



Child Safety Compliance Policy

Source of Obligation

Section 4.3.1 (6)(d) of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and the Victorian Registration Standards and the CECV Guidelines (ref 4.2) require the School to have developed policies, procedures, measures and practices in accordance with a Ministerial Order for managing the risk of child abuse including:

- the implementation of minimum standards for a child safe environment; and
- responding to allegations of child abuse committed against a child enrolled at the School or committed by an employee or a student, contractor or volunteer of the School or other person connected with the School.

The Victorian Registration Standards (sch 4 cl 12) (CECV Guidelines ref 4.1) require that the School ensures that the care, safety and welfare of all students attending the School is in accordance with any applicable State or Commonwealth laws, and that all staff are advised of their legal obligations under those laws.

The legal obligations that apply to staff include:

- mandatory reporting obligations under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic);
- reportable conduct obligations under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic);
- the failure to disclose offence under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic); and
- the failure to protect offence under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic).

Child Protection Program

St. Francis of the Fields has developed a comprehensive Child Protection Program designed to ensure compliance with:

- the Victorian Child Safe Standards
- Ministerial Order No. 870
- the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic), including requirements for the School to notify the Victorian Institute of Teaching of certain matters and compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards
- the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) which sets out the mandatory reporting obligations for many of our staff

- the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) which provides the statutory definition of child abuse, and creates the Victorian Child Safe Standards and sets out the School's reportable conduct obligations
- the Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic): which establishes the Working with Children Check framework
- the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) which establishes the failure to disclose offence and the failure to protect offence, as well as a grooming offence
- the Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic) which establishes the duty to take reasonable precautions to prevent the abuse of a child by an individual associated with the School while the child is under the care, supervision or authority of the School
- the Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic) which provides an extensive definition of family violence including behaviour which may constitute child abuse.

Our Child Protection Program is made up of work systems, practices, policies and procedures designed to maintain a child safe environment and to embed an organisational culture of child safety within the School community.

The Program deals specifically with child protection issues and is designed to ensure compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, the Victorian Registration Standards, and related child protection laws. Broader child safety issues arising from our common law duty of care are dealt with through our Student Duty of Care Program.

Child Protection Training

St. Francis of the Fields recognises that without training and education of our staff, they will not understand their obligations under child protection laws and our policies and procedures will not operate to effectively keep our students safe and protect them from abuse.

St. Francis of the Fields staff, St Francis of the Fields School Advisory Board members, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors receive child protection training when they first commence their role at the School and are required to complete ongoing training on child protection issues at least annually.

All staff, St Francis of the Fields School Advisory Board members and Direct Contact Volunteers are required to undertake role-appropriate training through our Child Protection Training course.

Professional Learning

St. Francis of the Fields has designed and implemented a plan to ensure that staff participate in professional learning sessions on student wellbeing, critical incident management, restorative practices and the NSSF. This is included in our Staff Professional Learning Plan.

Documentation

St. Francis of the Fields employs detailed child protection record keeping procedures, particularly relating to staff and volunteer Working with Children Checks and any child protection-related incident that occurs in a School environment, including on camps and excursions.