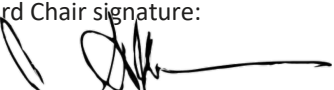




Child Protection Policy

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Introduction

Southern Christian College believes that all students have the right to enjoy and experience a safe learning environment. The College is committed to developing an environment of trust and respect between students, staff and adults who form our College community. All College staff have a professional, legal and moral responsibility to ensure that all students within the College environment are safe and protected.

Purpose

The Child Protection Policy is an overarching policy that guides the College's approach as a child safe organisation and sets out the College's strategies to ensure compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Tasmania.

Scope

The College's Child Protection Policy applies to all adults in the College community, including Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, External Education Providers, parents/carers and other family members. This policy applies in all College environments, both physical and online, and on-site and off-site College grounds (e.g. camps and excursions).

The Child Protection Policy relates to all aspects of child safety and protecting students from abuse or other harm, and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe environment and culture at the College.

Background

Children and students have a right to safety; emotionally, mentally and physically. All employees of Southern Christian College have a role to play in keeping our students safe from harm. Harm can take many forms such as accidental injury, exposure to physical hazards, bullying by peers, neglect, emotional abuse, physical abuse and sexual abuse. The College has a duty of care to keep all our students safe and to respect their rights.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the College:

- Creates an environment where student's safety and wellbeing is the centre of thought, values and actions;
- Places emphasis on genuine engagement with, and valuing of students;
- Creates conditions that reduce the likelihood of harm to students;
- Creates conditions that increase the likelihood of identifying any harm;
- Responds to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions;
- Develops and maintains a corporate culture that does not expressly, tacitly or through implication, foster an environment that is unsafe for children;

- Takes reasonable precautions to manage, control and supervise the conduct of persons involved in the organisation;
- And its staff fulfil their duty of care responsibilities towards students in managing and providing an appropriate level of first aid; and
- Staff act according to relevant legislation relating to child protection, information technology specifically, and other relevant Legislative Acts or Guidelines.

Policy

The Southern Christian College Child Protection Policy implements and is to be read and understood in conjunction with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, published by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Child Safeguarding Standards

The College's commitment to child safety is based on the **National Principles for Child Safe Organisations** published by the Australian Human Rights Commission, which sets out the following overarching standards that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect students from abuse and other harm.

- Standard 1 – Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture;
- Standard 2 – Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously;
- Standard 3 – Families and communities are informed and involved;
- Standard 4 – Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are taken into account;
- Standard 5 – People working with children are suitable and supported;
- Standard 6 – Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused;
- Standard 7 – Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training;
- Standard 8 – Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur;
- Standard 9 – Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved; and
- Standard 10 – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe.

The College's aim is to work towards what is best for each child, including assisting families to fulfill their responsibilities for the safety, care, upbringing and development of their children.¹

Child Safeguarding

Southern Christian College is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Protection Policy 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

¹ <https://www.unicef.org.au/our-work/information-for-children/un-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>

based on a range of factors including the nature of our College's activities, physical and online environments and the characteristics of the student body.

As a part of the College's induction process, all Staff, as well as Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors are required to complete induction in our child protection policies, practices and procedures. All Staff, as well as Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors also receive refresher and ongoing child protection training, when applicable.

Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors are supported and monitored by the College's Child Protection Officer(s) and Executive Team to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child safety.

Working with Vulnerable People Check

The Act requires that, subject to relevant exemptions, any worker who engages in child-related work that involves direct contact (physical or face to face) with a child or children (aged under 18) and whose contact is a usual part of and more than incidental to the work, must have a current Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) in order to work at the College.

While the Act exempts some people from needing a WWVP to volunteer or otherwise work with children, it is the College's Policy that all Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors must hold a valid WWVC.

Directors of the Board must hold a WWVP check clearance and demonstrate that each responsible person is a 'fit and proper person' to fulfill the position. People who work or volunteer as a referee, umpire, linesperson or other sporting official or grounds person for the College are also required to hold a valid WWVP if they are either a Regular Volunteer or a Regular Contractor.

The College may require that any volunteers and Contractors who are legally exempt from holding a WWVP to complete a Statutory Declaration, under the Oaths Act 2001 (Tas) Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas s18).

Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns to the College

Our Child Protection Policy provides guidance for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors on how to identify key indicators of child abuse and other harm and how to report child safety incidents or concerns internally at the College or to relevant external authorities. Students at the College are provided with information about and encouraged to use multiple pathways to raise child safety incidents or concerns about or at the College. These include informal and formal ways, an 'anonymous' way, and through external child advocacy or child safety organisations.

Parents/carers, family members and other community members who have child safety concerns or who suspect that a child or young person associated with the College may be subject to abuse or other harm can contact:

- The Head of Pastoral Care, by phoning 03 6229 5744 or emailing leaora.adams-bell@scc.tas.edu.au; or
- The Head of Secondary School / Head of Primary School, by phoning 03 6229 5744 or emailing david.witcomb@scc.tas.edu.au / jenny.mahoney@scc.tas.edu.au; or
- The Principal, by phoning 03 6229 5744 or emailing principal@scc.tas.edu.au or, if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of the Board by emailing chairman@scc.tas.edu.au

Students, parents/carers, family members and other community members can also raise child safety incidents or concerns through the College's Grievance Policy and the College's Complaints and Grievances Procedure. Any person can also contact the Child Protection Officer(s), the Principal or Heads of School and/or Head of Pastoral Care if they have concerns regarding the College's leadership in relation to child safety. Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

Whenever there are concerns that a child or young person is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000. For more information, refer to the College Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents and Concerns and the Process Summary for Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns.

Responsibilities for Child Protection at the College

Child Protection is everyone's responsibility. All adults in the College community including staff members, volunteers and contractors have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of students. They are required to comply with our Child Protection Policy and Codes of conduct, understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm, and raise all child safety incidents and concerns with the College's Child Protection Officer(s).

The College's Child Protection Officers

A number of senior staff members are nominated as the College's Child Protection Officers. Our Child Protection Officer(s) receive additional specialised training with respect to child safety and protection issues. They are a point of contact for raising child safety concerns within the College. They are also responsible for championing child protection within the College and assisting in coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

Contact details for our Child Protection Officers are set out below:

Position	Contact No.
Head of School (Secondary)	03 6229 5744
Head of School (Primary)	03 6229 5744
Head of Pastoral Care	03 6229 5744

The Heads of School, and Head of Pastoral Care have additional child protection responsibilities, such as being a first point of contact for all child safety concerns or queries for the wider community and coordinating the College's response to child safety incidents in consultation with the Principal, the Executive Team and the Board.

Record Keeping

All records created in accordance with this policy, including all complaints and allegations of staff misconduct or reportable conduct are maintained by the Principal. In maintaining records of child safety incidents or concerns, the College maintains confidentiality and privacy for students and families in accordance with federal and state privacy legislation.

Non-Compliance with Our Child Protection Policy

The College enforces this Child Protection Policy and our Codes of Conduct. In the event of any non-compliance, the College will instigate a review that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- Remedial education;
- Counselling;
- Increased supervision;
- The restriction of duties;
- Suspension; or
- In the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement.

Other relevant reference documents

- Commonwealth Child Safe Framework 2020 (2nd edition);
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (TAS);
- Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997
- the Education Act 2016 (TAS);
- the Crimes Act 2013 (TAS); and
- the Civil Liability Act 2002 (TAS);

- Recognising Signs of Child Abuse
https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/AG.DIBP.02.0033.001.0178_R.pdf
- <https://www.unicef.org.au/our-work/information-for-children/un-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>

There are a number of other College policies, procedures and guidelines that relate to child protection including (but not limited to):

- SCC Child Safe Tasmanian Legislation Statement 2022
- SCC Student Welfare Compliance Statement 2022
- SCC Staff Statement of Commitment to Child Safety 2022
- SCC Staff Professional Code of Conduct Policy 2022
- SCC Student Code of Conduct Policy 2022
- SCC Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy
- SCC Grievance Policy
- SCC Privacy Policy
- SCC Mandatory Reporting Policy
- SCC Procedures for Handling Allegations of Staff Misconduct and Reportable Conduct
- SCC Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns
- SCC Process Summary for Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns
- SCC Staff Safeguarding and Protective Practices 2022

APPENDIX: Definitions

1. Child and Young Person

Child and Young Person

A child is defined, in the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (TAS) and for the purposes of our Child Protection Policy and related procedures, as a person who is under the age of 16 years.

A young person is defined, in the Care and Protection Act and for the purposes of our Child Protection Policy and related procedures, as a person aged 16 or 17.

Note however that for some of the child abuse offences in the Crimes Act 1900 (TAS) (particularly those relating to sexual offences), a child is defined as a person under the age of 16. For the purposes of the Failure to Protect and Reporting to Police (Failure to Report) offences, note that the Crimes Act 1900 (TAS) defines a child as a person under the age of 18. For the purposes of Reportable Conduct and Working with Vulnerable People Registration obligations, a child is defined as a person under the age of 18.

Student

The term 'student' refers to any student enrolled at the College, including those aged 18 and above. It is the College's policy that our policies and procedures about the internal and external reporting of child safety incidents and concerns are to be followed for child safety incidents and concerns about students aged 18 years and above, provided that – for external reporting – the relevant student consents to the report.

2. Child Safety Incident or Concern

The key indicators of child abuse and other harm are set out in Recognising Signs of Child Abuse. These are considered 'child safety incidents or concerns' for the purposes of our Child Protection Policy and related procedures. Breaches of the Staff Safeguarding and Protective Practices are also considered 'child safety incidents or concerns.'

3. Worker and Child-related Work

A **worker**, for the purposes of the Child Protection Policy, means any person who is engaged in work, as:

- An employee
- A self-employed person
- A contractor or subcontractor (Third Party Contractor)
- A volunteer
- A person undertaking practical training as part of an educational or vocational course (other than as a College student undertaking work experience), or
- A minister, priest, rabbi, mufti or other like religious leader, or spiritual officer of a religion, or other member of a religious organisation.

Child-related work is defined in both the Act and the Regulation.

It includes work for, or in connection with, any of the following **if** the work involves **direct contact (physical or face to face)** with a child or children **which is a usual part of (and more than incidental to)** the work:

- Mentoring and counselling services for children
- Direct provision of child health services
- Disability services for children with a disability
- Clubs, associations, movements, societies or other bodies (including bodies of a cultural, recreational or sporting nature) providing programs or services for children
- Education and care services, child care centres, nanny services and other child care
- Colleges or other educational institutions
- Sporting, cultural or other entertainment venues used primarily by children and entertainment services for children
- Justice services such as detention centres
- Any religious organisation where children form part of the congregation
- Private coaching or tuition to children
- Boarding houses or other residential services for children and overnight camps for children
- Transport services especially for children, including College bus services and taxi services for children with a disability and supervision of College road crossings.

Child-related work also includes:

- A cleaner providing cleaning services at the College, even though they might not have direct contact with children; and
- A worker providing ongoing, counselling, mentoring or distance education using any form of communication that does not primarily involve direct contact (physical or face-to-face contact).

4. Direct Contact, Regular and Casual Volunteers and Contractors

A volunteer is a person who works without payment or financial reward for the College. Volunteers may be members of the College board, family members of students, or from the wider College or local community. Volunteers make a considerable contribution to the College community by giving their time and sharing their skills and expertise with others. Southern Christian College has identified three different categories of Volunteers, based on the level and frequency of their interaction with students. Volunteers' responsibilities and obligations under the Child Protection Policy may depend on their category. The categories of Volunteer are:

- Direct Contact Volunteers;
- Regular Volunteers; and
- Casual Volunteers.

Where the term "Volunteer" is used, it captures "Direct Contact Volunteers", "Regular Volunteers" and "Casual Volunteers".

Direct Contact Volunteer

Direct Contact Volunteers are individuals who provide volunteer services to the College where, in the normal course of providing the services, they could potentially have direct contact with students in circumstances where:

- They may be left alone, one-on-one, with a student (for example, 1:1 tutoring or learning support); or
- A reasonable person would consider that the contact may enable the individual to form a relationship of trust with a student (for example, coaching a sports team, helping with a drama production, or regularly working in a canteen or library); or
- A reasonable person would consider that the contact could create a potential risk to the safety of a student (for example, responsibility for a group of students during an excursion without a member of Staff present).

Due to the nature of Direct Contact Volunteers' contact with students, they will have more comprehensive child protection responsibilities and obligations within our Child Protection Policy.

Regular Volunteer

Regular Volunteers are individuals who provide volunteer services to the College, more than five times in any one year, but are not a Direct Contact Volunteer. They may have some indirect or limited contact with students when providing their services.

Due to the regular nature of Direct Contact Volunteers' attendance at the College or College events, even though their contact with students may be indirect or limited, they will have some child protection responsibilities and obligations within our Child Protection Policy.

Casual Volunteer

Casual Volunteers are individuals who provide volunteer services to the College, five times or less in any one year, during which they may have indirect or limited contact with students, but only in circumstances where they:

- Are not likely to be left alone, one-on-one, with a student; or
- A reasonable person would not consider the contact to enable the individual to form a relationship of trust with a student; or
- A reasonable person would not consider the contact to create a risk to the safety of a student.

Due to the limited nature of Casual Volunteers' contact with students, they do not have the same comprehensive role, responsibilities and obligations as College staff members or Direct or Regular Contact Volunteers.

Contractors

On occasion it may be necessary for the College to engage outside, independent contractors to perform specific tasks. These Contractors are not employees of Southern Christian College. Contractors may include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, tutors, sports coaches and cleaners.

Southern Christian College has identified three different categories of Contractors, based on the level and frequency of their interaction with students. Contractors' responsibilities and obligations under the Child Protection Policy may depend on their category. These categories are:

- Direct Contact Contractors;
- Regular Contractors; and
- Casual Contractors.

Where the term 'Contractor' is used, it captures 'Direct Contact Contractors,' 'Regular Contractors' and 'Casual Contractors'.

Direct Contact Contractor

Direct Contact Contractors are individuals who provide contractor services to the College where, in the normal course of providing the services, they could potentially have direct contact with students in circumstances where:

- They may be left alone, one-on-one, with a student (for example, 1:1 tutor or learning support); or
- A reasonable person would consider that the contact may enable the individual to form a relationship of trust with a student (for example, casual teacher, coach of a sports team, music tutor, canteen worker, regular maintenance worker); or
- A reasonable person would consider that the contact could create a potential risk to the safety of a student (for example, casual teacher, music tutor).

This also includes music tutors and other extra-curricular tutors and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the College, but have an agreement with the College to use the College's facilities. Due to the nature of Direct Contact Contractors' contact with students, they will have more comprehensive child protection responsibilities and obligations within our Child Protection Policy.

Regular Contractor

Regular Contractors are individuals who provide contractor services to the College more than five times in any one year, and are not Direct Contact Contractors. They may have some indirect or limited contact with students when providing their services.

Examples of Regular Contractors may include:

- Consultants;
- Maintenance workers who regularly work at times when students are not expected to be present; or
- Regular caterers.

Due to the regular nature of Regular Contractors' attendance at the College or College events, even though their contact with students may be indirect or limited, they will have some child protection responsibilities and obligations within our Child Protection Policy.

Casual Contractor

Casual Contractors are individuals who provide contractor services to the College, five times or less in any one year, during which they may have indirect or limited contact with students, but only in circumstances where they:

- Are not left alone, one-on-one, with a student; and
- A reasonable person would not consider the contact to enable the individual to form a relationship or trust with a student; and
- A reasonable person would not consider the contact to create a risk to the safety of a student.

Due to the limited nature of Casual Contractors' contact with students, they do not have the same comprehensive role, responsibilities and obligations as College staff members or Direct or Regular Contact Contractors.

External Education Providers

An 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. This may include:

- Another registered College;
- A government College (including Distance Education Centres)
- TAFE Colleges;
- Registered Training Organisations (RTOs); and
- Other external providers with appropriate scope of registration, qualifications and expertise.

The delivery of such a course may take place on College premises or elsewhere.

For the purposes of our Child Protection Policy, External Education Providers are considered Direct Contact Contractors.

5. Responsible Person

The term 'responsible person' is defined as:

1. The proprietor of the College and, if the proprietor is a corporation, each director or person concerned in the management of the College (including trustees), or
2. A member of the governing body of the College, or
3. The Principal of the College.