

Child Protection Policy

Mission Statement

Inspired by the Gospels and in the spirit of John XXIII, Mary Ward and Ignatius Loyola, we seek to be people of competence, conscience and compassion who are committed to God and the service of others.

Rationale

From the moment they join the John XXIII College community, students should learn of their value as human persons. Every aspect of the College's life should reflect a Christian pastoral dimension. The pastoral dimension of a Catholic school such as John XXIII College needs to include the mutual care and support staff demonstrate both towards each other and for their students.

Every John XXIII College staff member shares responsibility for the pastoral dimension of the College. In doing so, they place themselves at the service of a core objective in Catholic education, as explicated in the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia's Child Protection Policy:

"We call on all staff to develop the kinds of relationships that will help them respond proactively to their students' pastoral needs. (Mandate, 37)."

Catholic schools are entrusted, in partnership with parents/guardians/caregivers who are the primary educators of their children, with the total education of the child. Catholic school staff therefore have a duty of care to students during school operating hours and at other times when a staff/student relationship exists. Staff must take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions which they can reasonably foresee would be likely to result in harm or injury to the student.

Definitions

Child abuse is the long term and/or short-term maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 years of age. It is the result of action or inaction which results in harm or injury to a child. Child abuse may be categorised as follows:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect

Greater detail on the definitions of child abuse may be found in the Child Protection Procedures – Guidelines and Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia.

Child Protection refers to prevention and response to abuse against children. This includes the policies, preventative measures and procedures to protect children from both intentional and unintentional harm. In context it applies particularly to the duty of Catholic Education and individuals associated with Catholic Education, towards children in their care.

Principal refers to the Principal of John XXIII College

Historic Allegations refers to any information alleging child abuse where the child is a former student of the College.

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Principles

The Ignatian tradition of John XXIII College places great emphasis on the concept of cura personalis – ‘care of the whole person’. This concept has always played an integral role in guiding and driving the educational mission of the Jesuit fathers and Loreto sisters. In the words of the former Jesuit Superior General Peter-Hans Kolvenbach SJ: “Cura personalis is simply help, from person to person, so that God and human may really meet.”

In this context, and as a fundamental part of John XXIII College’s broader commitment to meeting the pastoral needs of every student in its care, the College is committed to child protection strategies and procedures to ensure the care, safety and protection of all children in our school.

In the best interests of the child, the child protection strategies and procedures to be followed are based on the following principles:

- All staff at John XXIII College have a responsibility to care for children and to promote their safety wellbeing.
- All children have the right to a thorough and systematic education in all aspects of personal safety. This should be done in partnership with their parents/guardians/caregivers.
- The dignity of the person shall be maintained and respected in all dealings regarding allegations of child abuse.
- The Principal will ensure that all staff are aware of and comply with legislation and policies with respect to child protection.
- The confidentiality of all concerned in relation to an allegation of child abuse should be respected, subject to the disclosures required to be made in accordance with the Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia.

Procedures

- John XXIII College staff who identify concerns regarding the sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect of a child must respond according to the Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia.
- Allegations of Misconduct and Serious Misconduct against Staff – Processes and Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia, is to be followed when an allegation is directed against school employees. These include teachers, administrative staff, grounds staff or any other staff member.
- Allegations directed against any clergy or members of religious institutes should be discussed with the Director of Professional Standards and follow Towards Healing: Principles and Procedures in responding to complaints of abuse against personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia, as well as fulfilling other relevant requirements i.e. mandatory reporting.
- The Principal shall ensure that staff receive induction, in relation to the Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia and Mandatory Reporting within the first 12 months of appointment.
- The Principal shall ensure the school's Pastoral Care structures reflect the Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia.
- The Principal is an approved “class of persons” in accordance with the Act and is able to take mandatory reports regarding child sexual abuse. Principals of Catholic schools have a legal obligation upon receiving mandatory reports regarding child sexual abuse to forward these

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unaltered to the approved agency (currently the Department for Child Protection - DCP) as soon as possible (usually within 24 hours). Teachers also have the option at law to report directly to DCP.

- Staff shall act in accordance with the relevant section of Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia in regard to any historic allegations of child abuse.

References

Framework for the Development of Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools

Bishops of Western Australia 2009, Mandate of the Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia 2009 – 2015

John XXIII College Policy: The Management of Confidential Information in Schools

The Child Protection Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia

Allegations of Misconduct and Serious Misconduct Against Staff – Processes and Procedures for Catholic Schools in Western Australia

Towards Healing, Principles and Procedures in Responding to Complaints of Sexual Abuse Against Personnel of the Catholic Church in Australia

Related Documents

Children and Community Services Act 2004 (as amended in 2008) (WA)