



Catholic
Education
Commission
Tasmania

Child Safety Policy

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1 AUTHORITY AND APPLICATION

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| Date of approval | 22 December 2020 |
| Source of approval | Catholic Education Commission Tasmania |
| Start date | 23 December 2020 |
| Date of review | November 2023 |
| Date of amendments | NA |
| Previous policies replaced by this Policy | Child Safe Organisation Policy |

SIGNED:



Chair of the CECT

DATE:

22.12.2020

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2 RELATED DOCUMENTS

This Policy should be considered in conjunction with the following instruments:

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| AoH Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Children and Vulnerable Adults Protection Policy |
| CET Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cyberbullying• Employee Code of Conduct• ICT (Information and Communication Technology)• Mandatory Reporting• Recruitment and Selection• Reportable Conduct• Work Health & Safety• Working with Vulnerable People• Workplace Behaviour |
| Applicable Laws | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (TAS)</i>• <i>Criminal Code Act 1924 (TAS)</i>• <i>Civil Liability Act 2002 (TAS)</i>• <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i>• <i>Education Act 1994 (TAS)</i>• <i>Family Violence Act 2004 (TAS)</i>• <i>Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (TAS)</i> |

3 PURPOSE

The aims of this Policy are to:

- establish and maintain Catholic Education Tasmania (CET) as a child safe organisation within the context of the Archdiocese of Hobart policy framework;
- enable Catholic Education Commission of Tasmania endorsement of CET's Child Safety Program; and
- set out CET's approach to meeting child safety legislative obligations.

4 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy:

CET's Child Safety Program - CET's suite of child safety governance instruments that collectively form CET's Child Safety Program i.e.:

- Child Safety Policy (this policy);

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- Mandatory Reporting Policy;
- Reportable Conduct Policy;
- Working with Vulnerable People Policy
- Child Safety Standards;
- Child Safety Code of Conduct;
- Child Safety Guidelines; and
- TCEO Child Safety Committee Terms of Reference.

Child means a person under 18 years of age as defined by *Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997* (TAS).

Other Person refers to any person in a school environment or workplace who is not a worker

Parent/Guardian is a person who has the legal authority and responsibility for the care of a child

School includes any systemic school or college, Archdiocesan college or congregational school or college

School Environment is any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by a School for use by children during or outside school hours, that includes:

- School grounds, including all campuses;
- online school environments, including email, intranet systems and social media platforms; and
- other locations provided by the school for a child’s use, including locations used for school activities and school events.

Worker includes any person who carries out work or services in any capacity for CET either as:

- an employee;
- a member of staff;
- a relief teacher;
- a volunteer;
- a priest or a member of a religious order;
- a contractor, subcontractor or consultant;
- an employee of a contractor, subcontractor or consultant;
- an employee of an employment agency or labour hire company;
- an apprentice or trainee; and
- an external student gaining work experience or on work placement.

Workplace any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by CET for use of workers or students during or outside of school hours, that includes:

- Tasmanian Catholic Education Office (TCEO) offices, school grounds, including campuses;
- online school environments, including email, intranet systems and social media platforms; and
- other locations provided by the TCEO or School or Workers for Students use, including locations used for school activities, school events and meetings.

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Young Person means a child who is 16 or 17 years old.

5 COVERAGE

This Policy:

- applies to all persons involved in CET activities including TCEO staff, school principals and staff, contractors, volunteers, religious personnel, students, parents and families of students, members of the wider community;
- covers all CET school environments and workplaces including TCEO offices, school and college premises and grounds, camps, tours, cultural immersions, excursions, sports events, coaching / tutoring activities and online endeavours; and
- provides Catholic Education Commission of Tasmania endorsement of subsidiary CET child safety governance instruments that together with this policy form CET's Child Safety Program.

6 POLICY

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is also the foundation of all the principles of the Church's social teaching. Catholic organisations operating in Tasmania are united by a recognition of the inherent value of the human person from conception to natural death. The Catholic community in Tasmania plays a significant role in promoting environments that nurture the wellbeing of all persons but in particular children and vulnerable adults, and is committed to providing safe and supportive places and programs for them.

CET is committed to developing and implementing safe and supportive learning and teaching environments that fulfil standards of a duty of care to children, where children feel safe, are treated with respect and protected from harm.

To achieve the necessary caring and encouraging child safety culture integral to the realisation of the commitment above all persons involved in CET activities in any CET school environment or workplace are required to fully implement all applicable aspects of CET's Child Safety Program.

7 COMMITMENTS

CET is committed to achieving best practice with respect to the efficacy of its Child Safety Program. Intrinsic to this commitment is the acceptance that achieving best practice is an ongoing endeavour. Furthermore, CET will ensure that its Child Safety Program has the structural and functional elements able to deliver the following, but not limited to, best practice outcomes:

- Open and aware organisational culture where:
 - the safety and wellbeing of children is of primary importance;
 - school leaders take the lead in championing and embedding a culture of preventative, proactive and participatory child safety;
 - children are instructed on their rights to be safe and made aware of what to

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- do if anything makes them feel worried, afraid or unsafe;
- all members of a school community can access CET’s Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct and know what to do if they have a concern; and
- all members of a school community feel they can speak up if they have a problem or concern, knowing they will be heard and supported.
- Adequate systems and practices in place to ensure:
 - workers are provided with access to CET’s Child Safety Program and understand expectations;
 - workers involved in child-connected work are instructed how to identify, respond to and report child safety concerns;
 - the recruitment and selection of workers including volunteers is conducted in accordance with CET policies and procedures;
 - workers involved in child-connected work receive training to enable them to understand their child safety responsibilities with respect to:
 - appropriate behaviours;
 - identifying and taking appropriate action to protect children from abuse, neglect and grooming; and
 - the reporting of concerns regarding abuse, neglect and grooming; and
 - child behaviour concerns are managed in accordance with school behavioural management policies.
- Appropriate management of:
 - concerns about a child’s welfare;
 - disclosures of child abuse, neglect and grooming;
 - notifications to child safety authorities; and
 - allegations or disclosures of worker misconduct.
- Workers are held to account for their conduct in accordance with the following CET policy instruments as applicable:
 - Child Safety Code of Conduct;
 - Employee Code of Conduct;
 - Mandatory Reporting Policy;
 - Reportable Conduct Policy; and
 - other relevant policies, procedures or contractual arrangements.

8 OBLIGATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

Executive Director of CET:

- ensuring CET compliance with this policy, legislative requirements and sound child safety governance practices; and
- appointing a suitable Child Safety Officer for CET:

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CET's Child Safety Officer:

- ensuring that the manner of CET's adherence to this policy, legislative requirements, sound child safety governance practices is efficacious;
- establishing clear child safety conduct and behavioural expectations in accordance with legislative requirements, professional registration responsibilities and best practice;
- developing and maintaining CET's Child Safety Program;
- implementing CET's Child Safety Program in all CET school environments and workplaces;
- ensuring the adequate induction and training of workers in CET's child safety requirements as described in CET's Child Safety Program,
- supporting CET workplace managers regarding compliance with CET's Child Safety Program and the management of child safety matters;
- ensuring the appropriate management of allegations, reports or suspicions of child abuse, neglect or grooming in accordance with child safety laws
- immediately reporting an allegation of abuse or suspicion of abuse against a trust agency worker to the Executive Director of CET and the Archdiocesan Director of Professional Standards;
- assisting the Executive Director, when requested, with the resolution of child safety matters, incident investigations and queries; and
- regularly reviewing CET's Child Safety Program to ensure that CET's child safety risk management strategies and measures are fit-for-purpose.

CET Workplace Managers e.g. Principals:

- implementing CET's Child Safety Program within their area of responsibility;
- taking reasonable steps to ensure that any potential breaches of CET child safety related policies, codes of conduct, standards, guidelines and reporting requirements are acted upon immediately and appropriately; and
- ensuring workers receive instruction to enable them to understand their child safety responsibilities.

Workers

- complying with all CET child safety related policies, codes of conduct, standards, guidelines and reporting requirements including mandatory reporting;
- completing required CET child safety induction and training;
- taking a preventative, proactive and participatory stance on child safety issues;
- promoting the safety and wellbeing of children in all CET school environments and workplaces so that children are treated with respect, protected from harm and feel safe;
- engaging in behaviours and conduct consistent with CET's Child Safety Code of Conduct; and
- cooperating fully with child safety incident investigations as required.

Other Persons

- complying with relevant CET child safety related policies, codes of conduct, standards, guidelines and reporting requirements;

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- engaging in behaviours and conduct consistent with CET's Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Parents/Guardians

- supporting CET in relation to the implementation of child safety related policies as agreed in the terms and conditions of enrolment for their child.

Children

- adhering to CET's child safety related guidelines for how they are expected to interact with one another.

9. BREACH OF POLICY

Breaches of this policy may involve disciplinary action and/or termination of employment or services. Incidents of abuse, neglect or child-harming behaviours will involve referral to the Police or the Tasmanian Government agency responsible for child protection.

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