

## Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the Centre for Higher Education Studies at [ches@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:ches@education.vic.gov.au)

### Purpose

The CHES Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our school's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This policy provides an overview of our school's approach to implementing [Ministerial Order 1359](#) (PDF, 363KB) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments. It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

### Scope

This policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school council members where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by the school for a student's use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

### Definitions

The following terms in this policy have [specific definitions](#):

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school boarding environment
- school staff
- school boarding premises staff
- school governing authority
- school boarding premises governing authority
- student
- volunteer.

### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

CHES is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQA+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### School leadership team

Our school leadership team (including the principal, assistant principal and other staff as designated by the principal) is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

Principals and assistant principals will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings

- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

### **School staff and volunteers**

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education and Training, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our Child Safety Code of Conduct ([Current Policies](#))
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures ([Current Policies](#)), including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

### **School council**

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, school council members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council
- approve the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members, and if updated, note the new document in its school council meeting minutes
- undertake annual training on child safety
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members
- when hiring school council employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe. At our school, school council employment duties are delegated to the principal who is bound by this policy.

### **Specific staff child safety responsibilities**

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. **All CHES staff** are required to:

- act in accordance with the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct, which clearly sets out the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who are vulnerable, students in out of home care, and LGBTIQ+ students when making decisions regarding the Child Safe Standards
- act in accordance with the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures at all times, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) where necessary
- undertake annual guidance and training on child safety
- act in accordance with their legal obligations, including:
  - failure to disclose offence (applies to all adults)
  - duty of care (applies to all school staff)

- mandatory reporting obligations (applies to all mandatory reporters, including teachers, university staff who have VIT permission-to-teach status, principals, registered psychologists, registered doctors and nurses, and school staff who provide direct support to students for mental, emotional or psychological wellbeing i.e. counsellors)
- failure to protect offence (applies to a person in a position of authority within the school)
- reportable conduct obligations (applies to all school staff in reporting conduct to the principal, and applies to the principal in reporting to Employee Conduct Branch)
- organisational duty of care (applies to the school as an organisation)

For more information on these obligations, see [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#).

As part of the child safe culture of CHES, **school leadership** (including the principal) will:

- consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who are vulnerable, students in out of home care, and LGBTIQA+ students when implementing the Child Safe Standards
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings and staff meetings
- encourage and enable staff professional learning and training to build deeper understandings of child safety and prevention of abuse
- ensure that no one is prohibited or discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the school or from making records of any allegation.
- provide annual training to university partners on the CHES child safety expectations, policies and code of conduct.

As part of the child safe culture of CHES, CHES staff are required to:

- complete the [Protecting Children – Mandatory reporting and other obligations](#) online module every year
- read the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document
- read the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures on induction, and maintain familiarity with that document
- read the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document) on induction, and maintain familiarity with the document.

School leadership will maintain records of the above processes.

Specific child safety responsibilities:

- The Principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy every three years, or as required by the Department.
- The Principal is responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. The school community should approach the principal if they have any concerns about the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- The Principal is responsible for informing the school community about this policy, and making it publicly available.

- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in CHES's other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and risk assessment register.

Our Risk Management Committee monitors the Child Safety Risk Register.

## CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct ([Current Policies](#)) also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

## MANAGING RISKS TO CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Our school leadership team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

CHES is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This is the primary focus of our care and decision-making. The CHES approach to creating and maintaining a child safe school environment is guided by our school philosophy and values.

At CHES, we have zero tolerance for child abuse.

We are committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, procedures, strategies and practices will be inclusive of the needs of all students, particularly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities, students who are vulnerable, students in out of home care, and LGBTIQ+ students.

Every person involved in CHES has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play 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.

## ESTABLISHING A CULTURALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT

At CHES, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed a number of strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community including:

- Begin events and meetings with a Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country as a standing agenda item. Use this as an opportunity to pause and reflect or open a discussion.
- Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on school grounds.
- Display plaques and signs to Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners.
- Make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voice part of decision making in matters that affect Aboriginal students. Be open to different ways of doing and expressing things.
- Celebrate the local Aboriginal community in communications with students, staff, volunteers and families. Share information through school newsletters, school assemblies, parent information nights.
- Lead on safety and inclusion for all Aboriginal students and their families. Learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, both locally and across Australia. Speak with respect and confidence about Aboriginal culture, knowledge systems and people.
- Build schoolwide knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, perspectives, values, skills and attitudes.
- Express zero tolerance of racism.
- Address racism from students, staff, volunteers or visitors directly. Make sure racist speech or actions are always dealt with, and the culture of the school works to prevent incidents from occurring.
- Put school leaders at the front of anti-racist action. Discuss racism and work to address unconscious bias and racism in the school community.

## STUDENT EMPOWERMENT

To support child safety and wellbeing at CHES, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging through our student Code of Conduct and our school values.

We inform students of their rights through our Student Code of Conduct and Student Handbook and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns at the reception desk of CHES.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

Students will be empowered by:

- being informed about all their rights, including their rights to safety, information and participation
- recognising the importance of friendships and encourage support from peers, to help students feel safe and be less isolated
- making sure all staff and volunteers:
  - are attuned to signs of harm
  - facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns
- developing a culture that encourages participation and responds to what students say
- giving students opportunities to participate, and responding to their contributions to strengthen confidence and engagement

## FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at CHES we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this by:

- seeking input from families and the community through Compass, the school website, communications from the school, school council, subcommittees of the school council and student, staff and parent meetings.
- all of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for students and parents on the school website or from the reception desk.
- Compass News Feed items will inform families and the school community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety.
- PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed across the school
- ensuring families participate in child safety and wellbeing decisions which affect their child
- engaging in open communication with families and the school community about our child safe approach
- making child safety information accessible
- involving families and the school community in developing and reviewing child safety and wellbeing policies and practices
- informing families and carers about the school's governance and approach to child safety and wellbeing, including roles and responsibilities of school and university staff.

## DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.



We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international students
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

Our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy provides more information about the measures we have in place to support diversity and equity.

CHES will:

- develop and endorse a policy statement or curriculum document that details the strategies and actions it will take to uphold diversity and equity, that:
  - ensures school and university staff and volunteers understand the diverse circumstances of students, and how to provide support, and respond to vulnerable students
  - gives students, staff, volunteers and the school community access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand
  - pays particular attention to the needs of:
    - students with disability
    - students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
    - students who are unable to live at home
    - international students
    - lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) students
    - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and provides and promotes a culturally safe environment for them.

## SUITABLE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

At CHES, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

### Staff recruitment

When recruiting staff, we follow the Department of Education and Training's recruitment policies and guidelines, available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at:

- [Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)
- [School Council Employment](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management.](#)

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record:
  - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
  - the person's history of working with children



- references that address suitability for the job and working with children.
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**Staff induction**


All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures and
- any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

**Ongoing supervision and management of staff**

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. CHES will be guided by the Department's Recruitment in Schools guidelines regarding the recruitment and pre-employment check processes to ensure that relevant proof of personal identity, valid Working with Children Clearance or other suitable check (such as registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching), and all other professional qualifications are ascertained to meet the child safe standards, as follows:

- inform applicants for jobs involving child-connected work about the school's child safety practices (including the Code of Conduct)
- the interview complements the written application and detailed referee checks to validate an applicant's work history and experience. Referees nominated by the applicant will be called on to clarify, verify and add information about an applicant's history of work involving children. Pre-employment suitability checks are also conducted in accordance with the Department's Recruitment in School Policy and Guidelines
- in addition to referee checks, pre-employment suitability checks are conducted following the recruitment decision process – see [Employment, Promotion and Transfer](#)
- volunteers will be engaged in accordance with our Volunteers Policy
- university staff who are teaching Higher Education Studies have permission to teach from the VIT
- university representatives working with students in other capacities, such as mentoring, are required to hold a  Working with Children Check and referee checks must be undertaken to confirm suitability to work with children.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school and department policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

**Suitability of volunteers**

All volunteers are required to comply with our Volunteers Policy ([Current Policies](#)) which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

To comply with Child Safe Standards CHES will:

- ensure job advertisements have clear statements about:
  - the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety and wellbeing
  - the job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety and wellbeing.
- advise job applicants about the child safety practices of the school, including the Code of Conduct
- make volunteers aware of the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct
- screen school staff applicants:
  - sight, verify and record a Working with Children clearance if they person is required to have one or any equivalent background checks such as Victorian Institute of Teaching registration
  - collect and record proof of identify, qualifications, history of working with children and references
- screen volunteers:
  - sight, verify and record a Working with Children clearance if they person is required to have one of any equivalent background check
  - consider the child safety risks relevant to the volunteer's role and, if reasonable and appropriate collect and record proof of identify, qualifications, history of working with children and references
- provide an induction to staff, volunteers and contractors engaged in child-related work, regarding child safety and wellbeing that is appropriate to the nature of the role
- ensure that induction addresses the school's:
  - Child Safety Code of Conduct
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
  - procedures for managing complaints and concerns related to child abuse
- make sure staff, governing body members, and volunteers engaged in child-connected work, are aware of their responsibilities for:
  - children and students
  - information sharing and reporting obligations
  - recordkeeping obligations
- provide supervision and people management of staff and volunteers that focuses on child safety and wellbeing.

## CHILD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND AWARENESS

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters. In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completing the [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#) online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students

- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

To comply with Child Safe Standards CHES will:

- Provide child safety training to staff engaged in child-connected work every year. This training should include:
  - the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the Child Safety Code of Conduct
  - the procedures for responding to complaints and concerns about child abuse
  - guidance on recognising indicators of child harm, including harm caused by other children and students
  - guidance on responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
  - guidance on how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
  - guidance on their information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
  - guidance on how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment without compromising a child or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
- Provide training and information to volunteers engaged in child-connected work that is appropriate to their role that will equip them with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe.
- Support staff and volunteers to implement the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the Child Safety Code of Conduct where these policies apply to their role and responsibilities.
- Provide appropriate training and guidance to the members of the governing body every year. This training should include:
  - individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
  - child safety and wellbeing risks in the school
  - the child safety policies, procedures and practices of the school.

### **School council training and education**

To ensure our school council is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment, the council is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment
- CHES child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in the school understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our school culture aims for all CHES staff, partner university staff delivering HES programs, and volunteers including mentors (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in coming forward with any allegations or suspicions of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff, partner university staff who are delivering Higher Education Studies, and volunteers (including university mentors) to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. This training occurs annually or more often as required.

We also support our staff, partner university staff, and volunteers (including university mentors) through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse, to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability and vulnerable children.

New employees and volunteers, including university mentors, will be inducted into the CHES child safety culture, expectations and procedures, including by being referred to the Child Safety Policy (this document), the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures on the school website. All employees of our school will be monitored and assessed via regular performance review to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported by school staff to the Principal and will be managed in accordance with CHES's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures where required. The annual induction for university staff who deliver programs for CHES students incorporates child safety obligations. The partnership agreements between CHES and partner universities includes the expectation that universities must declare incidents, allegations and reasonable suspicions as soon as they become aware of them.

## COMPLAINTS AND REPORTING PROCESSES

CHES fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's Complaint Policy. The Complaints Policy can be found at <https://ches.vic.edu.au/our-school/policies/>

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all school and university staff and volunteers (including school council employees) must follow our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures ([Current Policies](#)).

Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- the [Four Critical Actions](#) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy ([Current Policies](#)) and Bullying Prevention Policy ([Current Policies](#)) cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

## COMMUNICATIONS

CHES is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document), Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure
- displaying PROTECT posters around the school
- updates in our school newsletter
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings.

## PRIVACY AND INFORMATION SHARING

CHES collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to: [Schools' Privacy Policy](#).

## RECORDS MANAGEMENT

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the Department of Education and Training's policy: [Records Management – School Records](#)

## REVIEW OF CHILD SAFETY PRACTICES

At CHES, we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

We will:

- review and evaluate our [child safety and wellbeing policies](#), procedures and practices after any significant child safety incident, or at least every 2 years and improve where applicable
- analyse complaints, concerns and safety incidents to identify causes and systemic failures and to inform continuous improvement
- report on the outcomes of relevant reviews to school and university staff, volunteers, the community, families and students.

## RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Digital Learning Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Visitors Policy

**Related Department of Education and Training policies**

- [Bullying Prevention and Response Policy](#)
- [Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management Policy](#)
- [Digital Learning in Schools Policy](#)
- [Family Violence Support](#)
- [Protecting Children: Reporting Obligations Policy](#)
- [Policy and Guidelines for Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Policy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Supervision of Students Policy](#)
- [Visitors in Schools Policy](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools Policy](#)
- [Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)

**Other related documents**

- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](#)

**POLICY STATUS AND REVIEW**

The Principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the CHES community.

**APPROVAL**

<b>Created date</b>	August 2023
Consultation	October 2023 – School Council
<b>Endorsed by</b>	Stewart Milner, Principal
<b>Endorsed on</b>	26 October 2023
<b>Next review date</b>	October 2024