

# Child Safe Policy

**Policy No. 27**

July 2016

Creek Street  
Christian College





## **Introduction**

Creek Street Christian College is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

Everyone working at CSCC is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is:

- To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within Creek Street Christian College
- To work towards an organisational culture of child safety
- To prevent child abuse within CSCC
- To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs
- To provide guidance to staff/volunteers/contractors as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the College
- To provide a clear statement to staff/volunteers/contractors forbidding any such abuse
- To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

## **Policy**

Creek Street Christian College is committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of children involved in its program.

All children, regardless of gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

CSCC has zero tolerance to child abuse. Everyone working at CSCC is responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse.

Child protection is a shared responsibility between the CSCC, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the CSCC community.

CSCC supports and respects all children, staff and volunteers. CSCC is committed to the cultural safety of all children including those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to provide a safe environment for children living with a disability.

CSCC supports children of all ages being mindful in particular of younger students who may require additional support.

If any person believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse, telephone 000.

## **Policies and Procedures**

To ensure Child Safety, CSCC has in place procedures and policies which must be followed to ensure that the College remains safe for children and that we have zero incidents of child abuse.

### **Policies include:**

- Mandatory Reporting Policy (Policy No. 7)
- Internet Policy and Procedures (Policy No. 14)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (Policy No. 2)
- Camps Policy (Policy No. 6)
- Excursions Policy (Policy No. 9)
- Police Checks Policy (Policy No. 28)
- Volunteers Policy (Policy No. 29)
- Contractor Induction/Management Policy (Policy No. 30)
- Transport Policy (Policy No. 31)
- Grievance Policy (Policy No. 32)
- Visitors Policy (Policy No. 33)
- Working with Children Policy (Policy No. 34)
- Employment Policy (Policy No. 35)
- Staff Induction Policy (Policy No. 36)
- Tutoring Policy (Policy No. 37)
- Risk Management Policy (Policy No. 38)
- Teachers Code of Conduct (Policy No. 39)
- Child Safety Code of Conduct (Policy No. 40)
- Student Code of Conduct (Policy No. 41)
- Behaviour Management Policy (Policy No. 42)

### **Procedures include:**

Staff will be trained and made aware of these policies at an annual in-service and new employees will be trained and made aware of these policies as part of our new staff induction process.

All teaching staff meeting agendas will include a Child Safety agenda item.

We will annually present training to our community about child abuse and cybersafety.

We will advise parents of our Child Safety Code of Conduct (Policy No. 40)

## **Responsibilities**

### **College Council**

The College Council of CSCC has ultimate responsibility for the detection and prevention of child abuse and is responsible for ensuring that appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place. The Council is also responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures and a Child Safety Code of Conduct are in place. (See Appendix A)

### **Principal and Assistant Principal**

These leaders are responsible for:

- Dealing with and investigating reports of child abuse
- Ensuring that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of the relevant laws, College policies and procedures, and the College's Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Educating employees about the prevention and detection of child abuse
- Ensuring that all adults within the CSCC community are aware of their obligation to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures
- Providing support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

If there is an allegation of child abuse and a child is in need of immediate protection, he/she will be referred to the College Chaplain or Principal and placed in his or her care if, or as appropriate.

### **Senior Management Team, Chaplain and staff in leadership positions**

These leaders must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times
- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and eradicate/minimise any risk to the extent possible
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activity in consultation with the Principal

The Senior Management Team should be familiar with the types of abuse that might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indications of such conduct.

### **Employees**

All employees share the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse and must:

- Adhere to Child Safety Policies, Procedures, Instructions and Guidelines
- Co-operate with the employer with respect to any action taken by the employer to comply with any requirement imposed by or under the Policies, Ministerial Orders or Act
- Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters (See Mandatory Reporting Policy– Policy No. 7)
- Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to the Principal
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.

## **Cultural matters**

We are sensitive to the likelihood of any cultural issues affecting child safety within the college. Should we become aware of any issues in this area we will do all we reasonably can to resolve these while maintaining and protecting the Bible based values of CSCC and the Christian ethos of the school.

## **Our commitment to child safety**

Our organisation is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Our organisation has human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Our organisations is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

**If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.**

## **Our children**

This policy is intended to empower children. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say. We are aware that younger children may need additional care in the processes around listening to their views.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome.

In particular we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

## **Our staff and volunteers**

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our organisation.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

## **Training and supervision**

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our organisational culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to this organisation's code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

## **Recruitment**

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Our organisation understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

We encourage applications from people who are representative of our college community.

All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. Please see the [Working with Children Check](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) website [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) for further information

We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the recruitment process is complete. We do retain our own records (but not the actual criminal record) if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision making process.

If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

## Fair procedures for personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.

## Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

## Legislative responsibilities

Our organisation takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.
- **Failure to protect:** People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
- Any personnel who are **mandatory reporters** must comply with their duties.

## Risk management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in organisations on social media).

## Allegations, concerns and complaints

Our organisation takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it observing suspicious behaviour.
- Observing suspicious behaviour

### **Review**

The Child Safety procedures and policies will be reviewed by the College Board as part of our Strategic Planning review cycle and following any reportable incident.

We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

### **Further information**

Further details can be obtained from the College Principal or a member of the Senior Management Team.



# Child Safety Code of Conduct

**Policy No. 40**

July 2016

Creek Street  
Christian College





## **Introduction**

At Creek Street Christian College our overarching priority is that all children in our care are safe, feel safe and that child abuse is non-existent in our community.

On entering the site of CSCC we become representatives of this school and its Christian beliefs, ethos and values.

The College Council, Senior Management Team, Employees, Volunteers and Contractors are required to abide by this code.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is:

- Make clear the Child Safety Code of Conduct expectations of all employees, volunteers and contractors who may be on site at Creek Street Christian College
- Ensure that CSCC takes all action reasonably expected to maintain a zero tolerance to child abuse.

## **Responsibility**

Under the Principal, the Assistant Principal and Senior Management Team will:

- Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of staff and volunteers
- Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards staff and volunteers

## **Procedures**

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of CSCC will:

- Work towards the achievement of the aims and purposes of the College
- Be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities in their area
- Maintain a duty of care towards others involved in these programs and activities
- Establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work
- Be fair, considerate and honest with others
- Treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas and opinions
- Act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people
- Be professional in their actions
- Maintain strict impartiality
- Comply with specific College guidelines and policies on physical contact with children
- Respect the privacy of children, their families and teachers/carers and only disclose information to people who have a need to know
- Maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people
  
- If any disclosure of child abuse is reported, or becomes known to you, it is passed on to the Principal or Assistant Principal. (this is not a matter of personal discretion)
- Operate within the policies and guidelines of CSCC

- Contact the police if a child is in immediate risk of abuse (Phone 000)

No person shall:

- Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people
- Unlawfully discriminate against any child
- Engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves
- Use any form of aggressive physical contact
- Use any form of suggestive or inappropriate physical contact, eg. Inappropriate touching, kissing, hugging or sitting on an adult's lap
- Transport a single student in a vehicle unless accompanied by another member of staff or adult
- Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily and for more than a very short time out of view of other adults
- Develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs
- Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention
- Arrange contact, including on line contact, with children or young people outside of the College's programs and activities
- Photograph or video a child or young person without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians
- Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- Do anything in contravention of the College's policies, procedures or this Code of Conduct.

In addition-

All staff, visitors and contractors to the site are to use staff toilet areas or the disabled toilets which are individual areas.

All staff, visitors and contractors should never be the only adult in a toilet area or change room if students are present.

All staff, visitors and contractors should never be the only adult in a space with a student which is out of view of others.

All counselling of individual students must occur in a visible outside space, a classroom or the Principal's office, Assistant Principal's office, Interview room or Chaplain's office. If any other area is used for counselling there must be at least two adults present.

All First Aid (except in the case of emergency treatment whilst waiting for an ambulance) must be administered by trained staff.

If during a camp or excursion a single child is unable to join with the group, two adults or one adult and a student friend of the child is to remain.

## **The Victorian Teaching Professional Code of Conduct**

Teaching staff at CSCC are also bound by the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct has been developed for and by the Victorian teaching profession. It identifies a set of principles, which describe the professional conduct, personal conduct and professional competence expected of a teacher by their colleagues and the community.

## **What happens if you breach this Code of Conduct**

If a staff member, volunteer or contractor breaches this Child Safety Code of Conduct they will face disciplinary action, including and up to immediate suspension of employment (until the incident is investigated and at which time the suspension may be lifted or cessation of relationship/ employment with Creek Street Christian College applied).

Any allegations or charges of child abuse made against a registered teacher, will be immediately reported to the VIT.

Creek Street Christian College has a Mandatory Reporting Policy (Policy No. 7). If you form the belief that a child is in need of protection or his/her health, safety or wellbeing is at risk, you must report this to the Principal or Assistant Principal. The Mandatory Reporting Policy and this Code of Conduct are mutually reinforcing.

## **Review**

The Child Safety Code of Conduct procedures will be reviewed by the College Board as part of our Strategic Planning review cycle and following any reportable incident.

## **Further information**

Further details can be obtained from the College Principal or a member of the Senior Management Team.

**CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT**

July 2016

**I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:**

**Name:** .....

**Signature:** .....,

**Date:** .....