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CHILD SAFE POLICY

April 2016

St Mel's is a proud Catholic Education Community striving, learning and achieving together, through Christ, our light.

1.0 PURPOSE OR RATIONALE

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of all of St Mel's Education Community leaders, staff, volunteers, students, their families, to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and procedures developed to keep everyone safe from harm, including all forms of abuse.

2.0 COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

All students enrolled, and any child visiting, have a right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety.

3.0 CHILDREN'S RIGHTS TO SAFETY AND PARTICIPATION

The staff and volunteers of St Mel's encourage students to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.

We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us. Programs, strategies and practices could include:

- *Source of Life – religious Education curriculum*
- *Bounce Back,*
- *PBIS - S.T.A.R. Successful, Thoughtful Appreciative and Responsible*
- *Life relationships,*
- *Protective Behaviours*
- *St Mel's Behaviour expectations:*
 - *Do your best*
 - *Help others succeed*
 - *Respect our school*
- *St Mel's unwanted behaviour response*
 - *Ignore*
 - *Move away*
 - *Tell an adult*

4.0 VALUING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

We value and celebrate diversity, especially cultural diversity, and we do not tolerate discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:

- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students and their families
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) and their families
- promote the personal safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability and make them feel welcome and part of all aspects of school life

5.0 RECRUITING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

St Mel's will apply the most thorough and rigorous standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all staff and volunteers and require Working With Children Checks (WWCC) for all non teaching staff and volunteers, VIT accreditation for all teaching staff and police checks for those St Mel's deems necessary. Our commitment to Child Safety and our screening requirements are included in all advertisements for staff and volunteer positions.

6.0 SUPPORTING STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

St Mel's provides support and supervision to all staff and volunteers so people feel valued, respected, affirmed in their work and fairly treated. We have a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff and volunteers, all of whom receive training on the requirements of the Code.

**REFER TO ST MEL'S CODE OF CONDUCT FOR ALL ADULTS*

7.0 REPORTING A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

Our school records any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Code of Conduct, and store the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements. Our complaints and disclosure processes are outlined and detailed in the following policies and procedures

- *Child Safe Reporting and Responding Policy*
- *Child Safe Reporting Procedure*
- *Complaints & Disclosure Policy*
- *Complaints Procedure*
- *Disclosure of Abuse or Harm Procedure*
- *Child Safe Responding Procedure*

The principal and/or deputy principal has appointed as St Mel's Child Safety Officers with specific responsibility for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or students in relation to Child Safety.

8.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is an approach that minimises the potential for child abuse or harm to occur. Our Risk Management Plan outlines and details all aspects of risk across our whole school environment (on site and off site school activities) with specific activity risk assessments. In addition to our general Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse and harm to our students.

9.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed every three years and we undertake to seek feedback from students, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.

This policy is to be reviewed at least every three years.

Initially Ratified: April 26, 2016

Next Review to be completed by: April 26, 2019

Ratified by:

CoSSI Pastoral Wellbeing Team: March 22 2016

St Mel's Staff: Meeting April 11, 2016

St Mel's Parish Education Board April 26, 2016