

VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES

St Mary's Cohuna



*ALL CHILDREN HAVE THE
RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE AND BE
SAFE ALL OF THE TIME.*

The image features a solid blue background. In the center, there is a block of white text in an italicized, sans-serif font. The text reads: "ALL CHILDREN HAVE THE RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE AND BE SAFE ALL OF THE TIME." In the bottom right corner, there are several white, parallel diagonal lines of varying lengths, creating a sense of motion or a graphic element.

*When Catholic schools,
families and the broader
community work together,
schools improve
and communities flourish.*

VOLUNTEERS



*St. Mary's invites,
welcomes and encourages
families to be involved
in the life of the school.
We value your involvement.*

VOLUNTEERS



Victorian Parliamentary Inquiry 2012-13 came the *Betrayal of Trust* Report.

- 15 recommendations for the protection of children
- Civil and Criminal Law reform
- Child Safe Standards

CHILD SAFE



- ▶ Intended to ensure that all organisations involved in child related work are child safe.
- ▶ Ministerial Order 870 – schools required to meet minimum child safety standards.

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS



CECV Commitment



CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety A safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people in Catholic schools

The Statement is intended to provide the central focus for child safety¹ across Catholic education in Victoria, built around a unified 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 protection of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school.²

¹ Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, para 36.

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.

The CECV has a universal expectation for the protection of children. It is resolutely committed to ensuring that all those engaged in Catholic education in Victoria 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 and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

Catholic schools have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school 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, Catholic schools 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. All schools must 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.

Creating child-safe school environments is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by schools, families and their communities. 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.

¹As 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.

The CECV commits to providing a safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people in Victorian Catholic schools 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 and Torres Strait Islander 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, schools 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.

Schools, 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.

Schools 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.

Schools will 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.

Catholic education will stay abreast of current legislation and will meet their legislative duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in their care, including the Victorian Child Safe Standards (Victorian Government 2016), mandatory reporting, grooming, failure to disclose and failure to protect requirements.

References

Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, *The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium*, Vatican, Vatican City, accessed 24 February 2016 www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ceatedeoc/documents/rc_con_ateatedoc_doc_27041998_school2000_en.html.

State of Victoria, Department of Education and Training 2016, *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools* Ministerial Order No. 911, Education & Training Reform Act 2006, Gazette No. S2, accessed 16 May 2016 www.gazette.vic.gov.au/gazette/Gazette2016/G2016S002.pdf.



CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Minimum Standards

- Organisational Culture
- Child Safety Policy
- Screen, supervision, training
- Procedures for responding
- Risk minimisation
- Promotion

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS



St. Mary's Policies

- ▶ Child Safe
- ▶ Grooming
- ▶ Failure to Protect
- ▶ Failure to Disclose
- ▶ Mandatory Reporting
- ▶ Working With Children Check

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

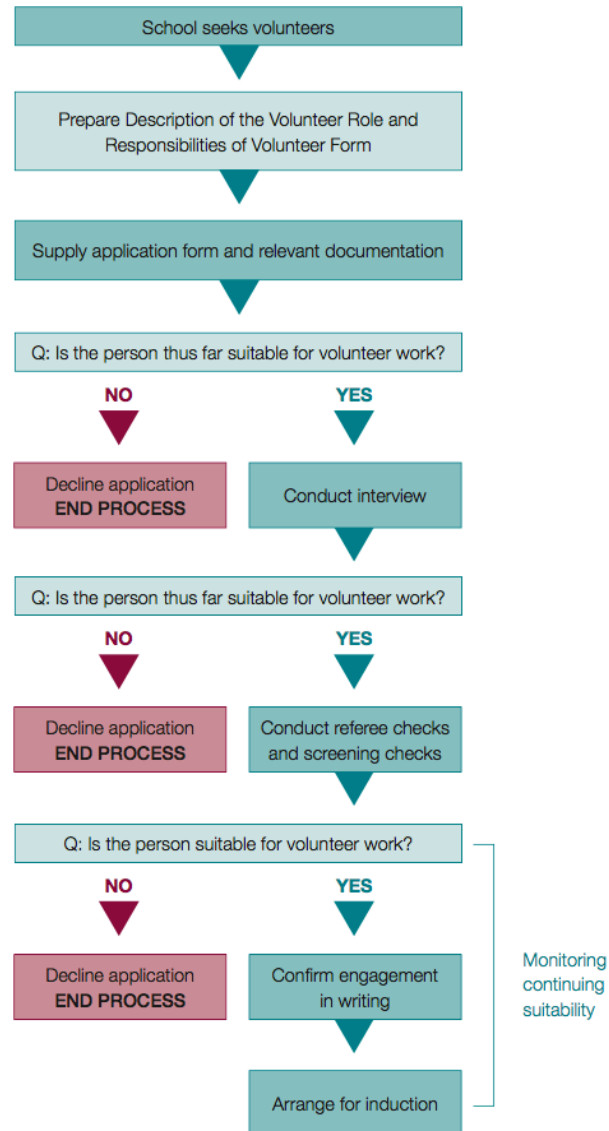


- ▶ At St. Mary's
 - Consulted with staff and parents
 - Review and amended wider policy and practice
 - Developed and implemented a Code of Conduct for staff
 - Development and implementation of Volunteer and Contractor guidelines

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS



Flowchart – Process for the Recruitment & Selection of Volunteers



*When Catholic schools,
families and the broader
community work together,
schools improve
and communities flourish.*

VOLUNTEERS



In Catholic Schools;

- ▶ contribute to the pool of resources available
- ▶ build a shared sense of community
- ▶ create opportunities for community connection, involvement and engagement
- ▶ strengthen the connection between schools, families, parishes and community.

VOLUNTEERS



Benefits for School Communities

- ▶ extend opportunities to broaden the perspectives and voices contributing to the life of the school;
- ▶ have an opportunity to share understandings about the life of the school, about learning and about the community.

VOLUNTEERS



Benefits for Volunteers

- ▶ have an opportunity to be part of the learning process for children and young people;
- ▶ can develop an enhanced sense of personal satisfaction from having an opportunity to give back, to share skills, experience and expertise, and to learn.

VOLUNTEERS



Benefits for Students

- ▶ can interact with a range of role models and adults from the community;
- ▶ have opportunities to learn from and be exposed to a broad range of skills and expertise;
- ▶ have an opportunity to experience a model of the spirit of altruism or the nature of giving.

VOLUNTEERS



We have a responsibility to create a school environment where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe. This commitment to protecting children must be embedded in our school's culture and policies.

VOLUNTEERS AT ST. MARY'S



Families and community members volunteer in a range of ways.

They include;

Canteen & celebration days

Learning Activities

Sports Days

Excursions / Incursions

Assisting with any school based activities

VOLUNTEERS AT ST. MARY'S



We are now required to more rigorously screen and monitor volunteers.

We aim to do this in a thorough and appropriate way to allow volunteers to continue to be involved at St. Mary's.

VOLUNTEERS AT ST. MARY'S

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Under the Child Safe Standards, anyone (including volunteers, staff, contractors) working in a school is considered '**Staff**'. Therefore thorough checking is required.

VOLUNTEERS AT ST. MARY'S



Under the Child Safe Standards, 'child-connected work' is work authorised by the school principal and completed by an adult (18years and over) in a school environment.

This environment extends to camps and excursions.

VOLUNTEERS AT ST. MARY'S

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Privacy

We are at all times mindful of privacy laws and obligations and will continue to be through volunteer screening and engagement purposes.

VOLUNTEERS AT ST. MARY'S



Download, complete and return:

1. Responsibility of Volunteer Form
2. Volunteer Application Form

All downloads are available from our school website.

www.smcohuna.catholic.edu.au

VOLUNTEERS AT ST. MARY'S



Documentation to Read

Child Safe Policy

Code of Conduct

CECV Commitment to Child Safety

All documents are available from the school website.

VOLUNTEERS AT ST. MARY'S



Read

Safety Handbook

Bullying And Harassment Policy

All documents are available from the school on request.

VOLUNTEERS AT MARY'S



**Thank-you
for your
ongoing support.**

*IN ALL THINGS GOD IS
GLORIFIED*

