



A P-12 School of the Lutheran Church of Australia

## Child Protection and Safety Policy

Introduction

Child Protection and Safety Policy	
Created by:	Principal Lakeside College
Current version:	1.0
Applicable for:	All Lakeside permanent and fixed term employees, casuals, independent contractors, volunteers and work experience students

“In the Lutheran school the gospel is to inform all programs, relationships and activities” (LCA and Its School statement). The love of God in Jesus Christ is to govern all that is done, in response to this love, people in the school community are directed to their fellow human beings. Where they love others, they love him. Christ’s promise is that whatever is done for others is done for him. Informed and transformed by God’s creative, redemptive and sanctifying love, God’s people are concerned with the total needs of their fellow human beings (Industrial Relations and the Lutheran school).

The Child Safe program in place at Lakeside College defines power as the capacity to set and care for boundaries. Boundaries are the structures which support human development within community; boundaries may be personal, communal, spiritual, psychological or physical. In Christ, there is an empowerment by the gospel to recognise boundaries and prevent their destructive crossing and to care for those who have been violated. Our responsibility of leadership is to care for professional boundaries through the establishment of structures that protect them. Structures provide for support, examination, and action to ensure that school leaders, staff and students act according to boundaries that help, protect and uphold the dignity, worth and safety of each individual. (Valuing Safe Communities: Statement of values)”(Valuing Safe Communities: Statement of values)”

Lakeside College has developed the following Child Protection and Safety Policy. This policy is an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse. It is designed to be communicated through our public website as well as through other mediums such as newsletters, our annual report and in induction and welcome packs for School Council members, staff and volunteers.

**Our Child Protection and Safety Policy**

**Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**

Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child’s exposure to family violence. Lakeside College is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Protection Program designed to keep children safe.

At Lakeside College we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in children’s best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The College regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant

child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture.

## Child Safe Principles

The College's commitment to child safety is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.

1. All children have the right to be safe.
2. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
3. The views of the child and a child's privacy must be respected.
4. Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in our Child Safety Code of Conduct and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.
5. The safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture.
6. Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within our College community.
7. Procedures are in place to screen all staff, **volunteers**, third party contractors\*\* and external education providers, as all are involved in child-connected work.

*\*\* There may be some specific circumstances where a third party contractor may not be screened by the college. If this occurs specific processes will be put in place to ensure that the un-screened contractor will not be left unsupervised in the college grounds at any time.*

8. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
9. Child protection training is mandatory for all School Council members, staff and volunteers.
10. Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of the College community.
11. All children, especially those who are vulnerable for whatever reason, have a right to care and support.
12. Children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.
13. Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.

## Objectives

This policy provides the framework for:

- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection within the College;
- the creation of a positive and robust child protection culture;
- the promotion and open discussion of child protection issues within the College; and
- complying with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Victoria.

## Child Protection Program

Lakeside College is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Protection Program 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 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.

Our Child Protection Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse. It includes:

- clear information as to what constitutes child abuse and associated key risk indicators
- clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse
- strategies to support, encourage and enable staff, volunteers, third party contractors, external education providers, parents and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters
- procedures for recruiting and screening School Council members, staff and volunteers
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe
- policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities
- a child protection training program
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist children
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards)
- a system for continuous improvement and review

As a part of Lakeside College's induction process, all staff and Direct Contact Volunteers are required to complete a selection of training modules on the content of our Child Protection Program.

All staff, volunteers and School Council members are provided with additional, ongoing child protection training at least annually.

Staff, volunteers, third party contractors and external education providers are supported and supervised by the College's [Child Protection Officers](#) to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child protection.

## **Responsibilities**

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. At Lakeside College all members of the School Council and staff, as well as volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:

### **School Council**

Each member of the School Council is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to allow the College's Child Protection and Safety Policy and the Child Protection Program to be effectively implemented within the College and are responsible for holding the Principal and Leadership team accountable for effective implementation.

### **The Principal**

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Protection and Safety Policy and the College's Child Protection Program are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the College.

### **The College's Child Protection Officers**

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

### **Staff Members**

All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the College's Child Protection Officers.

### **Volunteers**

All Volunteers, as defined in this policy, are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Safety Code of Conduct and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the College's Child Protection Officers.

### **Third Party Contractors**

All Third Party Contractors (service providers) engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the College environment.

All service providers engaged by the College are required by the College to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program.

The College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the service provider.

### 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.

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

All external education providers engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the College environment.

All external education providers engaged by the College are required by the College to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program.

Lakeside College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the external education provider.

### Reporting Concerns

Our Child Protection Program provides detailed guidance for members of the School Council, staff and volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our College's nominated Child Protection Officers. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Third party contractors, external education providers, students, parents/carers or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact one of the College's [Child Protection Officers](#).

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

**Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.**

### Policy & Program Review

Lakeside College is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Protection Program. The Program is regularly reviewed for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection related laws, regulations and standards.