

	<b>PARADE COLLEGE</b>
<b>POLICY:</b>	<b>CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY POLICY</b> (PROTECTING THE SAFETY AND WELL-BEING OF YOUNG PEOPLE AT PARADE COLLEGE)

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Parade College (the **College**) is committed to the care, safety and well-being of all of our students.
- 1.2 This policy provides the framework for:
- (a) the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection within the College;
  - (b) the actions that the College proposes to take to demonstrate its commitment to child safety and monitor its adherence;
  - (c) the creation of a positive and robust child protection culture;
  - (d) the promotion and open discussion of child protection issues within the College; and
  - (e) compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Victoria.

## 2. Statement of commitment

- 2.1 Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence. The College is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Protection Program designed to keep children safe.
- 2.2 The College has a zero tolerance for child abuse and is committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The College regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture.

## 3. Scope

- 3.1 This policy applies to all College Employees, Board Members, clergy, volunteers, and contractors (**Staff Member**).

- 3.2 It applies to all aspects of a Staff Member's engagement with the College and its students, including any engagement with students that may occur outside of school hours including but not limited to excursions, camps, overseas trips and extracurricular activities, whether face-to-face or online.
- 3.3 For the purpose of this policy, a student enrolled at the College, even if they are 18 years of age or over, is regarded as being covered by this policy and related policies and procedures.

#### **4. Values and Principles**

- 4.1 The College's commitment to child safety is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children and students from abuse.
- (a) All children and students have the right to be safe.
  - (b) The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
  - (c) The views of the child and a child's privacy must be respected.
  - (d) Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in our Child Safety Code of Conduct, Student Code of Conduct, and Parent Code of Conduct.
  - (e) The safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture.
  - (f) Child safety awareness is promoted within the College community.
  - (g) Procedures are in place to screen all Staff Members who may have Direct Contact with students.
  - (h) Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
  - (i) Child protection training is mandatory for all Board Members, Employees and Direct Contact Volunteers.
  - (j) Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of the College community.
  - (k) Children and students from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
  - (l) Children and students who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.

#### **5. Definitions**

- 5.1 **Child / Children** means any person under the age of 18, unless otherwise defined by law.

- 5.2 **Child abuse** includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence.
- 5.3 **Child connected work** means work authorised by the Principal or governing body and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.
- 5.4 **Contractors** captures all third party contractors and includes, for example, building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches and the College's cleaners. It includes Direct and Indirect Contact Contractors.
- 5.5 **Direct Contact Volunteers** means those volunteers who are involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and could potentially have contact with students (including physical contact, face-to-face contact, contact by post, written communication, telephone, oral communication, email or other electronic communication) during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.
- Examples of Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include volunteers involved in College camps and excursions, coaching sporting teams or assisting in learning activities.
- 5.6 **Direct Contact Contractors** are contractors who are engaged to perform child connected work.
- 5.7 **External Education Providers** means any organisation that the College has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the College. The delivery of such a course may take place on the College's premises or elsewhere.
- 5.8 **Employee** means any individual employed by the College, including teachers and support staff.
- 5.9 **Indirect Contact Contractors** are contractors that do not meet the definition of Direct Contact Contractors.
- 5.10 **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 a campus of the school, online school environments or 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).
- 5.11 **Student** means any student enrolled at the College, including those over the age of 18.
- 5.12 **Staff Member** means all Employees, College Board Members, volunteers, contractors.

## 6. Roles and responsibilities

6.1 This section sets out the responsibilities of different roles. The relevant individuals appointed in each role and their contact details can be found at the Safeguarding Roles document.

Role	Key responsibilities
Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approving the Child Protection Program</li> <li>• Ensuring that the College has appropriate resources to effectively implement the Child Protection Program</li> </ul>
EREA Regional Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports and advises the Principal in relation to relevant child protection legislation</li> <li>• Advises the Principal on the implementation of the College's Child Protection Program</li> </ul>
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible, and will be accountable for, the operational management of the College, its Child Protection Program and child safety strategy</li> <li>• Responsible for taking all practical measures to ensure that this policy and the College's Child Protection Program is implemented effectively</li> <li>• Ensuring that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the College</li> </ul>
College Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for working collaboratively with the Principal to ensure consistency and faithfulness to the Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition and the Touchstones of Liberating Education, Gospel Spirituality, Inclusive Community, and Justice and Solidarity.</li> <li>• Responsible for approving major College policies that are consistent with EREA policies.</li> </ul>
Child Safe Officers (CSO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of senior staff members are nominated as the College's Child Safe Officers. Our CSOs receive additional specialised training with respect to child protection issues. They can be a point of contact for raising child protection concerns within the College.</li> <li>• Responsible for championing child protection within the College.</li> <li>• The Senior CSO is responsible for the overall promotion and maintenance of a child protection culture at the College.</li> </ul>
Employees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Required to familiarise themselves with the content of this policy, the Child Safe Code of Conduct, other</li> </ul>

Role	Key responsibilities
	<p>College policies and procedures and the College's Child Protection Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand and comply with their child safety and legal obligations, including reporting of child abuse</li> <li>• It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse in accordance with the Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse Procedure.</li> </ul>
Volunteers, Contractors and External Education Providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the College environment.</li> <li>• Required to familiarise themselves with this policy and the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and comply with all obligations.</li> <li>• Comply with child safety obligations provided to them in contracts and other relevant documents.</li> </ul>

## 7. Child Protection Program

- 7.1 The College is committed to the effective implementation of its Child Protection Program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. We adopt a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors including the nature of the College's activities, physical and online environments and the characteristics of the student body.
- 7.2 Our Child Protection Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.
- 7.3 In accordance with its commitment to a child safe culture, the College will put in place:
- (a) clear information as to what constitutes child abuse and associated key risk indicators;
  - (b) strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the College;
  - (c) risk management strategies to identify, assess and mitigate the risk(s) of child abuse in the College environment, including monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls;
  - (d) a Child Safe Code of Conduct which sets standards about the way in which Staff Members are expected to behave with children and students;
  - (e) clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse, including reportable conduct and / or misconduct;

- (f) information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist children;
- (g) support for Staff Members who respond to a disclosure of abuse;
- (h) information for the school community about the Colleges child safe practices and strategy;
- (i) strategies to support, encourage and enable Staff Members, parents and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters;
- (j) procedures for recruiting, screening and monitoring Staff Members;
- (k) clear induction, support and supervision arrangements for Staff Members;
- (l) strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe;
- (m) policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities;
- (n) a child protection training program for Staff Members and students;
- (o) guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality;
- (p) embed child safety obligations in its contracts with External Education Providers and contractors as needed;
- (q) policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards); and
- (r) a system for continuous review and improvement, including monitoring the College's adherence to this policy and its child safety strategy.

7.4 As a part of the College's induction process, all Staff Members are required to complete a selection of training modules on the content of our Child Protection Program, in addition to the Mandatory Reporting Module provided through the Department of Education and Training (**DEET**) annually.

7.5 All Staff Members are provided with additional, ongoing child protection training at least annually on their obligations, child abuse risks and the Child Safe Standards.

7.6 Staff Members External Education Providers are supported and supervised by the College's Child Safe Officers to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child protection.

## **8. Reporting child protection concerns**

8.1 The College encourages Staff Members, External Education Providers, parents, students and members of the College community to identify and raise any child safety concerns.

8.2 It will do this in a number of ways, including by:

- (a) providing detailed guidance for Staff Members on how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns in accordance with the College's Child Safety Reporting Procedure;
  - (b) providing training at least annually to all Staff Members on identifying and reporting child safety matters;
  - (c) supporting its Staff Members and members of the College community to make reports of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities as needed;
  - (d) cooperating with regulatory authorities and the police on child safety matters as needed;
  - (e) publicising pathways for parents, students and members of the College community to raise concerns with the College; and
  - (f) empowering students to understand appropriate standards of behaviour and educating them on where they can go for help, both within the College and externally.
- 8.3 Communications will be treated confidentially on a "need to know basis". Individuals who raise a child safety concern or make a report in good faith will be supported by the College.
- 8.4 The College recognises that it can be difficult for individuals, particularly children and students, to raise a child safety concern. The College will provide support and pastoral care as appropriate to individuals who make a disclosure.
- 8.5 At all times when responding to a child safety concern or complaint, the College's priority will be the safety of all students. Where a student discloses child abuse or is otherwise linked to suspected child abuse, the College will provide support by:
- (a) offering the student access to the College's counselling and pastoral care services;
  - (b) making a referral where appropriate to external support services;
  - (c) working closely with the student's parents / carers / guardians / support network (as appropriate) to support the student in a holistic manner;
  - (d) complying with the College's Child Safety Reporting Procedure and other policies and procedure as required; and
  - (e) cooperating with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) if needed.

## **9. Breach of this policy**

Staff Members that breach this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment or engagement.

## **10. Policy & program review**

- 10.1 This policy will be reviewed every two years or as needed. The College Board will be responsible for reviewing and approving this policy consistent with EREA policies.
- 10.2 The College is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Protection Program. The Program is regularly reviewed by EREA for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection related laws, regulations and standards

## **11. Related policies, procedures and legislation**

- 11.1 Related policies and procedures:
- (a) Child Safe Code of Conduct;
  - (b) Student Code of Conduct;
  - (c) Parent Code of Conduct;
  - (d) EREA Code of Conduct;
  - (e) Child Safety Reporting Procedure;
  - (f) Recruitment and Selection Policy;
  - (g) Student Behaviour Management Policy;
  - (h) Contractor Child Safe Guidelines;
  - (i) Risk Management Procedures;
  - (j) Victorian Catholic Education Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2018;
  - (k) Training, Supervision and Professional Development; and
  - (l) Online Learning Guidelines.
- 11.2 Related legislative instruments:
- (a) *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic);
  - (b) Ministerial Order 870;
  - (c) *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic);
  - (d) *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic);
  - (e) *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic); and
  - (f) Child Safe Standards Victoria.