



Catholic
Education
Commission
Tasmania

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to enable all Catholic Schools and the Tasmanian Catholic Education Officer (TCEO) to protect Children and Young People from harm in the form of **Abuse, Harm, Neglect or Reportable Conduct** whilst in our care.
- 1.2 It does this by putting in place the settings required to establish and maintain CET as a Child Safe Organisation within the context of applicable Tasmanian legislation and the *National Principals for Child Safe Organisations*.

2 WHO DOES THIS POLICY APPLY TO

- 2.1 This policy applies to all Catholic Schools operating in the Archdiocese of Hobart, the TCEO, and all persons involved in any Catholic Education Tasmania (CET) activity (CET Activity), including Workers, Students, Parents/Guardians, families of students and members of the wider community.
- 2.2 For the purposes of this Policy, a CET Activity includes any Catholic School or TCEO activity held or occurring:
- (a) In a CET workplace.
 - (b) In a CET School Environment; or
 - (c) On an external site, such as school camps or excursions, where the child remains under the supervision and duty of care of CET.

3 STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

- 3.1 CET has made the following statement of commitment to the safety and wellbeing of young people.
- (a) We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people while enabling their participation as valued members of our community.
 - (b) We have zero tolerance to child abuse and harm. Our people prioritise the safety of the children they interact with in the performance of their role and must report any conduct of concern.
 - (c) We recognise the importance of child safety in the provision of quality education services. All children who attend Catholic Schools in Tasmania have the right to feel safe, be safe, and be heard.
 - (d) We recognise our legal and moral responsibilities in keeping children and young people

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safe and have robust policies and procedures in place to meet this commitment that are aligned with the National Principles and applicable Tasmanian child safety legislation.

- (e) We want children to thrive, be safe, happy and empowered, and are dedicated to ensuring their views are listened to and respected, and they are given opportunities to contribute to how we plan and deliver our services that affect them.
- (f) We are committed to being a Child Safe Organisation.

4 POLICY PRINCIPLES

4.1 CET is committed to maintaining and encouraging an organisational culture where Children and Young People feel safe, are treated with respect and protected from harm. It does this by putting in place the settings required to establish and maintain CET as a child safe organisation within the context of applicable legislation and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

4.2 All persons are required to familiarise themselves and comply with applicable Tasmanian legislation, this Policy, and all other policies, procedures and instruments that form Child Safety Program.

4.3 Senior management shall take the lead in championing and embedding a culture of preventative, proactive and participatory child safety.

4.4 CET's Child Safety Program shall include measures that ensure, as far as Reasonably Practicable that:

- (a) Interactions between and amongst adults and children at CET School Environments, Workplaces and external sites are safe, appropriate, and in the best interests of the relevant Child or Young Person.
- (b) Students are provided with age-appropriate instruction on their right to be safe, how they can participate in CET's Child Safety Program and what to do if anything makes them feel worried, afraid or unsafe.
- (c) Students are asked and encouraged to voice their views and concerns regarding aspects of CET's Child Safety Program that directly involve them.
- (d) CET's processes for reporting and responding to a Child Safety Concern allow Students, their families and CET Workers to raise concerns in a safe, 'user friendly' manner which ensures that they feel heard and supported.

(e) School communities are informed of and have access to applicable aspects of CET's Child

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Safety Program and are provided with the means to give feedback.

- (f) Measures aimed at reducing the risk of discrimination, exclusion, bullying and harm of Children and Young people will include behavioural guidance and a complaints process which is welcoming, accessible and easy to use.

4.5 Adequate systems and practices shall be developed and maintained to ensure:

- (a) Workers are provided with access to CET's Child Safety Program and understand its requirements.
- (b) The recruitment and selection of Workers including volunteers is conducted in accordance with relevant CET policies.
- (c) Workers involved in child-related work receive suitable training on an ongoing basis to enable them to understand their child safety responsibilities with respect to:
 - i. Appropriate behaviours.
 - ii. Identifying and taking appropriate action to protect Children and Young People from harm.
 - iii. The reporting of and responding to Child Safety Concerns.

4.6 A Child Safety Concern which discloses Reportable Conduct by a Worker shall be managed under the applicable CECT policies.

4.7 CET's child safety requirements, measures and processes shall be adequately documented, and this documentation made accessible to Workers and interested parties.

4.8 Adequate records of child safety matters including school community and Student engagement, mandatory reporting and Reportable Conduct allegations, investigations and associated matters must be created and kept in accordance with CET's records management guidelines

4.9 CET's Child Safety Program and it's operational effectiveness shall be reviewed on an annual basis by senior management for the purposes of planned and continual improvement.

5 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 For CET to achieve compliance with this Policy the following people must fulfill the responsibilities allocated to them under this Policy:

<i>People who are:</i>	<i>Must:</i>
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<p>Directors</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ensure compliance with this Policy. 2. Ensure effective resourcing and implementation of CET's Child Safety Program. 3. Provide the leadership necessary for a preventative, proactive and participatory child safety culture. 4. Appoint a suitable Child Safety Officer. 5. Review and evaluate on an annual basis CET's Child Safety Program for the purposes of improvement.
<p>CET's Child Safety Officer</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Develop and maintain a coherent Child Safety Program whose scope is sufficiently comprehensive to cover any child safety risk which a Child or Young Person could reasonably be expected to encounter while in the care of CET. 7. Ensure CET's Child Safety Program is implemented in a consistent and applicable manner in CET School Environments and Workplaces. 8. Provide staff and interested parties access to relevant elements of CET's Child Safety Program via CET's website, school websites and other knowledge portals. 9. Ensure recruiting and on-boarding endeavours emphasise CET's commitment to child safety and include adequate pre-employment / site entry screening for suitability to work with vulnerable people. 10. Ensure Students receive age-appropriate instruction regarding relevant aspects of CET's Child Safety Program 11. Ensure the adequate induction and training of Workers in child safety requirements. 12. Support Workplace Managers regarding the achievement of compliance with CET's Child Safety Program and the management of Child Safety Concerns 13. Ensure the appropriate management of allegations, reports or suspicions of

	<p>Child Safety Concerns and Reportable Conduct.</p> <p>14. Regularly check CET's compliance to this Policy.</p> <p>15. Regularly review CET's Child Safety Program to ensure that it is fit-for-purpose.</p>
Workplace Managers	<p>16. Implement CET's Child Safety Program within their area of responsibility.</p> <p>17. Take reasonable steps to ensure appropriate behaviour by Workers, Students and Other Persons.</p> <p>18. Ensure Workers receive instruction to enable them to understand their child safety responsibilities.</p> <p>19. Take reasonable steps to ensure that any potential breaches of CET child safety related policies, codes of conduct, standards, guidelines and reporting requirements are acted upon immediately and appropriately.</p>
Workers	<p>20. Comply with all CET child safety policies and codes of conduct.</p> <p>21. Complete required CET child safety induction and training.</p> <p>22. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory stance on child safety issues.</p> <p>23. Engage in behaviours and conduct consistent with CET's Child Safety Code of Conduct.</p> <p>24. Cooperate fully with child safety incident investigations as required.</p>
Students	<p>25. Adhere to applicable aspects of relevant CET child safety policies and codes of conduct regarding how they should interact with adults and one another.</p>
Parents / Guardians	<p>26. Support CET in relation to the implementation of child safety policies as agreed in the terms and conditions of enrolment for their child.</p> <p>27. Engage in behaviours and conduct consistent with CET's Child Safety Code of Conduct and Adult Behaviour Policy.</p>
Other Persons	<p>28. Comply with relevant CET child safety policies and codes of conduct.</p> <p>29. Engage in behaviours and conduct consistent with CET's Child Safety Code of Conduct.</p>

6 COMPLIANCE (LEGISLATION AND OTHER DOCUMENTS)

6.1 Applicable legislative instruments containing overarching obligations:

Tasmanian legislation

- (a) *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023.*
- (b) *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997.*
- (c) *Criminal Code Act 1924*
- (d) *Teachers Registration Act 2000.*
- (e) *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013.*
- (f) *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Regulations 2014.*

Other

- (a) *Non-government Schools Registration Board Guidelines.*
- (b) *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.*
- (c) *Tasmanian Office of the State Archivist Notice of a disposal freeze on records relating to children*

6.2 Any failure to comply with an obligation under this Policy will likely result in disciplinary action taken under CET's Workplace Behaviour Policy and CET's Code of Conduct.

7 DEFINED TERMS

Abuse, Harm or Neglect means sexual abuse or physical or emotional injury or other abuse, harm or neglect, to the extent that:

- (a) The abused, harmed or neglected person has suffered, or is likely to suffer, physical or psychological harm detrimental to the person's wellbeing; or
- (b) The abused, harmed or neglected person's physical or psychological development is in jeopardy.

Child Safety Concern means a belief, suspicion or knowledge that a person has committed reportable conduct or that the safety, psychological wellbeing or interests of a child or young person are affected or likely to be affected by family violence.

Child Safety Program means CET's suite of child safety governance instruments that collectively form CET's Child Safety Program i.e.:

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- (a) Child Safety Policy (this policy)
- (b) Child Safety Code of Conduct
- (c) Reportable Conduct Policy
- (d) Mandatory Reporting Policy
- (e) Working with Vulnerable People Policy
- (f) TCEO Child Safety Committee Terms of Reference

Grooming means conduct of a person that:

- (a) is intended to establish trust with the aim of normalising sexually harmful behaviour towards, or allowing the person to engage in an unlawful act, sexual offence, or sexual misconduct, against, the child; and
- (b) forms part of a pattern of manipulative or controlling behaviour in relation to –
 - (i) the child; or
 - (ii) the child's guardian, family or friends; or
 - (iii) a worker of a relevant entity that provides services to, or has dealings with, the child.

Reasonably Practicable means in relation to a duty to ensure health and safety, means that which is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done in relation to ensuring health and safety, taking into account and weighing up all relevant matters including –

- (a) the likelihood of the hazard or the risk concerned occurring; and
- (b) the degree of harm that might result from the hazard or the risk; and
- (c) what the person concerned knows, or ought reasonably to know, about –
 - (i) the hazard or the risk; and
 - (ii) ways of eliminating or minimising the risk; and
- (d) the availability and suitability of ways to eliminate or minimise the risk; and
- (e) after assessing the extent of the risk and the available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, the cost associated with available ways of eliminating or minimising the risk, including whether the cost is grossly disproportionate to the risk.

Reportable Conduct means behaviour that constitutes:

- (a) A breach of CET's Child Safety Code of Conduct
- (b) Grooming of a Child or Young Person.
- (c) Conduct that causes or is likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm to

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a Child or Young Person.

(d) Physical violence against Child or Young Person.

(e) Sexual offence or sexual misconduct, committed against, with, or in the presence of a Child or Young Person (includes sending/uploading sexually explicit digital/social media posts, child pornography offences, whether or not the behaviour falls below the criminal offence threshold).

(f) Significant neglect Child or Young Person.

(g) Unreasonable treatment of a Student but not extending to conduct which is reasonable for the purposes of the discipline, management or care of students having regard to appropriate professional standards.

Reportable Conviction means a conviction for an offence that involves reportable conduct, regardless of whether the conduct or conviction occurred before the commencement of the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023*.

Workplace manager means a member of staff with team leadership responsibilities e.g. a principal.

For all other Terms and Definitions refer to the CET Terms and Definitions document available on the CET website.

8 FURTHER INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

8.1 For further information and assistance in relation to this Policy please contact CET's Child Safety Officer (the TCEO's Executive Manager: People Services) T: 03 6210 8888.

9 REVIEW OF THIS POLICY

9.1 This Policy will be reviewed every four years.

9.2 Updated versions of this Policy will be available on the CET website and on request.

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