

**PURPOSE**

This policy sets out the College's approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the College's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

**MLC'S COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

MLC has a proud history of providing students with a safe and nurturing environment in which to prosper and thrive. This environment exists as a result of the wellbeing roles and structures in place, sound wellbeing policies and processes and the delivery of a comprehensive student wellbeing program.

The College's core values of respect, responsibility and compassion guide the development of all policies and procedures.

MLC is committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children and supports and respects all children, as well as employees, contractors, agency staff and volunteers. As a community, we have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently in accordance with our robust policies and procedures. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are concerned about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

MLC is committed to preventing child abuse through identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks. MLC has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all employees and volunteers. MLC is committed to regularly training and educating employees and volunteers on child safe practices and child abuse risks.

MLC supports and respects all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal students, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse background, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments. MLC will ensure strict legal and moral adherence to laws and legislation.

**SCOPE**

This policy relates to all MLC employees, contractors, agency staff and volunteers, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people; collectively called "College Staff". This policy applies across all school environments, including all MLC campuses (Kew and the Boarding House, MLC Banksia and MLC Marshmead), both during and outside of school hours and within and outside the physical school environment (excursions, camps and tours) and the online environment.

**Policies and Procedures:**

The College's approach to providing an environment supporting child safety and to ensuring adherence with the Child Safe Standards includes:

A Child Safe Culture

The College's culture encourages staff and all community members to identify, raise, discuss and examine concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden. The MLC Child Safe Strategies have been identified for creating a child safe culture.



### Personnel understand their roles and responsibilities/Code of Conduct

Members of the College Management Team are responsible for ensuring that employees, contractors, agency staff and volunteers understand their role, responsibilities and the behaviours expected to ensure that children and young people are protected from abuse and neglect. All employees, contractors, agency staff and volunteers are required to comply with the MLC Code of Conduct in addition to other employee-specific professional codes (i.e. teachers - VIT Code of Conduct).

The College's Code of Conduct Policy and the MLC Relationships Policy provide clarity on the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.

### Human Resources

The College applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work at the College. We ensure that staff induction, education and training programs are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect. All prospective employees are required to undergo a National Criminal History Records check and maintain a valid Working with Children Check/VIT registration. Contractors, non-teaching agency staff and volunteers are required to maintain a valid Working with Children Check. Agency staff working as teachers require VIT registration and Pre-Service teachers require a Working with Children Check.

### Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

The College makes clear to staff and volunteers the expectations related to making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. Immediate action should include reporting their concerns to the MLC 'designated contact' and notifying of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The College will take immediate action to respond to a complaint and ensure immediate safety of the child.

The College policy and procedures for reporting a child safety concern or complaint are detailed in the MLC Child Protection (including Mandatory Protection) Policy.

### Risk reduction and management

The College believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount and is vigilant in ensuring comprehensive risk management processes. The College recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures.

The College's approach to Child Safety risk reduction and management aligns with the College Risk Management Policy.

### Listening to children and young people

The College has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with and between children, young people and their parents/guardians. We encourage child and parent/guardian involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/guardians to understand their rights and their responsibilities.

When the College is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with, or abuse of a child, the College will listen to the complainant's account, take any concerns or allegations seriously, check understanding and keep the child (and/or their parent/guardian) appropriately informed about progress.



### Confidentiality and Privacy

The College collects, uses and discloses information about individual children and their families in accordance with State and Federal legislation. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information are included in the College Privacy Policy.

## **DEFINITIONS**

Ministerial Order 870 provides definitions, including:

- ◆ **Child** means a child enrolled as a student at the school.
- ◆ **Child abuse** includes —
  - any act committed against a child involving:
    - a sexual offence or
    - an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming)
  - the infliction, on a child, of:
    - physical violence or
    - serious emotional or psychological harm
    - serious neglect of a child.
- ◆ **Child-connected work** means work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.
- ◆ **Child safety** encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.
- ◆ **School environment** means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the College Management Team for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:
  - all campuses (Kew, Boarding House at MLC, MLC Banksia, MLC Marshmead)
  - online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
  - other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).
- ◆ **School Governing Authority** means the MLC Board
- ◆ **School Staff** means an individual working in a school environment who is:
  - directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority;
  - a volunteer or a contracted service provider; or
  - a minister of religion.



## MLC CHILD SAFE POLICY

Volunteer

### DOCUMENT DETAILS

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Title:</b>                          | MLC Child Safe Policy (Volunteer)   |
| <b>Author(s):</b>                      | Vice Principal  |
| <b>Owner:</b>                          | Vice Principal  |
| <b>Reviewer:</b>                       | Director of Student Wellbeing   |
| <b>Other staff involved in review:</b> | Members of the College Management Team and Student Wellbeing Committee. This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents, if they occur. We will ensure that College staff, families and children have the opportunity to contribute. |
| <b>Created:</b>                        | 2016  |
| <b>Review Timeline:</b>                | Biennial  |
| <b>Document location:</b>              | Principal's Administration  |

### VERSION CONTROL

| Version | Date | Description                    |
|---------|------|--------------------------------|
| V1      | 2016 | To meet Ministerial Order 870. |
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### AUDIENCE

Members of the MLC Community, including employees, contractors, agency staff , volunteers, students and their families