

Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children Policy



Note: All references to Staff member' include Administration Staff, Support Teachers, Teachers and Temporary Relieving Teachers.

Introduction:

The McAuley Community School Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children is framed within the Vision Statement for South Australian Catholic Schools. McAuley Community school is a community which:

- gives witness to Gospel values
- respects individual dignity
- values cooperation
- challenges its members to be critical and reflective in their search for truth.

This policy is based on the Gospel values of freedom and justice for all people and an underlying belief in their dignity and uniqueness.

Safety, a basic human right, is a pre-requisite for the McAuley Community School community to be able to carry out its mission to educate.

Safety and protection from all forms of abuse are fundamental rights of all children.

McAuley Community 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 that the principles of care, protection and safety are implemented.

Underlying Assumptions, Philosophy and Rationale:

McAuley Community School espouses the view that the safety and wellbeing of the child must be the paramount consideration in every situation. This policy is based on the underlying principles that:

- the dignity of the human person is fundamental to Catholic teaching
- children have the right to be safe and feel safe at all times
- 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 mandatory
- the prevention and treatment of child abuse requires a multi-disciplinary response which is sensitive to cultural diversity and special needs

- cultural or other reasons notwithstanding, school personnel must intervene on behalf of children
- cooperation with Government Departments and human service organisations in the community are 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:

McAuley Community School recognises its role in the prevention of child abuse and takes responsibility for implementing child protection practices.

McAuley Community 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
- developing and providing protection and abuse prevention curriculum for children.

Staff at McAuley Community School will be educated in the area of child protection and mandatory notification.

As legal mandators the staff at McAuley Community School will report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect.

A Guide to Responsibilities:

The responsibility of all people at McAuley Community School is to ensure that there is a total community approach towards the protection of children from abuse.

The **Principal** of McAuley Community School is committed to:

- providing a safe school environment that ensures that children are protected
- ensuring 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
- supporting school personnel directly involved with the handling of disclosure and notification
- ensuring that policies and organisational procedures, in consultation with McAuley Community School Board, provide children with a safe school environment
- promoting models of behaviour between school personnel and children based on mutual respect and consideration
- ensuring that children behaviour management practices respect the dignity of all children
- providing training and development for all involved in child protection at McAuley Community School

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- initiating and supporting the implementation of child protection and abuse prevention curriculum at the classroom level to ensure that all children have access to these programs throughout their school years
- monitoring and evaluating child protection and abuse prevention curriculum
- providing families with information about and opportunities to participate in the protection and abuse prevention curriculum
- ensuring appropriate confidentiality of information concerning children in cases of suspected abuse or neglect
- ensuring appropriate police checks and screening procedures are carried out as necessary.
- ensuring registered volunteers have an understanding of mandatory practices and the need to actively report through CARL -Child Abuse Report Line telephone 13 14 78 or to the Principal where there concerns
- ensuring all visitors to the school have signed in at the front office and wear a visitors badge identifying themselves and their purpose for being in the school.

The **staff** of McAuley Community 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 CARL – Child Abuse Report Line 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.

Children will:

- be encouraged to develop skills to contribute to their own safety and well being.
- Inform staff immediately of any concerns to their own safety and wellbeing
- be aware of the school's role in supporting them in their emotional and physical safety.

Parents/Carers will:

- be made aware of and have access to this policy and the guidelines drawn from the Child Protection Policy 2000 – South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools.

Implementation:

- All staff members will be made aware of and have access to this policy.

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- All Parents/Carers or volunteers who have direct supervision of children will be made aware of and have access to this policy.
- All Parents/Carers and community members will be informed of this policy via the newsletter and website

The names of all relevant Government Agencies will be checked and updated on the review date of this policy.

Basis of Discretion:

Nil

Support Documents:

- Policy for the Care, Well being and Protection of Children and Young People 2011 – South Australian Commission for Catholic Schools.
- Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect – Mandated Notification Guidelines (Dept for Families and Communities).
- Child Protection Act (1993).

Financial Budget:

Nil

Resources:

- Proforma for reporting child abuse and neglect
- Child Abuse Report Line – Phone 131478
- Police Check Consent form