



## POLICY ON CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING

### 1. Reflection Material

- 1.1 All Hallows' School Mission Statement
- 1.2 All Hallows' School Strategic Plan
- 1.3 National Catholic Safeguarding Standards Edition 2 2022

### 2. Rationale

The purpose of this policy is to detail All Hallows' School's (**AHS**) commitment to the safety, wellbeing, and empowerment of every child and young person in our care.

This policy complements and enhances the statutory child protection obligations of Queensland Catholic schools. The objectives of the policy will be achieved through implementing child safe practices and processes, building the capacity of all employees, volunteers and other personnel who provide services to students to act protectively and holding to account those employees and/or volunteers who have a responsibility to protect children.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to individuals who work, volunteer, or who are otherwise engaged with children at AHS, including employees, contractors, consultants, volunteers, pre-service teachers, trainees, clergy and members of the Board.

Visitors, including parents/carers and other members of the AHS community may also be made aware of this and other student protection policies and are encouraged to report any concerns to the school. The School Community Code of Conduct continues to apply.

It covers adult to child and child to child conduct across all school environments, whether physical/online or on-site/off-site, and may include camps, excursions, and any activity or service involving children and young people. Third party contractors must demonstrate at least equal measures to ensure child safety and wellbeing.

### 4. Statement of Commitment

AHS has zero tolerance for all forms of child abuse and is committed to Child Safety and implementing and adhering to the Child Safe Standards. Our commitment is based on our Mercy values of compassion, respect, justice, and service. We are

committed to and promote the safety, wellbeing, inclusion, participation, and empowerment of all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, and children from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Child Safety is the responsibility of every member of the community. All Hallows' School has a responsibility to understand and communicate the important and specific role staff and volunteers hold regarding Child Safety, to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people is maintained.

Our Child Safety policies, strategies and procedures are inclusive of the needs of all children. The school respects, supports, values, and recognises the diverse needs and contributions of all students.

## 5. Definitions

**Abuse** – means an action that causes harm to a child or places a child at unacceptable risk of harm, and includes sexual abuse, physical abuse and emotional and psychological abuse.

**AHS** – means All Hallows School Limited ABN 99 143 964 372.

**Board** – means the Board of Directors with delegated authority from Mercy Partners Limited in specified aspects of mission and ethos, finance, governance and policy, and compliance and risk management.

**Child** – means a person aged 0 to 18 years old. Unless explicitly stated otherwise, child for the purpose of this policy extends to any person enrolled at AHS and may include persons who are 18 years old or older.

**Child safe standards** – means the 10 nationally recognised standards that outline best practice for creating child safe environments, as endorsed by the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

**Complaint** – means any report, allegation or expression of dissatisfaction about the conduct of a person, including in relation to any alleged breach of a policy or procedure.

**Concern** – means any information or disclosure that may give rise to harm or a suspicion of harm to a child's physical, psychological, emotional or cultural wellbeing.

**Contractor** – means any person who is engaged by the school to provide a service or perform work in accordance with the terms of their contract or agreement. An independent contractor is responsible for providing their own equipment, tools or other assets required to perform the work. The contractor takes responsibility for the work they perform and how they perform that work.

**Consultant** – means a person engaged by AHS and qualified to give professional advice or services.

**CYRMS** – means AHS' Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy as reviewed by the Risk and Compliance Committee and approved by the Board.

**Employee** – means any person who is employed by AHS, on a temporary, casual, part-time, fixed term or continuing basis pursuant to a contract of employment. The term 'employees' does not include independent contractors and employees of labour-hire companies.

**Harm** – means damage to the health, safety, or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical violence, sexual abuse, grooming, sexual misconduct, emotional and psychological harm, and neglect.

In some cases, harm may be of a sufficient threshold to also enliven reporting obligations under other legislation. The obligations are often distinct and unique, but generally share a common definition: harm is a detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing, immaterial of how the harm is caused. The Student Protection Guidelines provide more information.

**Neglect** – means the omission or failure to take action that would prevent harm or an unacceptable risk of harm to a child.

**Parents/Caregivers** - The term 'parent' or 'caregiver' includes any person or persons having the custody or care of a child or young person.

**Pre-service teacher** – an individual who is enrolled in a post-secondary teacher preparation program at the undergraduate or graduate level, working to obtain an initial teaching license.

**Principal** – means the individual who is the head of AHS or their delegate and is responsible for its operation and management.

**QFCC** – means the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

**School** – means AHS and its controlled and associated entities, including, but not limited to, the All Hallows' School Parents and Friends Association, the Catherine McAuley Bursary Trust, the Foundation, parent support bodies and any other member or members of the school community.

**School community** – means parents, caregivers, past pupils, stepparents, relatives, extended family, visitors, friends, supporters, carers and invitees of the school, and may include any of those persons volunteering in any capacity, when in the school environment (both physical and digital) or when attending any school related function or activity at any other location.

**Student** – a prospective, current or past student of the school.

**Student Protection Contact** – means staff members nominated as such from time

to time, and currently including the Deputy Principal, Dean of Student Wellbeing, Head of Pastoral Care, Head of Health and Wellness, Head of Years 5 & 6, and the School Counsellors. AHS has at least two nominated staff members to whom a student can report the behaviour of another staff member, student, parent/caregiver or school community member that the student considers inappropriate.

**Student Protection Strategic Team** – means the team responsible for liaising with the Board and the Risk and Compliance Committee to oversee, advise on, and support the development, implementation, and review of the CYRMS and student protection policies at AHS. It is currently made up of the Principal, Dean of Student Wellbeing, and Student Protection Contacts.

**Trainees** – a person undergoing training for a particular job or profession.

**Universal principle** – means the principle that child safe entities must provide environments that promote and uphold the right to cultural safety of children who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons.

**Visitor** – means anyone who is not an employee, volunteer, consultant or is otherwise engaged by AHS who attends or is in the vicinity of the school.

**Volunteer** – means any person who is acting on a voluntary basis at the school to fulfil a specific purpose and who is not paid a wage for work performed. A volunteer may receive an honorarium payment. A volunteer maintains responsibility to ensure their safety, and the safety of others, and is required to comply with the School's policies and procedures.

## 6. Responsibilities

### **AHS Board / Risk & Compliance Committee**

The Board holds ultimate responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at AHS. It takes reasonable steps to ensure that child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and risk management strategies are in place and are regularly reviewed, including ensuring the school has appropriate resources to effectively implement its Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy (**CYRMS**).

The Board will appoint a designated member (currently the Deputy Chair) as the contact for sexual abuse matters referred to the Board.

The Board's Risk and Compliance Committee is responsible for:

- reviewing the CYRMS and recommending it to the Board for approval;
- maintaining and reviewing the school's risks registers, approved by the Board;
- holding regular meetings to identify risks, ensuring student protection is a standing agenda item at all meetings;
- receiving reports of breaches of the CYRMS and notifying the Board; and
- monitoring compliance with child safety policies and procedures.

**Principal (or their delegate)**

- leads and oversees the implementation of AHS' child safe policies and procedures, the 10 child safe standards and the universal principle;
- works in consultation with the Student Protection Strategic Team to ensure the CYRMS is current, effective, and reflective of best practice;
- ensures all staff, volunteers, contractors, and external providers are aware of and follow child safety requirements, including induction and ongoing training;
- makes sure all incidents, concerns, or breaches are reported to the Board's Risk and Compliance Committee and, where appropriate, to external authorities;
- ensures the school maintains secure and confidential records of child safety matters;
- ensures child safety policies and related documents are accessible to the school community;
- drives continuous improvement in child safety and wellbeing.

**Student Protection Strategic Team / Contacts**

The Student Protection Strategic Team is responsible for:

- advising and supporting the Principal on developing, implementing and reviewing the CYRMS;
- ensures the CYRMS is consultative and reflects a whole-school approach;
- monitors the effectiveness of training, information sessions, and the implementation of child safety practices across the school;
- provides recommendations and reports to the Risk and Compliance Committee regarding child safety matters.

Student Protection Contacts are the first point of contact for students, staff, parents, and community members with child safety concerns. They receive and respond to disclosures or suspicions of harm, provide guidance and support, and follow reporting guidelines.

Student Protection Contacts must complete annual training in student protection and ensure their contact details are communicated to the school community.

**All persons covered by this policy**

- must act in accordance with the school's child safety policies, codes of conduct, and procedures;
- complete mandatory induction and ongoing training in child safety and understand their reporting obligations;
- immediately report any concerns, disclosures, or breaches of child safety to a Student Protection Contact or the Principal;
- promote a safe and supportive environment for all students.

**Parents, Caregivers, and Students**

- parents and caregivers agree to the School Community Code of Conduct as part of enrolment;
- students follow school policies, listen to staff, behave appropriately, and are encouraged to speak up and report any concerns to Student Protection Contacts or trusted adults;

- all members of the AHS community are encouraged to raise any concerns or disclosures regarding child safety with a Student Protection Contact, the Principal, or through other designated channels.

## 7. Policy

To implement this policy, the school will:



### **Recognise**

- recognise the paramountcy of the interests and wellbeing of children
- listen to the voice of students and respond to the views and concerns of students
- respect student perspectives in policy, procedures and practices.

### **React**

- quickly and appropriately receive and escalate concerns, disclosures or suspicions of abuse, harm or inappropriate behaviour towards a student.

### **Respond**

- implement and follow the schools' processes and systems to identify and respond to concerns
- meet all record keeping obligations and demonstrate accountability;

### **Support**

- where reasonable, keep families and students informed and involved in creating and maintaining safe and supportive environments
- facilitate child-friendly ways for students to communicate and raise their concerns
- train and support employees, volunteers and other persons covered by this policy to implement child safe responses to concerns.

## 8. Child safe risk management

AHS is committed to proactive risk management to protect the physical, psychological, emotional and cultural safety and wellbeing of children through implementation of its CYRMS. Risk management is integral to our child safe culture and supports both the prevention of harm and the creation of positive opportunities for children and young people.

All activities, environments, and interactions involving students are subject to risk assessment, and extends to camps, excursions, high-risk activities, and use of school facilities.

## 9. Recruitment & screening

Nothing in this policy limits the application of the Policy on Recruitment, Selection and Employment Practices, which applies to recruitment and selection of all roles.

All roles, whether paid or unpaid, must be actively managed by an appropriate line manager, and must have a documented position description outlining:

- screening, registration, and qualifications relevant to the position;
- applicable child safety responsibilities;
- details of the line manager responsible for recruitment, induction, training, and performance management.

All job advertisements must outline the school's commitment to child safety and wellbeing, and selection criteria include a demonstrated understanding of child safety.

### **Suitability**

AHS is committed to child-safe recruitment practices. When recruiting, regard may be had to an applicant's motivation, understanding of child development, values, attitudes, and employment history. Applicants must disclose if they have:

- been charged with an offence against a child;
- had a prohibited status under working with children legislation lifted;
- been subject to any complaint, disciplinary, or investigatory process involving child abuse or neglect.

All applicants are required to provide written agreement to the relevant Code of Conduct as part of the application process.

### **Training**

All employees must undertake a formal induction program and annual mandatory training, including student protection training, and may include cultural safety training and trauma-informed care training as appropriate with respect to role and responsibilities.

### **Referee checks**

References are preferred for roles involving work with children. Applicants in contact roles may be required to provide at least two referees from persons with direct line managerial responsibility for the applicants' previous employment in a role working with children, including oral and/or written references. AHS requires work contact information of referees to confirm the identity of all referees. If referee details are not provided, then a recruitment process will not continue.

### **Screening and Blue Card compliance**

The Principal (or their delegate) is responsible for maintaining the school's Blue Card Register. All required persons engaged by AHS must have a Blue Card (or Exemption

Card) linked to the school via Blue Card Services Online Organisational Portal before commencing work. Regulated professions (e.g. teachers, health practitioners) must have their registration confirmed prior to commencement and annually thereafter.

Workers exempt from Blue Card requirements must confirm in writing that they are not disqualified or restricted persons.

Workers are responsible for notifying Blue Card Services and AHS of any change in circumstances or police information relevant to holding a Blue Card or relevant clearance. AHS will act immediately on any notification of suspension or cancellation from Blue Card Services.

## 10. Reporting

AHS is committed to ensuring that concerns are responded to promptly and appropriately. Any person who becomes aware of a concern should escalate the matter to a Student Protection Contact. Student Protection Contacts are identified on school's website.

The Student Protection Strategic Team and Student Protection Contacts manage concerns in accordance with the *Student Protection Processes for Queensland Catholic School Authorities - All Hallows' School*.

Generally, reporting requires:

- **Immediate Danger:** If a student is in immediate danger, contact Queensland Police on 000.
- **Student Protection Contacts:** Concerns must be reported to a Student Protection Contact. The current Student Protection Contacts are listed in the Student Diary, on the school website, and on digital screens throughout the school.
- **Reporting Process:** Staff must follow the steps outlined in the Student Protection Processes, including completing the Student Protection Reporting Form and providing all relevant information.
- **Mandatory Reporting:** Where required by law, the Principal (or delegate) will report the matter to Queensland Police, the Department of Child Safety, or other relevant authorities. A person may make a report to the Police or Child Safety at any time.

Any person with concerns in relation to any non-compliance with this policy or AHS' broader student protection processes may raise a complaint under the Complaints Procedure for Non-Compliance with Student Protection Processes.

All concerns and complaints are treated confidentially and recorded securely. Information is shared only in accordance with the following section.

## 11. Information sharing

Responding to child safety concerns often requires sensitive and/or personal information about a child and/or teacher/carer/staff member to be shared. Information

sharing to respond to concerns is done in good faith and without negligence, and is undertaken in accordance with the Policy on Privacy.

From time to time, AHS may be required to share information as required by the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld) to respond to a concern about a failure to implement or comply with the child safe standards or the universal principle or to lessen or prevent a serious risk to the health and safety of a child.

Information may be shared with Child Safety Services, Queensland Police, or other authorised entities when:

- it is relevant to preventing or assessing a child's need for protection;
- it supports the development of a child's case plan or care arrangements;
- it helps meet a child's health, education, or wellbeing needs;
- it is necessary for the prevention, detection, investigation, prosecution, or punishment of a criminal offence or breach of law.

All requests for information must be managed by the Principal. The identity of requesting officers must be verified, and accurate records of all requests and information provided must be kept. Staff must not inform the child or their parent/guardian about the request unless authorised by Child Safety Services or Police.

## 12. Review

AHS is committed to regularly reviewing and improving its child safety policies, practices, and responses. Where appropriate and reasonable, this may include seeking feedback from employees, volunteers, students and parents/caregivers.

- The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, and related child safety responses, will be reviewed at least annually for the first three years after commencement of this policy;
- Nothing in this policy prevents AHS from reviewing its child safety processes at any time or after any reportable incident, to the extent reasonable and necessary in the circumstance;
- Serious or critical incidents will be reviewed individually and expeditiously, even if routine matters follow a broader review cycle;
- The Principal, or their delegate, will audit the Blue Card Register at least every six months to ensure ongoing compliance.

## 13. Relevant legislation and standards

- 13.1 *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* (Qld)
- 13.2 *Child Protection Act 1999 and Regulation 2023* (Qld)
- 13.3 *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024* (Qld)
- 13.4 *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations* (Qld)
- 13.5 *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act and Regulations 2017* (Qld)
- 13.6 *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 and Regulations 2017* (Qld)

- 13.7 *Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth)*
- 13.8 *Education (Queensland College of Teachers) Act 2005 and Regulation 2016 (Qld)*
- 13.9 Guidelines for implementing the Child Safe Standards in Queensland
- 13.10 National Catholic Safeguarding Standards 2019
- 13.11 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations 2019
- 13.12 *National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students (legislative instrument)*
- 13.13 *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 and Regulation 2011 (Qld)*

#### 14. Related Policies, Guidelines and Procedures

- 14.1 Student Protection Processes for Queensland Catholic School Authorities – All Hallows’ School
- 14.2 Student Protection Guidelines for Queensland Catholic Schools Authorities – All Hallows’ School
- 14.3 Student Protection Reporting Form
- 14.4 Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy
- 14.5 Complaints Procedure for Non-Compliance with Student Protection Processes
- 14.6 Response and Guidelines for Students with Suicidal Behaviours and Non Suicidal Self Injury – Staff
- 14.7 Response and Guidelines for Students with Suicidal Behaviours and Non-Suicidal Self Injury – Parents
- 14.8 Student Code of Conduct
- 14.9 Employees Code of Conduct
- 14.10 Volunteer and Other Personnel Code of Conduct
- 14.11 Code of Conduct for Directors
- 14.12 School Community Code of Conduct
- 14.13 Policy on Pastoral Care and Wellbeing
- 14.14 Policy on Working with Children (WWC) Card
- 14.15 Working with Children (WWC) Card Procedure
- 14.16 Policy on Positive Behaviours – Students
- 14.17 Policy on Privacy
- 14.18 Policy on Risk and Compliance
- 14.19 Policy on Work Health and Safety
- 14.20 Policy on Recruitment, Selection and Employment Practices

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