suspected are treated with sensitivity, dignity, respect and confidentiality

Guidelines

The responsibility of all people at St Mary Magdalene's School is to ensure that there is a total community approach towards the protection of children from abuse. Staff and volunteers at St Mary Magdalene's School will be educated in the area of child protection and mandatory notification. As legal mandators the staff at St Mary Magdalene's School will report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

St Mary Magdalene's School recognises its role in the prevention of child abuse and takes responsibility for implementing child protection practices. Our school is committed to:

- being a place where children are safe
- allocating resources for child protection education and programs
- developing practices and procedures that support child protection
- developing and providing protection and abuse prevention curriculum for students

The Principal is committed to

- providing a safe school environment that ensures that all children are protected
- follow CESA policy in relation to employment of staff
- ensuring school personnel and volunteers understand the definitions of child abuse and neglect and carry out their legal obligations, responsibilities and correct procedures when notifying suspicion of child abuse and neglect
- supporting school personnel and volunteers directly involved with the handling of disclosure and notification
- ensuring that policies and organisational procedures, in consultation with School Board,
- provide children with a safe school environment
- promoting models of behaviour between school personnel and children based on mutual respect and consideration
- ensuring that student management practices respect the dignity of all children
- providing training and development for all involved in child protection
- initiating and supporting the implementation of child protection and abuse prevention curriculum in the classroom level(Keeping Safe R-7; Kids Matter) to ensure that all children have access to these programs throughout their school years
- monitoring and evaluating child protection and abuse prevention curriculum
- providing families with information about and opportunities to participate in the protection and abuse prevention curriculum
- ensuring appropriate confidentiality of information concerning children in cases of suspected abuse or neglect
- ensuring appropriate police checks and screening procedures are carried out as necessary
- ensuring registered volunteers have an understanding of mandatory practices and the need to actively report through CARL or to the Principal where there are concerns
- ensuring all visitors to the school have signed in at the front office and wear a visitors badge identifying themselves and their purpose for being in the school

The staff are committed to

- treating children with dignity and respect, to act with propriety, provide a duty of care and protect children in their care
- notifying the Central Intake Team of Children Youth and Family Services (Family SA - telephone 13 14 78) if, in the course of their work, they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected
- providing a physically and psychologically safe environment for children
- participating in training and development opportunities which provide knowledge and skills in mandatory notification

- teaching children skills and understanding which will empower them to achieve and maintain personal safety
- assisting children to develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from both neglect and abuse

Students will

- be aware of the school's role in supporting them in their emotional and physical safety
- have access to Child Protection Curriculum – Keeping Safe R-7
- be provided with support resources including time, space and privacy to use Kids Helpline

Parents/Carers will

- be made aware of and have access to this policy and the guidelines drawn from the Child Protection Policy 2000 – South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools

Implementation

- all staff members will be made aware of and have access to this policy
- all staff will be made aware of Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Children and Young People – Guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings.
- all parents/carers/ volunteers who have direct supervision of children will be made aware of and have access to this policy
- all Parents/Carers and community members will be informed of this policy via the newsletter and website
- the names of all relevant Government Agencies will be checked and updated on the review date of this policy.

Basis of Discretion

Nil

Support Documents

Child Protection Policy 2000 – South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools

Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Children and Young People – Guidelines for staff working or volunteering in education and care settings.

Interviewing Students Guidelines

Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect – Mandated Notification Guidelines (Dept of Human Services)

Child Protection in South Australia – A new approach (Family and Community Services)

Child Protection Act (1997)

Duty of Care (SACCS)

Financial Budget

Curriculum resources

Staff release to attend professional learning

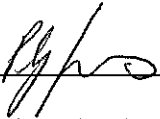
Resources

Proforma for reporting neglect and abuse

Child Abuse Report Line – Phone 131478

Police Check Consent form – Professional Standards Office

Signed

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Date: 2015

Principal on behalf of the School Board

Date to be reviewed: 2018