



# St Paul Lutheran School

## Child Safe Policy

*Last reviewed: February 2019*

### **Purpose**

St Paul Lutheran School has developed the following Child Safe Policy as an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse, grooming and neglect.

This policy forms the foundation of the School's policy framework, procedures and practices, and ultimately the School's culture with respect to child safety. It is designed to be St Paul Lutheran School's public statement of commitment to child safety and a demonstration of the School's leaders' commitment to champion child safety in our School.

The School's Child Safe Policy has been approved and endorsed by the School Council. The policy is reviewed at least annually, in light of experience, the effectiveness of procedures and the publication of relevant research.

This policy is published on our public website, as well as communicated through other mediums such as newsletters, our annual report and in induction and welcome packs for members of the School Council, Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers.

### **Policy Objectives**

This policy provides the framework for:

- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection within the School;
- the creation of a positive and robust child protection culture;
- the promotion and open discussion of child protection issues within the School; and
- complying with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in South Australia.

*Living and Learning Together in Christ*

44 Audrey Avenue, Blair Athol, South Australia 5084

**T** 08 8260 2655 **E** admin@stpaulba.sa.edu.au

**W** stpaulba.sa.edu.au / ABN 84 648 346 828

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This policy has been developed in accordance with Principle 2 of the Child Safe Environments Principles of Good Practice.

### **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety**

St Paul Lutheran School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people at the School. We support the rights of the child and will act without hesitation to ensure a child safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our Staff and Volunteers, and encourage their active participation in creating and maintaining a child safe environment for all members of the School community.

### **Our Child Safe Values & Principles**

The School'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, grooming and neglect.

- 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 Safety 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 School community;
- Procedures are in place to screen the Principal, Leila Mattner, members of the Management/Executive Team, all Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers who have direct contact with students;
- Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility;
- Child protection training is mandatory for all School Council members, Staff, Direct Contact Contractors and Direct Contact Volunteers;
- Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse, grooming or neglect are simple and accessible for all members of the School 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;
- Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse and grooming are simple and accessible for all members of the School community.

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

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

### **Our Child Protection Program**

St Paul Lutheran School has developed procedures and standards to support our overarching Child Safe Policy, through our Child Protection Program.

Our Child Protection Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse, grooming and neglect 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/guardians and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters;
- procedures for recruiting and screening School Council members, Staff, Direct Contact Contractors and Direct Contact Volunteers;
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe;
- policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities;
- a child 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 requirements for a child safe environment); and
- a system for continuous improvement and review.

## **Responsibilities**

Child protection is everyone's responsibility. At St Paul Lutheran School all members of the Council and Staff, Volunteers, Third Party Contactors and External Education Providers have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:

### **School Council**

Each member of the School Council is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to allow the School's Child Safe Policy and the Child Protection Program to be effectively implemented within the School and are responsible for holding the Principal, Leila Mattner and Management/Executive team accountable for effective implementation.

### **The Principal, Leila Mattner**

The Principal, Leila Mattner is responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Safe Policy and the School's Child Protection Program are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the School.

### **The School's Child Safety Officers**

A number of Staff are nominated as the School's Child Safety Officers. Our Child Safety 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 School. They are also responsible for championing child protection within the School and assisting in coordinating responses to child protection incidents.

St Paul Lutheran School has also appointed Leila Mattner as the School's Senior Child Safety Officer. The Senior Child Safety Officer has an important role in the promotion and maintenance of a child safe environment at the School.

### **Staff Members**

All Staff are required to comply with our Child Protection Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. Each current and new staff member is required to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and acknowledged the School's Child Safe Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct.

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 School's Child Safety Officers.

Staff, as a condition of employment at the School, must adhere to the School's Child Safety Code of Conduct and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries policy.

### **Direct Contact Volunteers**

All Direct Contact Volunteers, as defined in this policy, are required to comply with 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 School's Child Safety Officers.

### **Indirect Contact Volunteers**

Indirect Contact Volunteers are those volunteers who are involved in providing support and services whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students. Indirect contact volunteers are not responsible for supervising students and would not have "unsupervised" contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

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

All Indirect Contact Volunteers are required by the School to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and acknowledged the School's Child Safe Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Examples of Indirect Contact Volunteer activities may include assisting with School functions, or the School canteen and fundraising barbeques.

### **Third Party Contractors**

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

Third Party Contractors include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches and School cleaners. This also includes peripatetic music teachers and other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the School, but have an agreement with the School to use the School's facilities.

In this Child Protection Program, Third Party Contractors are classified as either "Direct Contact Contractors" or "Indirect Contact Contractors".

Direct Contact Contractors are:

- those who have direct unsupervised contact with students during the normal course of their work;
- those who may be in a position to establish a relationship of trust with a student notwithstanding that unsupervised access to students would be rare (for example full-time maintenance personnel); and
- any contractors whom a school is legally required to screen.

Indirect Contact Contractors are those contractors who do not meet the definition of "Direct Contact Contractor". Refer to Third Party Contractors' Responsibilities for more information.

All Third Party Contractors engaged by the School are required to comply with our Child Protection Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse, grooming and neglect.

Each Third Party Contractor is required to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and acknowledged the School's Child Safe Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The School 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 School has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the School.

The delivery of such a course may take place on School premises or elsewhere. All External Education Providers engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment.

All External Education providers engaged by the School are required to comply with our Child Protection Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse, grooming and neglect.

Each External Education Provider is required to have appropriate child protection policies and procedures within their organisation.

St Paul Lutheran School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

### **Reporting Concerns**

Our Child Protection Program provides detailed guidance for all members of the School community as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse, grooming or neglect and how to report child protection concerns. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse, grooming or neglect incidents to relevant external authorities.

Staff, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, Volunteers, students, parents/guardians and other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse, grooming or neglect are asked to contact the School's Senior Child Safety Officer, Leila Mattner by phoning 8260 2655 or emailing [lmattner@stpaulba.sa.edu.au](mailto:lmattner@stpaulba.sa.edu.au)

All communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis' and without threat of punishment or victimisation.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.

If you have any questions regarding the School's Child Safe Policy, and how it applies to you, the School's Child Safety Officers are available for advice.