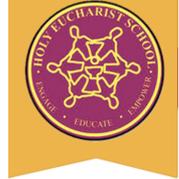




# Holy Eucharist Catholic Primary School

## COMMITMENT STATEMENT TO CHILD SAFETY



### *A safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people at our Catholic school*

The intention for this statement is to provide a central focus for child safety<sup>1</sup> at our Catholic school, built around a common understanding of the moral imperative and overarching commitments that underpin our drive for improvement and cultural change.

*The Catholic school sets out to be a school for the human person and of human persons. 'The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of Christ's teaching: that is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school'.*

(Congregation for Catholic education 1997, par. 9)

Holy Eucharist Primary School, together with the guidance of the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of Catholic education. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

Holy Eucharist Primary school was established under the authority of the Archbishop in the Melbourne diocese (CECV). As a school established by this governing body we have a universal expectation for the protection of children. Holy Eucharist is resolutely committed to ensuring that all those engaged in our Catholic primary school promote the inherent dignity of children and young people and their fundamental right to be respected and nurtured in a safe school environment. This is particularly so for the most vulnerable children, including aboriginal children, from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

Holy Eucharist school has a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing environments where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe. When allegations of abuse concerning children and young people are raised, Holy Eucharist Primary School will take prompt action to have these appropriately referred and investigated. While the context and reality at each Catholic school will differ, the fundamental issues of understanding effective practices in child safety and identifying and responding to child harm remain the same. Holy Eucharist School will strive for continual improvement that is responsive to emerging thinking, evidence and practice, so as to eliminate the possibility of abuse occurring in the first place.

Our utmost responsibility at Holy Eucharist is to create a child-safe school environment. It is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by the whole school community. It is marked by collaboration, vigilance and proactive approaches across policies, procedures, curriculum and practices.

Every person involved in Catholic education has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make. Therefore, Holy Eucharist School has in place policies, processes and practices ensuring child safety is key within its culture and that these represent best practice.

<sup>1</sup>As defined by the Victorian Government Special Gazette No. 2 (2016), 'children and young people' in this document refers to those children and young people enrolled as students in Catholic schools in Victoria.

*Holy Eucharist Primary School commits to providing a safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people through:*

**1. Upholding the primacy of the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.**

At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children and young people will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a safe and nurturing culture, our school will actively and continually develop and review all policies, processes and practices, informed by emerging thinking and evidence.

**2. Empowering families, children, young people and staff to have a voice and raise concerns.**

Holy Eucharist Primary School, in partnership with families, will ensure children and young people, are engaged and active participants in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on their safety.

This means that the views of staff, children, young people and families are taken seriously and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner. Children and young people are also provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.

**3. Implementing rigorous risk-management and employment practices.**

Holy Eucharist Primary School will systematically and continually identify and assess risks to child safety and will eliminate (where possible) or reduce all potential sources of harm. Effective risk management will be embedded in school life through effective, transparent and well-understood policies, procedures and practices.

Our schools will endeavor to employ highly competent and professional staff who are formed and challenged to maintain the safety of all students. The high-quality of staff appointments will be upheld through rigorous employment and staff review processes and practices.

Holy Eucharist Primary School together with the CECV will stay abreast of current legislation and will meet legislative duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care, including the Victorian Child Safe Standards (Victorian Government 2016), mandatory reporting, grooming, failure to disclose and failure to protect requirements.

**Staff Members involved:**

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**Date of Review:**

**References**

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CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety 2016