

# Engaging Families and Caregivers in Child Safety Policy

## Policy Statement

Loreto College Ballarat is committed to ensuring that families and all members of the College community are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing. The College implements the following strategies and actions to ensure compliance with the *Ministerial Order 1359* commitment to:

- providing opportunities for families and caregivers to participate in decisions related to child safety and wellbeing which affect their child
- open and accessible communication with families and caregivers and other members of the College community about the College's approach to child safety and wellbeing
- enabling families and community members to contribute to the development and review of policies and practices of the College related to child safety and wellbeing
- ensuring that families and caregivers and the College community are informed about the policies and practices of the College which relate to child safety and wellbeing

## Context

Catholic education is a collaborative partnership between church, parish community, families, caregivers, and schools. This relationship acknowledges families as the first and ongoing educators of their children. Schools and families share the responsibility for nurturing children's faith, learning, safety, and wellbeing. This policy is grounded in contemporary safeguarding principles and aligns with Ministerial Order No. 1359.

The College holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of the entire school community. This reflects to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel (VCEA Statement of Commitment to Child Safety).

Loreto College Ballarat offers an innovative and contemporary education that engages students and prioritises student agency. We are committed to following in the footsteps of Mary Ward by developing courageous students able to thrive in a changing world.

Loreto College Ballarat has its foundation in the gospel of Jesus Christ and is proud to be part of and contribute to the larger Catholic community. Loreto College builds on a strong and proud tradition of the education of girls, one which strives to offer 'a Catholic education which liberates, empowers and motivates students to use their individual gifts with confidence, creativity and generosity in loving and responsible service.' (Loreto Schools of Australia Mission Statement)

Our values of **Freedom, Justice, Sincerity, Verity** and **Felicity** capture the vision of a Loreto Education.

The purpose of this policy is to outline clear, actionable strategies that ensure families, caregivers, and the broader school community are actively informed and engaged in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

This Policy reinforces the specific requirements of the Child Safe Standards as set out in [Ministerial Order No. 1359](#).

At Loreto College Ballarat, the following beliefs underpin the commitment to family and caregiver engagement:

- Families and caregivers should have the opportunity to contribute to decisions relating to child safety and wellbeing which affect their child
- The College has a fundamental responsibility to provide accessible and culturally safe communication with families and caregivers and other members of the College community about the College's approach to child safety and wellbeing
- All members of the College community should have access to current and relevant information relating to child safety and wellbeing
- Families and caregivers and other members of the College community should have the opportunity to provide input into the development and review of the College's policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing
- The College should promote an environment where carers feel safe to disclose unsafe home situations
- All members of the College community have the right to be informed of the governance principles and operational structures that underpin child safety and wellbeing at the College.

## Scope

This policy applies to all school staff (including employees, contractors, clergy, volunteers, labour hire workers), visitors, parents/guardians, students and other members of the College community.

## Legislative Context

Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic), Part 11, which came out of recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016) and requires that prescribed organisations and services align with Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM).

The Family Violence Protection (Information Sharing and Risk Management) Regulations 2018 (Vic)

Ministerial Order No. 1359: Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises

The Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (2005) creates the legal basis for Information Sharing Schemes (ISEC)

## Definitions specific to this policy

TERM	DEFINITION
<b>MARAM</b>	<p>MARAM in Victoria refers to the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework. It is a system-wide framework designed to guide professionals in identifying, assessing, and managing family violence risk across different sectors and services.</p> <p>Established under the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic), Part 11, which came out of recommendations from the Royal Commission into Family Violence (2016) and requires that prescribed organisations and services align with MARAM.</p>

## Supporting Documentation

### Internal

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safe Governance Policy
- Child Safe Risk Management Policy
- Diversity and Equity Policy
- Engaging Families and Caregivers in Child Safety Policy
- PROTECT: Reporting and Responding Obligations Policy
- PROTECT: Reporting and Responding Obligations Procedures
- PROTECT: Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy
- PROTECT: Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending
- Student Empowerment and Participation Policy
- Bullying Prevention (including Cyber-bullying) Policy
- Grievance Policy

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