



# ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

## OUR CHILD SAFEGUARDING CODE OF CONDUCT

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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
- compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Victoria.

This Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards students. The Code serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote child safety in the College environment.

It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. Where a staff member breaches the Code, Assumption College may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal. The College revises the Code annually.

Assumption College has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our College community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, the Council, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers and parents/carers.

The College's Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct fulfills the requirements of the Marist Schools Australia (MSA) Standards and has been approved and endorsed by the MSA Regional Director and the MSA Association Council in its capacity as the College's governing body.

### DO:

- Uphold Assumption College's Child Protection Policy at all times.
- Behave as a positive role model to students.
- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- Be vigilant and proactive with regard to student safety and child protection issues.
- Provide age appropriate supervision for students.
- Comply with guidelines published by the College with respect to child protection.
- Treat all students with respect.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students.
- Use positive and affirming language toward students.
- Encourage students to 'have a say' and participate, and then listen to them with respect.
- Respect cultural, religious and political differences.
- Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact, and socialise.
- Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way.
- Report any breaches of this Child Protection Code of Conduct.
- Report concerns about child safety to one of the College's Child Safeguarding Officers and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met.



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- Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe.
- Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety.
- Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

## DO NOT:

- Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour.
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with students.
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on culture, race, ethnicity or disability.
- Engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of students.
- Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a student including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material.
- Engage in inappropriate or unnecessary physical conduct or behaviours including doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Engage in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriately rough physical play.
- Use physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student.
- Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm.
- Develop 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- Engage in undisclosed private meetings with a student that is not your own child.
- Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- Take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent.
- Post online any information about a student that may identify them such as their: full name; age; e-mail address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group they may attend.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

Our Child Safeguarding and Protection Program includes a Staff and Student Professional Boundaries policy that provides detailed guidance for all adults at the College on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults at Assumption College.

### *Report any Child Safeguarding or Protection Concerns*

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Assumption College's Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal or the MSA Association Council (via the Regional Director) in its capacity as the College's governing body.

The Program also includes information for members of the Council, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors 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 Safeguarding Officers.

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T: +613 5783 5000 E: [principal@assumption.vic.edu.au](mailto:principal@assumption.vic.edu.au) W: [www.assumption.vic.edu.au](http://www.assumption.vic.edu.au)



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It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Third party contractors, external education providers, indirect contact volunteers, 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 Safeguarding Officers.

Peter Augustin  
Deputy Principal - Wellbeing  
E: [peter.augustin@assumption.vic.edu.au](mailto:peter.augustin@assumption.vic.edu.au)

Leonie Farrugia  
Wellbeing Services Leader  
E: [leonie.farrugia@assumption.vic.edu.au](mailto:leonie.farrugia@assumption.vic.edu.au)

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 contacted on 000.

#### **Breach of Code of Conduct**

Where a staff member breaches this Code of Conduct the college may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal.



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## CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

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### OVERVIEW

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
- compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Victoria.

### STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Assumption College is committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

At Assumption 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 safeguarding 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 SAFEGUARDING VALUES & 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.

- All children have the right to be safe.
- The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
- The views of the child and a child's privacy must be respected.
- Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in our Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries policy.
- The safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture.
- Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within our College community.
- Procedures are in place to screen all staff, Direct Contact Volunteers<sup>(i)</sup> Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers who have direct contact with children.
- Child safeguarding and protection is everyone's responsibility.
- Child safeguarding and protection training is mandatory for all staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors<sup>(ii)</sup>.
- Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of the College community.
- 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.
- Children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support.



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(i) Direct Contact Volunteers are those volunteers that are involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and could potentially have direct contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

The Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic) defines "direct contact" as any contact between a person and a child (aged under 18) that involves:

- physical contact
- face to face contact
- contact by post or other written communication
- contact by telephone or other oral communication
- contact by email or other electronic communication.

Examples of Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include volunteers involved in College camps and excursions, coaching sporting teams or assisting in learning activities.

(ii) Direct Contact Contractors are third party contractors who have direct contact with students during the normal course of their work or contractors who may be in a position to establish a relationship of trust with a student. This also includes any contractors whom a school is legally required to screen.

Examples of Direct Contact Contractor activities may include tutors, sports coaches and casual teachers.

## CHILD SAFEGUARDING PROGRAM

Assumption College is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Safeguarding 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 Safeguarding 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/carers and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters
- procedures for recruiting and screening staff, Direct Contact Volunteers, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers and Direct Contract Contractors
- procedures for reporting reportable conduct and/or misconduct
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe
- policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities
- a child safeguarding and 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 review and improvement.



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As a part of Assumption College's induction process, all staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors are required to complete a selection of training modules on the content of our Child Protection Program. Additional, ongoing child safeguarding and protection training is provided at least annually.

Staff, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers are supported and supervised by the College's Child Safeguarding Officers to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child protection.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

Child safeguarding and protection is everyone's responsibility. At Assumption College all members of the Marist Schools Australia Regional Council and the staff, as well as direct and indirect volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:

### *MSA Regional Council*

Each member of the 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 the 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 Safeguarding Policy and the College's Child Safeguarding and Protection Program are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the College.

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

A number of staff members have been nominated as the College's Child Safeguarding Officers. Our Child Safeguarding 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 Safeguarding 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 Safeguarding Officers.

### *Direct Contact Volunteers*

All Direct Contact Volunteers, as defined in this policy, are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safeguarding and Protection Program, particularly this Child Safeguarding Policy and our Child Safeguarding 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 Safeguarding Officers.

### *Indirect Contact Volunteers*



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Indirect Contact Volunteers are those volunteers who are involved in providing support and services whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students.

All Indirect Contact Volunteers are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the College environment.

All Indirect Contact Volunteers are required by the College to be familiar with our Child Protection Policy and our Child Protection Program.

Examples of Indirect Contact Volunteer activities may include assisting with College administrative functions.

### *Third Party Contractors*

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

Third Party Contractors include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches and College cleaners.

This also includes music teachers and other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the College, but have an agreement with the College to use the College's facilities.

All Third Party Contractors engaged by the College are required by the College to be familiar with our Child Safeguarding Policy and our Child Safeguarding and Protection Program.

The College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the Third Party Contractor.

### *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 Safeguarding Policy and our Child Safeguarding and Protection Program.

Assumption College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

## **REPORTING CHILD ABUSE CONCERNS**

Our Child Protection Program provides detailed guidance for staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Indirect Contract 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 Safeguarding Officers. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Staff, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, Volunteers, students, parents/carers and other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse or grooming are asked to contact



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the College's Senior Child Safeguarding Officer, Kate Fogarty, by phoning 03 5783 5000 or emailing [kate.fogarty@assumption.vic.edu.au](mailto:kate.fogarty@assumption.vic.edu.au).

## *Senior Child Safeguarding Officers*

In addition to the Principal, Assumption College has appointed the people listed below as the College's Senior Child Safeguarding Officers. Each Child Safeguarding Officer is available to answer any questions that you may have with respect to our Child Safeguarding Policy and the Child Safeguarding and Protection Program.

Peter Augustin  
Deputy Principal - Wellbeing  
E: [peter.augustin@assumption.vic.edu.au](mailto:peter.augustin@assumption.vic.edu.au)

Leonie Farrugia  
Wellbeing Services Leader  
E: [leonie.farrugia@assumption.vic.edu.au](mailto:leonie.farrugia@assumption.vic.edu.au)

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 AND PROGRAM REVIEW

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