



Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

St Catherine's School is a Child Safe organisation and is committed to embedding a child safe culture into our practices and processes, and to take action to ensure that a child safe culture is championed and modelled across the school. We are committed to providing environments where our students, including Aboriginal students, are physically, socially, emotionally and culturally safe and feel safe. Students' participation and inclusion is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the diverse cultural backgrounds and needs of all children and students, including Aboriginal students.

St Catherine's School recognises that the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse Final Report identified specific groups of students being at heightened risk, including Aboriginal students, Boarders and International Students. Consistent with the requirements of the National Code 2018, the VRQA Guidelines, Ministerial Order 1359 and their intersection with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, the School is committed to mitigating risk for all students, with specific policies, processes and procedures addressing the needs of these students.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect and reinforced through the School Values, the Wellbeing program and the Learning Framework.

St Catherine's School has zero tolerance for child abuse and all staff employed by St Catherine's School are responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and to report information about suspected child abuse.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment through risk assessment, mitigation and management. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Staff training and community awareness processes emphasise that every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We value student input to planning and procedures to prioritise their safety and inclusion and the Towards 2025 Strategic Plan includes a focus on Student Voice. A Student Voice Child Safety Group has been established, in addition to broader consultation of the student body via workshops and surveys.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.