



Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Policy

Mandurah Baptist College is committed to being a child safe organisation and will demonstrate its leadership and commitment to student safety and wellbeing through the implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

The College provides a safe environment where students' rights, needs and interests are being met and where all students are protected from all forms of harm.

Students, families and the community can be confident that the College puts the best interest of students first and their safety and wellbeing is the centre of thought, values and actions.

Our Commitment to Student Safety and Wellbeing

- Our College Board, leaders, staff and volunteers model attitudes and behaviours that show they are committed to student safety and wellbeing.
- Our College Board, leaders, staff and volunteers understand their responsibilities for child safe practices and use this to inform their actions.
- Students share their views and participate in decision making.
- The College values students' views.
- The College communicates with families and communities about how we ensure student safety and wellbeing.
- The College involves families and communities in conversations about student safety and wellbeing.
- All students are able to participate in College life and activities, regardless of circumstances and backgrounds.
- Staff and volunteers effectively support students with diverse needs.
- Staff and volunteers are carefully selected.
- The College continuously supports and supervises staff and volunteers to meet their child safety responsibilities.
- The College has accessible procedures for raising and responding to concerns and complaints.
- The College takes all concerns and complaints seriously, and follows up with everyone involved.
- Staff and volunteers are regularly encouraged to and have access to information and training on child safety and wellbeing.
- Staff and volunteers respond effectively when issues of child safety and wellbeing arise.
- The College's risk management program and practices addresses physical and online risks.
- The College regularly reviews child safe practices and uses reviews to improve those practices.
- The College's policies and procedures on child protection and student safety and wellbeing are documented and easily accessible.
- Everyone in the College knows how to apply the child protection and student safety and wellbeing policies and procedures.

Terminology used

A *Child Safe Organisation* puts the best interests of children and young people first and creates a culture, adopts strategies and takes action to provide safe environments where their rights, needs and interests are met; promotes child wellbeing; and, prevents *harm* to children and young people.

A Child Safe Organisation consciously and systematically:

- creates an environment where children's safety and wellbeing is the centre of thought, values and actions
- places emphasis on genuine engagement with, and valuing of, children and young people
- creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of *harm* to children and young people
- creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any *harm*
- responds to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of *harm*.

[\(<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/about/what-child-safe-organisation>\)](https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/about/what-child-safe-organisation)

Harm can take many forms such as intentional and unintentional physical and emotional harm, accidental injury, exposure to physical hazards, bullying and cyberbullying, child abuse and neglect, exposure to violence and grooming.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations were developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission and agreed to by the Council of Australian Governments in February 2019, including the Premier of Western Australia. The National Principles provide a nationally consistent approach to embedding child safe cultures within organisations that engage with children and young people.

The National Principles reflect the ten child safe standards recommended by the *Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse*. The National Principles have a broader scope that goes beyond child sexual abuse to cover other forms of potential harm to children and young people and are underpinned by a child rights, strengths-based approach¹.

The National Principles are:

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

¹ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (Ratified by Australia in 1990)

9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.
<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/national-principles/about-national-principles>

Responsibilities

Ensuring children and young people are safe from harm is everyone's responsibility. At Mandurah Baptist College, all members of the College Board, senior management, staff and volunteers have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Specific responsibilities include:

- **College Board**

The Board is accountable for the effective implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and ensuring that child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

The Board has a non-delegable duty of care for the students to ensure that reasonable steps are taken for the safety of the students while they are on the school premises during the hours when the school is open and during school-related off-site activities.

The Board is responsible for undertaking comprehensive risk audits in relation to child safety.

- **Principals**

The Principals are responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within the College.

- **Senior Management**

Senior management is responsible for the implementation of strategies to build a positive school culture that fosters caring and respectful relationships between students and their teachers and for creating a safe and supportive teaching and learning community that promotes student safety and wellbeing, upholds equity and values diversity.

- **Teachers**

Teachers have a duty to take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of all students in the school. This duty requires the teacher to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and welfare of the students from both known and reasonably foreseeable risks of harm and/or injury.

- **Staff**

Staff are required to:

- champion and model a child safe culture.
- have a sound knowledge of children's rights, including their rights to feel safe and be heard, and the accountabilities that accompany these rights.
- adhere to the Code of Conduct and the guidelines on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.

- be familiar with the Student Safety and Wellbeing and Child Protection policies and procedures and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and grooming.
- be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse and grooming, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse and grooming with the Principal. Staff understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping.

- **Volunteers**

Volunteers are required to:

- champion and model a child safe culture.
- adhere to the Code of Conduct and the guidelines on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.
- complete induction training before commencement of duties and provide their working with children checks.
- report all child safety concerns to the Principal, which includes safety incidents and child abuse concerns.

Reporting Concerns

The College takes seriously its commitment to student safety and wellbeing, and will immediately respond to student safety incidents, complaints and allegations of grooming, child abuse and breaches of the code of conduct or student code of conduct in the best interests of students and in accordance with College policies and procedures. Incidents will be reported promptly to the appropriate authorities by following College procedures.

Contractors, volunteers, visitors, students, parents/guardians or other community members who have concerns that a child may be at risk of abuse or harm are to discuss their concerns with the Principal.

The Principal will nominate staff to assist in coordinating responses to student safety incidents.

This excludes mandated reporters' obligations to report any sexual abuse concerns to Mandatory Reporting Services.