



Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (**MACS**) schools operate with the consent of the Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne and are owned, operated and governed by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS).

1. Purpose

This procedure outlines the strategies and actions in place to ensure that families, carers and other members of the school community are informed about relevant child safety and wellbeing matters and are involved in the promotion of child safety and wellbeing at the school.

2. Scope

These procedures apply in Our Lady of the Way Primary School Wallan East.

3. Principles

The following principles underpin our commitment to family engagement:

- Parents and Carers are given the opportunity to participate in decisions relating to child safety and wellbeing which affect their child
- Our school engages and openly communicates with Parents, Carers and other members of the school community about our child safe approach
- Relevant information relating to child safety and wellbeing about their child or children will be available to parents and carers
- Parents, Carers and other members of the school community can provide input into the development and review of the school's policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing
- Parents, Carers and other members of the school community have the right to be informed about the operations and governance of the school in relation to child safety and wellbeing.

4. School Commitment

Our school is committed to ensuring that all members of our school community are kept informed about relevant child safety and wellbeing matters and are involved in the promotion of child safety and wellbeing.

The Principal and school leaders at our school recognise their responsibilities to communicate and engage with families, carers and other members of the school community in relation to issues regarding child safety and wellbeing.

The Principal ensures the following actions and strategies are implemented to ensure we meet this commitment.

4.1. School leadership actions and strategies

At *Our Lady of the Way Catholic Primary School*, we recognise that parents, carers and families are the primary educators and advocates for their children. In partnership with **Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS)**, the school leadership team actively supports and promotes family participation in all aspects of **child safety and wellbeing**.

This partnership ensures that our child safety culture is inclusive, transparent and grounded in Catholic values of respect, dignity and community. Specific Examples include:

1. MACS System Support

- **Framework and Policy Alignment:**

MACS provides the *Safeguarding Children and Young People Framework* and the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*, which guide all practices at Our Lady of the Way.

- **Leadership and Professional Learning:**

MACS offers training, resources and system-wide support to school leaders and staff to strengthen engagement with families around child safety and wellbeing.

- **Shared Accountability:**

Through regular review processes and compliance checks, MACS ensures that parents, carers and families are recognised as essential partners in maintaining a child-safe environment.

2. School Leadership Strategies and Actions

Promoting Family Engagement in Child Safety

- Child safety and wellbeing are standing items at **School Advisory Council** meetings, ensuring ongoing consultation with parent representatives.
- Regular communication is provided through **newsletters**, **PAM notifications**, and the **school website** to inform families about child safety policies, wellbeing programs, and support services.
- **Parent information sessions and workshops** are offered throughout the year, including:
 - *Bodyworks Parent Workshops* on health and personal development
 - *Sacramental Workshops* to connect faith formation and wellbeing
 - *Seasons for Growth* wellbeing program for children and families experiencing change or loss

Building a Culture of Safety and Respect

- The school actively promotes the **Positive Behaviours for Learning (PBL)** framework and the **Respectful Relationships** initiative to reinforce safe and respectful interactions across the community.
- Parents and carers are invited to contribute to the **review of child safety policies**, including the *Child Safety Code of Conduct* and *Complaints Handling Policy*.
- Clear, open channels of communication are maintained with families to ensure concerns about child safety can be raised and addressed promptly.

Culturally Safe Environments for Aboriginal Children, Young People and Families

- Our Lady of the Way works in partnership with MACS to strengthen **Aboriginal cultural inclusion** through:

- The **Fire Carriers Program**, fostering understanding of Aboriginal spirituality and connection to Country.
- The **Cuppa and Yarn** initiative, providing opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to share experiences and build relationships within the school community.
- Aboriginal perspectives are embedded across curriculum areas and reflected in school celebrations such as **Reconciliation Week** and **NAIDOC Week**.
- The school environment visibly reflects Aboriginal culture through displays, flags, artwork and Acknowledgement of Country at gatherings and assemblies.
- Aboriginal children and families are supported through personalised wellbeing plans and respectful consultation in decision-making processes.

Inclusive Communication and Support for Diverse Families

- Translation and interpreting services are made available for non-English speaking families to ensure equitable participation in all child safety matters.
- Communications are provided in accessible formats, and visual or simplified resources are used where required.
- The school ensures that all families understand the **Child Safe Standards**, **reporting procedures**, and **the rights of children** to feel safe, respected and heard.

Student and Family Voice

- Students are encouraged to share their views on safety and wellbeing through classroom discussions, student leadership groups, and wellbeing surveys.
- Families are invited to provide feedback through annual community surveys and consultation processes.
- Feedback from families informs ongoing improvement of wellbeing programs and safety practices.

3. Continuous Review and Improvement

- The leadership team conducts an **annual review** of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and associated procedures, incorporating feedback from parents, carers, students, and staff.
- Updates and outcomes are communicated to the community via the **School Advisory Council** and the **Annual Report to the School Community**.
- The school maintains a strong culture of reflection and accountability to ensure all families feel confident in the school's commitment to child safety and wellbeing.

1.1. Actions and strategies for Staff

School Staff also have a responsibility to support MACS, the school's governing authority, and school leaders in communicating and engaging with Parents, Carers and other members of the school community regarding child safety and wellbeing.

Strategies and actions used to carry out this responsibility are listed below.

Principals to include strategies and actions in the school.

1. *Open lines of communication with families, carers and other members of the school community, particularly with respect to child safety and wellbeing matters.*
2. *Liaison with parents and carers about concerns and/or decisions that affect their child occurs.*
3. *Opportunities, where appropriate, for families to contribute to discussions.*
4. *Informing families and school community members when practices and procedures involved in child safety and wellbeing are reviewed and updated.*
5. *Ensuring all staff manage child safety and wellbeing issues in accordance with all policies for child safety and wellbeing.*
6. *Providing information about how to make complaints or raise concerns*

7. Definitions

Definitions of standard terms used in this document can be found in the [Glossary of Terms](#).

Carer

Refers to those with permanent care, foster care or kinship care arrangements.

Parent

A person who has parental responsibility for the child or young person. This may include a biological parent or another person who has been granted parental responsibility by a court order.

Parental responsibility

All the duties, powers, responsibilities and authority, which by law, parents have in relation to their children.

Principal

The role of the principal in a MACS school is to lead and manage the planning, delivery, evaluation and improvement of the education of all students.

Staff

Staff or staff member refers to the MACS board, board committee and working party members, MACS executives, principals, employees, contractors, consultants and volunteers in MACS schools and offices. The term includes those involved in religious ministry.

Volunteer

A person who performs work without remuneration or reward for MACS or a MACS school.

8. Related policies and documents

Related MACS policies and documents

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedures
Protect – Identifying and Responding to Abuse – Reporting Obligations Policy
Reportable Conduct Policy

Policy information table

Approving authority	Director, Child Safety and Risk
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School document owner	School Principal Our Lady of the Way Primary
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