

CHILD SAFE POLICY



METHODIST
LADIES'
COLLEGE

Policy Owner	Principal	Review cycle	Annual
Approval Authority	Council	Next review	June 2026
Category	Pastoral Care	Commencement	2025
Date last modified	June 2025	Ratified by Council	June 2025

If there is a concern that a child or young person is in immediate danger, call the Police on 000.

Rationale

All children have the right to feel safe at school and in their wider community. MLC is committed to being a child-safe organisation and ensuring the safety, welfare and overall wellbeing of children and young people at the College.

This policy provides the framework for:

- how the College implements the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations;
- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection, safety and wellbeing;
- the promotion of open discussion of child safety matters within the College; and
- compliance with applicable laws, regulations and standards relating to child protection and safety.

Scope

This policy applies to all adults in the MLC Community. This includes all adults involved in any kind of child-related work at the College (including staff, members of Council, volunteers, contractors, consultants, trainees, external education providers) and parents/guardians and other family members. This policy applies to all College-related activities and environments, both physical and online, and on- or off-campus.

Statement of Commitment

All children and young people have a right to feel safe at MLC. The College is committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment in which young people can actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

The College has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse or harm. The College is committed to providing the necessary resources to fulfill child protection responsibilities and compliance with the law.

Each member of the MLC Community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play, individually and collectively, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all students is at the forefront of everything they do.

Reporting child safety incidents or concerns to the College

All adults involved in any kind of child-related work at the College (e.g. staff, members of Council, volunteers, contractors, consultants, trainees and external education providers) are provided with information on how to identify and report concerns of child abuse, grooming, misconduct or other harm. All concerns and suspicions must be reported.

Students are provided with age-appropriate information, education, and multiple pathways to raise concerns or incidents. Children and young people are encouraged to speak up about any concern – big or small – that worries them or makes them feel unsafe, and with any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable.

Parents/carers, family members and other community members who have child safety concerns (including suspicions that a child or young person associated with the College may have been/is being harmed, groomed or abused) should contact the Principal, Rebecca Clarke. If the concern relates to a child safety matter involving the Principal, the Chair of the College Council may be contacted.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

Child Safety Program

The College adopts a risk management approach to identify, assess and manage child safety risks. The College is committed to the effective implementation of a child safety program which establishes policies, procedures and work practices to protect children from abuse and promote a child-safe environment.



This includes but is not limited to the following:

- Policies and procedures, including relevant Codes of Conduct, which clearly outline expected standards of behaviour;
- Policies and procedures relating to how to respond to and report child safety incidents, including the requirement for all adults involved in any child-related work at the College to report any observations, concerns or allegations of misconduct;
- Procedures for reporting to external agencies (e.g. Mandatory Reporting Service, Department of Communities, Police, Reportable Conduct Scheme via the WA Ombudsman);
- Strategies to support and encourage all members of the MLC Community identify and report child safety concerns;
- Recruitment, screening, selection, induction, and ongoing professional development practices that address child safety concerns;
- Child Protection education and training for all staff and clear information regarding what constitutes child abuse and key risk indicators of child abuse, grooming and other harm;
- Pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe;
- Student-focused child safety curriculum which is age and developmental-stage appropriate; and
- A system for continuous review and improvement.

Children and young people’s rights to safety, information and participation

The College seeks to include students in the decisions that affect them. This includes decisions about safety and wellbeing, management of facilities and classroom learning and assessment environments. We actively seek to understand what makes student feel safe at MLC and regularly communicate with students about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We ensure our students know about their rights to safety, information and participation. We recognise the importance of support from peers and staff.

Parents/carers, families and community involvement

The College recognises that parents/carers have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their children. We provide families with ways to participate in decisions affecting their children and awareness of important policies and procedures. We actively seek to include families in decisions about MLC’s future planning, curriculum, management of facilities, and classroom learning and assessment environments.

We build a culture of child safety at the College through our partnerships with our students, staff, families, Collegians and the broader community.

Valuing inclusivity and diversity

The College does not tolerate any discriminatory practices. All members of the MLC Community have a right to feel safe. We seek to strengthen cultural safety at the College through community partnerships, education and continuous improvement in both our practices and the physical environment of the College.

Responsibilities

Child safety is everyone’s responsibility. All adults in the MLC Community are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students. All adults involved in any kind of child-related work at the College are required to report any concerns or suspicions of child abuse, grooming or other harm.

Members of the Executive Leadership Team serve as the College’s Child Protection Officers. These individuals are the primary point of contact for child safety and protection issues and responsible for championing child safety within the College. As the Senior Child Protection Officer, the Principal is the primary point of contact for child safety matters and responsible for coordinating responses to child safety incidents:

Senior Child Protection Officer	Principal Rebecca Clarke	Principal@mlc.wa.edu.au +61 (08) 9384 4000
Child Protection Officer	Deputy Principal ELC-Year 6 Kylie Cross	DPELC6@mlc.wa.edu.au +61 (08) 9384 4000
Child Protection Officer	Deputy Principal Years 7-12 Katy Moore	DP712@mlc.wa.edu.au +61 (08) 9384 4000

If the concern relates to a child safety matter involving the Principal, the Chair of the College Council may be contacted.

The College Council

The College Council is responsible for approving policies and procedures relating to child safety and ensuring the College has the appropriate resources to implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible for the operational management of the College and leading the Child Safety Program. This includes taking all practical measures to ensure policies and procedures are implemented effectively and cultivating a strong child safe culture within the College.

The Executive and Senior Leadership Teams

Each member of the Executive and Senior Leadership Teams will comply with policies and procedures relating to child safety, support the Principal in the practical application of the College's policies, strategies, procedures and work systems, and ensure appropriate resources are available to their area of operations.

Staff members

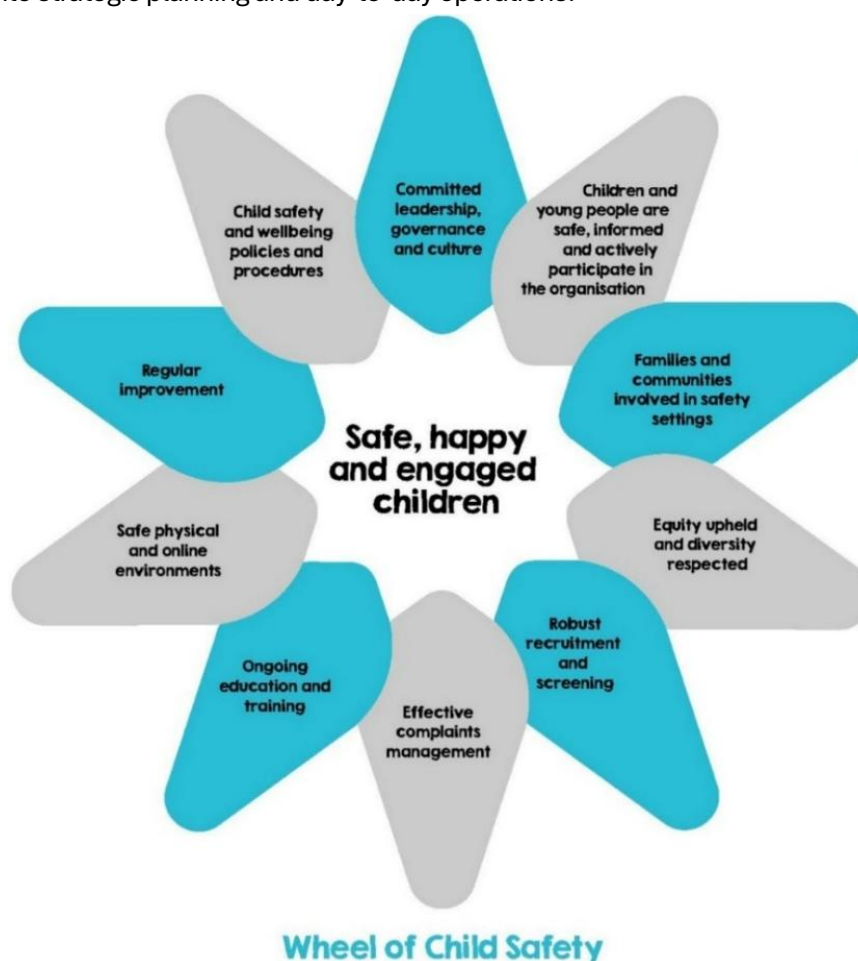
All staff members are required to comply with policies and procedures relating to child safety and all elements of the Child Safety Program. Staff must ensure they understand and comply with their legal obligations (including reporting obligations), are aware of and observant to key indicators of abuse, and raise all child safety concerns with one of the College's Child Safety Officers.

Volunteers, Contractors, Consultants, Trainees and External Education Providers

All volunteers, contractors, consultants, trainees and external education providers are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment and complying with this policy and the relevant Code of Conduct. All individuals working or volunteering at the College must ensure they understand their obligations and raise all child safety concerns with one of the College's Child Safety Officers.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations were developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission. The College is committed to promoting the safety of children and young people by embedding these principles into strategic planning and day-to-day operations:



From the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, Australian Human Rights Commission 2018



Recordkeeping

The College will record all internal and external reports of child safety incidents or concerns and maintain confidentiality and privacy for students and families in accordance with the law.

Policy and Program Review

The College is committed to the continuous improvement of the Child Safety Program. Policies, procedures and practices are regularly reviewed for overall effectiveness, relevance and compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards.

The College is committed to actively seeking and incorporating feedback from students, families, staff members, volunteers, contractors and the wider MLC Community.

Noncompliance with this policy

Any suspected breach or noncompliance of policies and procedures relating to child safety or the relevant Code of Conduct will be reviewed and may result in consequences including remedial education, counselling, increased supervision, restriction of duties, suspension and/or termination of employment, contract or engagement.

Relevant documents and legislation

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following:

- *Resolving Grievances Policy – Parents and Students*
- *Privacy Policy*

Relevant legislation and standards

- *Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA) (includes amendments to the Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children Act 2008)*
- *Criminal Code Act Compilation Act 1913 (includes amendments to the Sexual Offences Act 1992 and the Cyber Predators Act 2006)*
- *Department of Education - Non-Government Schools Registration Standards*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Family Court Act 1997 (WA)*
- *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*
- *School Education Act 1999 (WA)*
- *School Education Regulations 2000 (WA)*
- *Teacher Registration Act 2012 (WA)*
- *Teacher Registration (General) Regulations 2012*
- *Teacher-Student Professional Boundaries (TRBWA)*
- *Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 and (Screening) Regulations 2005 (WA)*