



St Joseph's School ~ Renmark

Child Protection Policy



INTRODUCTION:

St. Joseph's is a Catholic school community that is committed to providing a safe, healthy and happy environment for all children.

This Child Protection Policy is framed within the overarching Vision Statement for South Australian Catholic Schools:

“Catholic Schools educate young people in all dimensions of life
by developing the whole person.”

St. Joseph's is a community which:

- Names and witnesses to Gospel values.
- Respects the dignity and worth of each individual.
- Values working in partnership.
- Challenges and encourages each member of the community to search for the truth in all things.

St Joseph's School operates in a wider community context where legal requirements exist and where they have an obligation to:

- protect children.
- provide a secure environment where children can be safe and feel safe.
- intervene on behalf of children.
- actively work towards empowering children.
- ensure the principles of care, protection and safety are implemented.

PRINCIPLES:

The safety and well-being of the child must be the paramount consideration in every situation.

The dignity and worth of the human person is fundamental to Catholic teaching.

Children have the right to be safe and to feel safe.

Children's development is dependent on the quality of care provided by the significant adults in their lives.

The family is recognised as being the unit primarily responsible for the care and protection of the child.

Where families are not providing the care consistent with their obligations or where a child's welfare is at risk, or suspected to be at risk, intervention on behalf of the child is obligatory.

Cooperation with Government Departments and human service organisations in the community is essential in child protection.

People who are involved in situations where abuse occurs or is suspected are treated with sensitivity, dignity and respect.

POLICY STATEMENT:

St Joseph's School recognises its role in the prevention of child abuse and takes responsibility for implementing child protection practices.

St Joseph's School is committed to:

- being a place where children are safe and feel safe.
- allocating resources for child protection education and programs.
- developing practices and procedures that support child protection.
- implementing the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum.

Staff at St Joseph's School will be educated in the area of child protection and mandatory notification.

As legal mandators the staff at St Joseph's School will report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

The responsibility of all people at St Joseph's Catholic School is to ensure that there is a total community approach towards the protection of children from abuse.

Principal

It is the responsibility of the School Principal to:

- provide a safe school environment that ensures that children are protected.
- ensure all staff, parent volunteers, tutors and contractors have a current Catholic police clearance or other acceptable documentation as referenced by the Police Check Unit.
- ensure school personnel understand the definitions of child abuse and neglect and carry out their legal obligations, responsibilities and correct procedures when notifying suspicion of child abuse and neglect.
- support school personnel directly involved with the handling of disclosure and notification.
- ensure that policies and organisational procedures provide children with a safe school environment. This will be done in consultation with St Joseph's School Board.
- promote models of behaviour between school personnel and children based on mutual respect and consideration.
- ensure that student management practices respect the dignity of children.
- provide training and development for all involved in child protection at St Joseph's School.
- provide training and development for all involved in Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum.
- initiate and support the implementation of Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum at the classroom level to ensure that all children have access to this program throughout their school years.
- monitor and evaluate Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum.
- provide families with information about and opportunities to participate in the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum.
- ensure appropriate confidentiality of information concerning children in cases of suspected abuse or neglect.

All Staff Members

The staff at St Joseph's School are committed to:

- treating children with dignity and respect, to act with propriety, provide a duty of care and protect children in their care.
- notifying the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) of Department for Child Protection (DCP) (telephone 13 14 78) if, in the course of their work, they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.
- providing a physically and psychologically safe environment for children.
- participating in training and development opportunities which provide knowledge and skills in mandatory notification.
- teaching children skills and understanding which will empower them to achieve and maintain personal safety.
- assisting children to develop positive, responsible and caring attitudes and behaviours which recognise the rights of all people to be safe and free from both harassment and abuse.
- teaching the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum.

Procedures for dealing with Child Abuse

Children's Protection Act:

By law, all principals, teachers and other school personnel (including volunteers) are obliged to notify CARL if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been or is being abused or neglected.

Recognition of Abuse:

'Abuse' refers to sexual, physical, emotional or psychological abuse or neglect.

Legal Requirements:

The Law requires school personnel to report reasonable suspicions of abuse. School personnel have reasonable grounds to suspect abuse and to contact CARL when:

- A child tells you he or she has been abused.
- A child tells you he or she knows someone who has been abused.
- Someone else tells you that a child has been abused.
- Your own observations of the child's physical condition and/or behaviour lead them to suspect that the child has been abused.
- Other circumstances lead you to suspect that a child has been abused.

Notification Procedures:

To consult and make a notification, phone the Child Abuse Report Line on 131478 as soon as possible.

When making a notification, school personnel must advise:

- The child/young person's name, age and address.
- The reason for suspecting that the injury to, or behaviour of, or the condition of the child/young person is the result of abuse or neglect.

- The notifier’s assessment of immediate danger to the child or young person.
- What arrangements, if any, exist for the care and protection of the child/young person.
- What involvement, if any, other agencies have in dealing with the abuse or neglect issues.
- The notifier’s description of the injury, the behaviour or condition observed.
- The current whereabouts of the child/young person.
- The onus to notify CARL rests with the person who suspects abuse.

In all cases of sexual abuse, serious physical abuse, or serious neglect, the Police and Department for Child Protection (DCP) consult to determine the respective roles of the two departments.

Signed:
 Chairperson School Board: *Steve Atkinson* July 2023
 Principal: *Don DePalma* July 2026
 Policy Review Date: July 2023
 Next Review Date: July 2026