

# Xavier College

## Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy



### 1. BACKGROUND

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Xavier College Limited (the 'College') has established the following Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (the 'Policy'). This Policy provides key elements of the College's approach to safeguarding children from any form of child abuse. This Policy forms the foundation of the College's procedures, practices, decision-making processes and ultimately the College's culture with respect to child safety and wellbeing.

This Policy is designed to be published on the College's public website, referenced in other mediums, as appropriate, and used in the induction of College Board members, all new staff, volunteers and third party and educational service providers.

### 2. PURPOSE

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This Policy provides the framework for:

- The development of College systems, practices, procedures and guidelines which promote child safety and wellbeing
- The creation of a positive and robust child safety and wellbeing culture
- The promotion and open discussion of child safety and wellbeing issues within the College; and
- Compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child safety and wellbeing and protection in Victoria, most especially Ministerial Order 1359 - Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises ('Ministerial Order 1359').

### 3. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

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The College has **zero tolerance** for child abuse and is committed to acting in the best interests of all children and keeping them safe from harm. The College regards its child safety and wellbeing responsibilities with the utmost importance. It is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child safety and protection laws and regulations and to always uphold a child safe and wellbeing culture both in the physical and online environment.

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 safety and wellbeing framework designed to keep children safe. Further, students at the College, through our actions, processes and support, are empowered to have voice and to take action for their own care.

## 4. SCOPE

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This Policy applies to the school environment, which includes, any campus of the College, online and virtual environments and other locations provided by the College or through a third-party provider for a child or student. The Policy also applies to the school boarding environment.

This Policy applies to all College employees (partners in mission), Jesuits, directors, students, parents and guardians, third party service providers, volunteers and contractors involved in the school environment.

## 5. POLICY STATEMENT

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### 5.1 Child Safe Standards

The College recognises its responsibilities, as an organisation that provides services to children and to implement and uphold the Child Safe Standards established by Ministerial Order 1359.

The Child Safety Standards under Ministerial Order 1359 are:

- The College must establish culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children, young people and students are respected and valued
- The College must ensure that child safety and wellbeing is embedded in school and school boarding premises leadership, governance and culture
- The College must ensure that children, young people and students are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
- The College must ensure that families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
- The College must ensure that equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
- The College must ensure that people working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
- The College must ensure that processes for complaints and concerns are child focused
- The College must ensure that staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
- The College must ensure that physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children, young people and students to be harmed

- The College must ensure that implementation of its child safety and wellbeing framework is regularly reviewed and improved; and
- The College must have policies and procedures that document how the College is safe for children, young people and students.

## **5.2 Child Safety Code of Conduct**

The College has adopted the Australian Jesuit Code of Conduct which has been established and prescribed by the Australian Province of the Society of Jesus (the 'Province').

Both the Province and the College are committed to creating and maintaining environments that are safe, positive, enriching and supportive and which promote religious, educational, social, physical, professional and emotional development. All who are involved in the work of the Province and the College are deeply committed to safeguarding all people, particularly children and young people.

The first of four primary obligations within the Code of Conduct, with respect to professional and personal conduct, addresses Safeguarding Children and a duty and responsibility to promote and maintain a child safe environment and culture that cares for all persons.

## **5.3 Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Child safety is everyone's responsibility.**

All members of the College community have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and wellbeing of children.

### **5.3.1 College Board**

College Board members have the following responsibilities:

- Confirming that the College has a child safety and wellbeing framework, and it is regularly reviewed
- Promoting and encouraging a child safe and wellbeing culture throughout the College
- Ensuring that appropriate resources are made available to allow this Policy and the child safety and wellbeing framework to be effectively implemented
- Holding the Principal and the management team accountable for the effective implementation of this Policy; and
- Monitoring the College's compliance with this Policy and other regulatory obligations with respect to child safety and wellbeing.

### **5.3.2 The Principal**

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for:

- Taking all practical measures to ensure that this Policy and the College's child safety and wellbeing framework are implemented effectively
- Resources being deployed to ensure that this Policy is implemented effectively
- Ensuring that there are appropriate procedures, processes and systems for reporting child safety and wellbeing matters
- Ensuring that child safety and wellbeing matters are reported to the appropriate authorities in a professional and timely manner
- Informing the College Board via the Chair of the Board and/or Chair of the Child Safety & Risk Committee and log the matter with the Head of Standards, Safety & Risk; and
- Cultivating and sustaining a robust child safety and wellbeing culture across the College.

### **5.3.3 The College Child Safety Leads**

The College's Child Safety Leads are responsible for:

- Maintaining a strong understanding of this Policy
- Working with the College's Principal to manage the College's response to any child abuse allegation or disclosure of child abuse and that all disclosures are taken seriously
- Ensuring that the child safety and wellbeing framework is being implemented across the College effectively
- Being an advocate for child safety and wellbeing practices across the College; and
- Training and assisting staff about the signs of child abuse and how to report matters internally or to external bodies.

### **5.3.4 Staff Members**

College staff members are responsible for:

- Being familiar with the content of this Policy, the College's child safety and wellbeing framework and the Code of Conduct
- Complying with this Policy in all material respects
- Understanding and meeting their legal obligations with respect to reporting disclosures of child abuse
- Being aware of key risk indicators of child abuse; and

- Reporting any concerns they may have relating to child abuse to one of the College's Child Safety Leads in a timely and confidential matter.

### **5.3.5 Volunteers**

All Volunteers are responsible for:

- Being familiar with the contents of this Policy, the College's child safety and wellbeing framework, Code of Conduct and their legal obligations with respect to reporting child abuse
- Complying with this Policy in all material respects
- Being aware of key risk indicators of child abuse; and
- Reporting any concerns they may have relating to child abuse to their supervisor.

### **5.3.6 Third Party Service Providers**

All Third Party Service Providers engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and wellbeing of children within the College environment.

All Third Party Service Providers are responsible for complying with this Policy, the Code of Conduct and reporting any concerns they may have relating to child abuse to their supervisor.

### **5.3.7 Contractors**

All Contractors engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and wellbeing of children within the College environment.

All Contractors are responsible for complying with this Policy, the Code of Conduct and reporting any concerns they may have relating to child abuse to their supervisor.

The College may include these requirements in the written agreement between it and the Contractor.

### **5.3.8 External Education Providers**

All External Education Providers engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and wellbeing of children in the College environment.

All External Education Providers are responsible for complying with this Policy, the Code of Conduct and reporting any concerns they may have relating to child abuse to their supervisor.

The College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

## 5.4 Child Safety and Wellbeing Values and Principles

The College's commitment to child safety and wellbeing is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of the College's work systems, practices, procedures and guidelines to protect children from abuse:

- All children have the right to be safe
- The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount
- The views of the child and a child's privacy must be always respected
- Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in the Code of Conduct and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy
- The safety and wellbeing of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe and wellbeing culture
- Child safety and wellbeing awareness is promoted and openly discussed within the College community
- Procedures are in place to screen all staff, Volunteers, Third Party Service Providers, Contractors and External Education Providers who have direct contact with children
- Child safety and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility
- Child safety and wellbeing training is mandatory for all College Board members, staff and Volunteers
- Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of the College community
- Children from culturally, linguistically or other diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander or as part of the LGBTQIA+ community; and
- Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.

## 5.5 Child Safety and Wellbeing Framework

The College is committed to the effective implementation of its child safety and wellbeing framework and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

The College has adopted a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety and wellbeing 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.

The College's child safety and wellbeing framework relates to all aspects of protecting young people and children from abuse and establishes systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.

The College's child safety and wellbeing framework includes:

- Clear information to students about all their rights, including to safety, information and participation
- Clear information on how staff can develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and students
- Clear information to students on how they can participate and how staff can be responsive to student contributions to strengthen confidence and engagement
- Clear information to staff and volunteers as to what constitutes child abuse and associated key risk indicators and how to facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns
- Clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse
- Strategies to support, encourage and enable all staff, Volunteers, Third Party Service Providers, Contractors, External Education Providers, parents and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety and wellbeing matters
- Procedures for recruiting and screening College Board members, all staff and Volunteers (as it relates to clause 10 of Ministerial Order 1359)
- Procedures for reporting Reportable Conduct and/or misconduct (as referenced in the Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse and Student Sexual Offending Policy)
- Procedures for Mandatory Reporting (as referenced in the Mandatory Reporting Policy)
- Pastoral care strategies designed to empower students, to promote student voice and agency, and to keep them safe and well (as referenced in the Participation and Empowerment of Students Policy)
- Pastoral care strategies that recognise the importance of friendships and support from peers and to help students feel safe and less isolated
- Policies with respect to the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal students, students who identify as part of the LGBTQIA+ community, students who are linguistically or culturally diverse and students with disabilities (as it relates to clause 5 in Ministerial Order 1359)
- Seeking the feedback of parents about the College's child safety and wellbeing policies and involving families in decisions relating to the safety and wellbeing of their children
- A child safety and wellbeing training program
- Information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist students
- Guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality

- Policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards; and
- A system for continuous review and improvement (as it relates to clause 14 in Ministerial Order 1359).

As a part of the College's induction process, all staff and Volunteers are required to complete training modules on the Code of Conduct, with further training through the Australian Childhood Foundation. Further, acknowledgement of the Province Code of Conduct is required.

All Board members, staff and Volunteers are provided with additional and ongoing child safety training. This is offered at regular intervals.

Staff, Volunteers, Third Party Service Providers, Contractors and External Education Providers are supported and supervised by the College's Child Safety Leads to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child safety and wellbeing.

## 5.6 Online and Virtual Environment Safety

The College is committed to actively promoting an online and virtual safe environment that is free from cyberbullying, sexting, identity theft and predatory behaviour.

Cyber safety is managed through a whole of College approach involving students, parents and College staff. Age-appropriate strategies have been devised to identify cyber safety issues and how to respond appropriately. The College will review its approach to online and virtual safety on a regular basis to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students is maintained.

## 5.7 Reporting Child Safety Concerns

The College's child safety and wellbeing framework provides detailed guidance for members of the College community as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of the College's nominated Child Safety Leads. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

**Staff, Volunteers, Third Party Service Providers, Contractors, External Education Providers, students, parents/guardians and other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to child abuse or grooming are asked to contact one of the relevant Child Safety Leads on the relevant campus immediately as noted below.**

All communications will be treated privately and confidentially.

The Child Safety Leads and their relevant contact details across the College campuses are outlined below and on the College website.



Name	Campus	Position	Phone	Email
Jeremy Nicholls	Senior Campus	Head of Students	03 9815 4882	Jeremy.Nicholls@xavier.vic.edu.au
Maree Girolami	Burke Hall	Student Wellbeing Coordinator	03 9855 4130 (Mob: 0418 139 653)	Maree.Girolami@xavier.vic.edu.au

## 5.8 Review of Child Safety and Wellbeing Framework

The College will review its compliance with Ministerial Order 1359 and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations on an annual basis. This review may be performed internally, however, once every three years an external consultant will be engaged to perform a review of the child safety and wellbeing framework.

The scope of the review will include whether:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing policies have been documented and adequately address Ministerial Order 1359 and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Ministerial Order 1359 and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations have been implemented throughout the College; and
- The College has materially complied with Ministerial Order 1359 and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

The College will also consider any complaints, concerns and safety and wellbeing incidents which are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures and will be used to inform continuous improvement.

The outcomes of these reviews will be reported to the College community via newsletters and the Annual Report which is published and available to the College community.

## 6. RELATED POLICES, PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTS

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- Jesuit Province Code of Conduct
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse and Student Sexual Offending Policy
- Reportable Conduct Policy
- Student Care Policy
- Creating and Maintaining a Child Safety Environment Policy
- Participation and Empowerment of Children Policy
- Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy

## 7. BREACHES OF THIS POLICY

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If you believe that the College has breached its obligations, please contact the Principal in writing or telephone. The College will investigate your notification and will inform you of the outcome as soon as is practicable after a decision has been made.

The College Principal can be contacted on:

- Telephone: (03) 9854 5411
- In Writing: The Principal, Xavier College, 135 Barkers Road KEW, VIC 3101
- Email: [principal@xavier.vic.edu.au](mailto:principal@xavier.vic.edu.au)

Alternatively, the Director of Culture, Risk & Standards at the Australian Province at the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) can be contacted on:

- Telephone: (03) 9810 7300
- In Writing: Director of Culture, Risk & Standards, PO Box 6071, HAWTHORN, VIC 3122
- Email: [professionalstandards@sjasl.org.au](mailto:professionalstandards@sjasl.org.au)

Certain incidents might be covered by the College's Whistleblower Policy which can be found [here](#).

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that all breaches of this Policy and underlying policies, guidelines and procedures are escalated to the Child Safety & Risk Committee as soon as possible.

A breach of this Policy may lead to disciplinary action including possible termination of employment or appointment and/or referral to the appropriate authorities.

## 8. FURTHER INFORMATION

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If you would like further information about the way the College manages its child safety commitments, the first point of contact is to the relevant Director of Campus.

### **POLICY RATIFICATION AND REVIEW:**

The College's policies are ratified by the Xavier College Limited Board.

This Policy will be reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if required.

## 9. DEFINITIONS

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**Child Abuse:** The College takes child abuse to have the same meaning as it has in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005.

**Child Safety:** The College takes this term to include matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse.

**School Boarding Environment:** The College takes this to mean any physical, online or virtual space made available or authorised by the College Board for a child or student boarding at a school boarding premises to use at any time, including:

- a. Online or virtual school boarding environments (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services)
- b. Other locations provided by the provider of school boarding services or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for:
  - i. Camps
  - ii. Approved homestay accommodation
  - iii. Delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school; or
  - iv. Sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.

**School Environment:** The College takes this to mean any of the following physical, online or virtual places, used during or outside school hours:

- a. A campus of the school;
- b. Online or virtual school environments made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child or student (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services); and
- c. Other locations provided by the school or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for:
  - i. Camps
  - ii. Approved homestay accommodation
  - iii. delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school; or
  - iv. Sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.

**Student:** A person who is enrolled at or attends the College or a student at the school boarding premises.

**Volunteer:** A person who performs work without remuneration or reward for the College or school boarding premises in the school environment or school boarding premises environment.

**External Education Provider** is 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.

**Contractors** are third party contractors who have any contact with students during the normal course of their work or contractors who may be in a position to establish a relationship of trust. This also includes any contractors that the College is legally required to screen.

**Third Party Service Providers** include, but are not limited to, organisations providing cleaning services and consultants. Any entity that does not meet the definition of a contractor will fall into this category.