



**FLINDERS**  
CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Hope & Purpose through Christian Education

# STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

## Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Children have the right to be safe and protected, including at school.

Flinders Christian Community College is, and always has been, committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This was not just a response to our legal obligation but the outworking of our moral purpose and the Christian values that underpin our culture, policies and practices.

As a child safe school committed to zero tolerance for child abuse, we welcome and are enthusiastically meeting the new child safe standards mandated by the Victorian Government to all schools to further protect children.

## Why do we need new laws and practices? - Inquiry Into Child Abuse

Recent enquiries into child abuse in Australia revealed the immense damage done in lives and communities when individuals and institutions fail in their responsibility to protect children. The 'Betrayal of Trust' report detailed these findings and included a range of recommendations for doing more to prevent and respond to child abuse in our community. It was tabled in Parliament on 13 November 2013.

## The Child Safe Standards

One result of the report was the Victorian Government's decision to introduce substantial legislative changes including Ministerial Order No. 870 which mandates schools to adhere to minimum standards known as *The Child Safe Standards*. Their purpose is to drive continuous improvement in the way we:

- promote child safety;
- prevent child abuse; and
- ensure there are proper responses to child abuse allegations.

Schools are required to consider all aspects of child safety and put measures in place to **protect children from all forms of abuse** including:

- sexual or grooming offences
- physical violence
- serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect.

There are **seven child safe standards** applicable to all schools.

- strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety
- a child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety
- a child safety code of conduct
- school staff selection, supervision and management practices for a child-safe environment
- procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of suspected child abuse

- strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- strategies to promote child empowerment and participation.

In complying with the child safe standards, **three principles** must be applied to each standard.

These are:

- promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety of children with a disability.

### **We're ALL Responsible**

The Ministerial Order places accountability for managing the risk of child abuse with the College Board of Governance. The Board of Governance is committed to embedding a college-wide commitment and culture to the protection of children through the College Child Safety Strategic Plan.

While the executive and campus principals will join the Board in leading and driving our ongoing commitment to keeping all children safe, every Flinders community member is:

- responsible for ensuring that our students are safe and protected
- invited to participate in the development and review of all related policies, codes of conduct and strategies.

### **The Imperative - Flinders has a ZERO tolerance for child abuse**

Child abuse, and arrangements that allow it to occur, will not be tolerated at Flinders Christian Community College. Ensuring and enforcing this together is our moral obligation and Christian responsibility.

### **In Summary**

As a child safe school, Flinders Christian Community College is committed to:

- establishing and maintaining a child safe environment
- protecting all children from child abuse
- valuing all children and treating them with respect
- appropriately responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- empowering students to raise any child safety concerns
- facilitating student participation in the school's decision making processes.

### **We invite your questions and input**

To make enquiries about child safety at the College, to contribute to our child-safe policy reviews, or make suggestions to further improve our child-safe environment, please contact your Campus Principal or Head of Wellbeing on the numbers listed below.

Carrum Downs Campus - Andrew Watts, Campus Principal .....T (03) 9785 0000 Traralgon Campus - Julian Van Tienen, Campus Principal..... T (03) 5173 0500 Tyabb Campus - Nick Haines, Campus Principal .....T (03) 9573 2000

## Support

If you or someone you know has suffered abuse, we encourage you to reach out for support. You can contact your Campus Principal (above) , Campus Child safety Officer or members of the Campus Wellbeing team:

Carrum Downs Campus – Sally Cahill .....T (03) 9785 0000  
Traralgon Campus – Hannah Warner..... T (03) 5173 0500  
Tyabb Campus – Richard Van Orsouw .....T (03) 9573 2000

A list of organisations and support services we can commend to you can be found at:

<http://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/support-services>.

### Quick Reference:

Lifeline	131 114 (24 hours, 7 days)
Adults Surviving Child Abuse (ASCA)	1300 657 380 (9am-5pm, 7 days)
Bravehearts	1800 272 831

## Finally

Everyone at Flinders Christian Community College is responsible for preventing and responding to child abuse