



Child Safety and Safeguarding Program

Child Safety and Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities Policy and Procedures

Background

St Patrick's College is a Catholic School in the Edmund Rice tradition. The charism of Blessed Edmund Rice expressed through the touchstones of Liberating Education, Gospel Spirituality, Inclusive Community, Justice and Solidarity, underpins our continued commitment to a safe and inclusive environment for all.

St Patrick's College is a Catholic day and boarding college for boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1893. St Patrick's College is committed to providing a caring, supportive, and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known.

EREA Victorian Schools Ltd. (EREA VSL) and St Patrick's College are committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and participation of all students.

The EREA VSL Board, the College's and the Boarding School's governing authority, has approved the College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Responsibilities Policy and Procedures, as set out in the Policy Administration section, below.

Purpose

Ministerial Order 1359 requires The EREA VSL Board to ensure that St Patrick's College's policies and procedures for responding to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse clearly outline the roles and responsibilities of leadership, School-Based Staff, School Boarding Premises Staff and Volunteers.

St Patrick's College (the College) is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment.

Society as a whole shares responsibility for promoting the safety and protection of students from abuse. In the St Patrick's College context, all members of the St Patrick's College community have their role to play – teachers, other staff, administrators, parents/carers and other family members, Volunteers, Contractors and students.

That said, St Patrick's College's Principal are committed to 'leading from the front' and engaging in a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to student safety.

Students are encouraged to take an active role in developing and maintaining a child safe environment at St Patrick's College and are provided with opportunities to contribute and give feedback in the development of the College's policies and practices. Students also have and are made aware of the different avenues available to them to disclose abuse, harm or concerns for their safety or the safety of others.

This Policy and its Procedures set out the roles and responsibilities that specific members of the St Patrick's College community have with respect to child safeguarding at St Patrick's College in general and the Child Safety and Safeguarding Program as a whole. This includes, but is not limited to, roles and responsibilities relating to responding to child safety incidents and concerns, and to handling child safeguarding-related complaints.

The roles and responsibilities set out below apply to each Policy and its Procedures in the Child Safety and Safeguarding Program.

Additional roles and responsibilities that relate to individual Policies and their Procedures are set out in the relevant Policy and its Procedures.

Principles

EREA Victorian Schools Ltd. and St Patrick's College are committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and participation of all students. We have no tolerance for child abuse.

The EREA VSL Board and St Patrick's College have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected and their voices heard, and where they are safe and feel safe.

Ministerial Order 1359, the EREA Victorian Schools Ltd. Safeguarding Framework and the related EREA Victorian Schools Ltd. safeguarding policies set out the principles that guide The EREA VSL Board and St Patrick's College in the establishment of child safety and safeguarding roles and responsibilities at St Patrick's College.

Scope

This Policy and its Procedures apply to Staff, Volunteers and Contractors, as well as The EREA VSL Board.

They apply in all College and Boarding School environments (together referred to as College environments) within the meaning of Ministerial Order 1359, including physical, virtual and online environments used during or outside school hours, on-site and off-site College grounds (e.g. extra-curricular activities such as sport and other programs, camps and excursions, interstate and overseas travel), and environments provided by External Education Providers and other Contractors.

Definitions

Definitions of particular terms used in this Policy and its Procedures can be found in the [Child Safety and Safeguarding Policy: Master Definitions List](#).

Of particular importance to this Policy and its Procedures are the following additional key definitions:

“Child-Connected Work”

For the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359, “child-connected work” is defined as work authorised by the school governing authority or the provider of school boarding services and performed by an adult in a school or school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Under this definition, all **School-Based Staff members** are engaged in child-connected work.

Under this definition, many, but not all, **Volunteers** and **Contractors** are engaged in child-connected work. Volunteers and Contractors who are not adults or who do not work when children are present or expected to be present are NOT engaged in child-connected work.

“Child-connected work” is broader than “child-related work” (defined below). “Child-connected work” does not need to involve direct contact with children, whereas “child-related work” does. For example, a consultant engaged by the College to work with the College Advisory Council and who attends the College for meetings during school hours when children are present is not engaged in “child-related work” but is engaged in “child-connected work” for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

“Child-Related Work”

“Child-related work” is defined in the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic). It is work performed at or for the College or the Boarding School by a School-Based Staff member, Volunteer or Contractor that usually involves direct contact with a child (unless the direct contact is only occasional and incidental to the work).

Direct contact means any contact between a person and a child that involves:

- physical contact
- face-to-face contact
- contact by post or other written communication
- contact by telephone or other oral communication; or
- contact by email or other electronic communication.

Under this definition, only those Volunteers and Contractors who have direct contact with students are engaged in child-related work for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

“School-Based Staff”

“School-Based Staff” means “an individual working in a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority*
- a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by a school governing authority to perform child-related work; or
- a minister of religion, religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the school.

*St Patrick's College engages or employs School-Based Staff and Contractors at the College (other than the Principal/Head of Campus, Deputy Principal and the Director of Human Resources, Risk and Compliance.) on behalf of The EREA VSL Board.

This means that, at the College, all School-Based Staff members, **as well as** Direct Contact Contractors, are "School-Based Staff" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359, no matter their age or the frequency of their engagement.

"School Boarding Premises Staff"

"School Boarding Premises Staff" means an individual working in a school boarding environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by the school boarding premises governing authority*
- a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by the school boarding premises governing authority to perform child-related work; or
- a minister of religion, religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the school.

*St Patrick's College engages or employs all School Boarding Premises Staff and Contractors at the Boarding School on behalf of The EREA VSL Board.

This means that, at the Boarding School, all School Boarding Premises Staff, as well as Direct Contact Contractors, are "School Boarding Premises Staff" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359, no matter their age or the frequency of their engagement.

"Volunteers" and "Contractors"

A Volunteer is a someone who performs work for the College in a College environment without remuneration or reward. Volunteers may be family members of students, or from the wider College or local community. Volunteers are not "School-Based Staff" or "School Boarding Premises Staff" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

A Contractor is someone engaged by the College to perform specific tasks. Contractors are not employees of the College. However, Contractors who have direct contact with children (see below) are "School-Based Staff" or "School Boarding Premises Staff" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

The College categorises Volunteers and Contractors as either:

- **Direct Contact Volunteers/Contractors:** Volunteers and Contractors who have direct physical or face-to-face contact with, or who directly communicate with, students (such as Volunteers and Contractors who are tutors, provide learning support, work in the canteen, attend or provide excursions/incursions, assist in music/drama productions and coach sports teams). External Education Providers are considered Direct Contact Contractors. **All Direct Contact Volunteers/Contractors who are adults are engaged in both “child-related work” and “child-connected work”.**
- **Regular Volunteers/Contractors:** Volunteers and Contractors who assist the College in ways that **do not involve direct contact with students** (although there could be indirect or incidental contact), and **who do this more than seven times per year** (such as Volunteers working the College’s administration office, contracted consultants, regular maintenance workers or cleaners, and caterers for staff events). **Regular Volunteers/Contractors are NOT engaged in “child-related work”. They are only engaged in “child-connected work” if they are adults and if they work when children are present or expected to be present.**
- **Casual Volunteers/Contractors:** Volunteers and Contractors who assist the College in ways that **do not involve direct contact with students** (although there could be indirect or incidental contact) or whose services are aimed at the general public, and **who do this seven times or less per year** (such as Volunteers who work on a stall at a College fete or on a barbecue at a sporting event, and one-off emergency maintenance workers). **Casual Volunteers/Contractors are NOT engaged in “child-related work”. They are only engaged in “child-connected work” if they are adults and if they work when children are present or expected to be present.**

St Patrick's College's Policy

Roles relevant to child safeguarding at the College, and to the College’s Child Safety and Safeguarding Program, are:

- The EREA VSL Board
- The EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer
- The Director of Human Resources, Risk and Compliance Mr. Jamie Bobrowski
- The Principal
- The St Patrick's College Advisory Council
- The Principal
- Child Safeguarding Officers

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- External Education Providers

The EREA VSL Board and St Patrick's College have assigned general child safeguarding responsibilities to the above roles as set out in **Child Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities at St Patrick's College**, below.

Child Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities at St Patrick's College

The EREA VSL Board Responsibilities

The EREA VSL Board is St Patrick's College's "school governing authority" and "school boarding premises governing authority" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

It has responsibility for EREA VSL's strategic directions, The EREA VSL Board policy, operational policy and risk management.

It is responsible for:

- acquiring and keeping up-to-date knowledge of child safety and wellbeing issues
- understanding the nature of EREA VSL-governed schools' operations and the child safety and wellbeing risks associated with these operations
- ensuring that EREA VSL-governed schools have appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding child safety and wellbeing issues and are able to respond in a timely way to that information
- approving and reviewing EREA VSL-governed schools' child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures to ensure that they have and implement processes to comply with Ministerial Order 1359 and other child safety and wellbeing legal and regulatory obligations
- ensuring that EREA VSL-governed schools have developed and implemented ongoing monitoring processes to verify the provision and use of the resources that have been allocated to manage child safeguarding obligations within each school and evaluate their effectiveness.

The EREA VSL Board, through the EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer, has delegated functions relating to the operational management and implementation of St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program to the Principal. For more information, refer to the EREA VSL Delegations Instruments.

The EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer's Responsibilities

The EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer implements the strategy and policy approved by The EREA VSL Board and appoints staff to fulfil the leadership, management and operational structures of EREA VSL.

The EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- ensuring that EREA VSL-governed schools have appropriate resources to effectively implement their Child Safety and Safeguarding Programs
- ensuring that sound governance and management practices are applied and that EREA VSL-governed schools and entities meet their obligations and legislative requirements as defined in the EREA VSL Safeguarding Framework
- ensuring those delegated to employ in EREA VSL screen employees in accordance with relevant State/Territory legislative requirements
- monitoring and assuring appropriate and timely reporting to The EREA VSL Board to enable its members to discharge their responsibilities.

The EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer is the "Head of Entity" for St Patrick's College for the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme. They have authorised the Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) Safeguarding and Standards Unit to undertake responsibility for reporting and investigating reportable allegations that involve School-based Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, the Principal, EREA VSL Staff, Volunteers and Contractors, and members of The EREA VSL Board.

For more information, refer to the [Child Safeguarding Reporting and Responding Obligations Policy and Procedures](#) and the EREA VSL Delegations Instruments.

The Director of Human Resources, Risk and Compliance Mr. Jamie Bobrowski's Responsibilities

The Director of Human Resources, Risk and Compliance Mr. Jamie Bobrowski supports each EREA VSL-governed school to comply with relevant child protection legislation, the EREA VSL Safeguarding

Framework, related safeguarding policies and the Child Safeguarding Codes of Conduct.

The Director of Human Resources, Risk and Compliance Mr. Jamie Bobrowski is responsible for:

- directing, supporting and advising Principals of EREA VSL-governed schools and entities in relation to relevant child protection legislation and the implementation of St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program
- ensuring that EREA VSL-governed schools and entities in Victoria promptly report abuse or potential abuse of a child, consistent with PROTECT Four Critical Actions and Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending, to Police, the EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer and The EREA VSL Board, and other relevant authorities
- supporting EREA VSL-governed schools and entities to have in place and implement policies and procedures that support the safety, protection and wellbeing of students under their care
- ensuring that EREA VSL's Child Safeguarding Framework is understood and implemented by EREA VSL-governed schools and boarding premises
- supporting EREA VSL-governed schools and entities to meet their obligations and legislative requirements as defined in the Framework
- supporting EREA VSL-governed schools and entities in enhancing a culture of care and safety for all, especially for students
- supporting EREA VSL-governed schools and entities in Victoria to maintain the highest standards in relation to the protection of students
- supporting and advising the Principals of EREA VSL-governed schools and entities in Victoria to ensure compliance, especially with non-government school registration and accreditation
- providing direction as necessary regarding compliance with EREA VSL policy
- reporting to The EREA VSL Board through the EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer.

For the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme, the EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer has authorised the Director of Human Resources, Risk and Compliance Mr. Jamie Bobrowski to receive internal reports of Reportable Conduct that involve the Principal.

The Principal's Responsibilities

The EREA VSL Board has delegated, through the EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer, operational management and implementation of St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program to the Principal.

The Principal is ultimately responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that:

- St Patrick's College effectively implements the Child Safety and Safeguarding Program, and effectively deploys all available resources for that purpose
- appropriate St Patrick's College Child Safeguarding Officers are appointed and trained
- a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within St Patrick's College
- any child safety incidents or concerns are dealt with professionally and in a timely manner
- The EREA VSL Board, through EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer, receives regular reports with respect to child safety and safeguarding matters involving St Patrick's College
- all School-Based Staff, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors, are aware of St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program and trained in implementing the Program's processes and procedures
- St Patrick's College is complying with its legal and regulatory obligations with respect to child protection.

The Principal may, when appropriate, call on the Principal for advice and support in the management and implementation of St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program.

For the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme, the EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer has authorised the Principal to receive internal reports of Reportable Conduct that involve School-based Staff, Volunteers and Contractors at the College.

The St Patrick's College Advisory Council's Responsibilities

The St Patrick's College Advisory Council is responsible for working collaboratively with the Principal to ensure consistency and faithfulness to the Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition.

The Advisory Council:

- advises and supports the Principal on the implementation of strategies for monitoring and enhancing St Patrick's College's identity and culture
- advises and supports the Principal in maintaining St Patrick's College's strategies for safeguarding students
- advises and supports the Principal on matters referred to it by the Principal.

Responsibility for the day-to-day management and implementation of St Patrick's College's child safety and safeguarding policies and procedures rests with the Principal.

The Principal's Responsibilities

Each member of the Principal is responsible for ensuring that appropriate resources are made available in their area of operations to allow St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program to be effectively implemented within the College, and for supporting the Principal in the practical application of the College's child safeguarding strategies, policies, procedures and work systems.

St Patrick's College's Child Safeguarding Officers' Responsibilities

One or more School-Based Staff members have been appointed as the College's and the Boarding School's Child Safeguarding Officers. Their names, positions and contact details can be found [here](#).

The appointment of Child Safeguarding Officers is one strategy used at St Patrick's College to meet Standard 2 of the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Clause 6 of Ministerial Order 1359 – Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in leadership, governance and culture.

Child Safeguarding Officers are selected based on a number of considerations, namely:

- their personal attitudes, experiences and beliefs, for example, a person who is non-judgmental, calm, resilient and demonstrates a high degree of integrity and respect for confidentiality
- their role within St Patrick's College, for example, a person who has seniority and experience working with complex student and family issues at the College and someone who is readily accessible and available to all members of the College community
- their personal profile within St Patrick's College, for example, a person who is approachable, who students and School-Based Staff members trust and who is willing and able to respond to issues personally and sensitively.

Child Safeguarding Officers also receive special training that allows them to deal with child safety incidents or concerns both sensitively and effectively.

Key Responsibilities of Child Safeguarding Officers

- having a good working knowledge of St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program
- acting as “Child Safeguarding Champions” and ensuring a strong and sustainable child safe culture is embedded within the College
- promoting child safety issues within the College community and responding to general queries with respect to St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program
- being a point of contact for School-Based Staff, or other members of the College community, raising child safety concerns within the College
- communicating College’s child safeguarding policies and procedures to all stakeholders including students, parents/carers, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- on behalf of The EREA VSL Board and the Principal, ensuring that St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program is being effectively implemented
- on behalf of The EREA VSL Board and the Principal, reviewing and managing particular aspects of St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program, and specifically the **Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Policies and Procedures**
- ensuring that the College’s Principal, all School-Based Staff, School Boarding Premises Staff, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors undertake child safeguarding training so that they are able to identify signs of abuse and other harm, understand how to respond and know when to make a referral either internally or to an external agency
- inducting and managing the training of new School-Based Staff, School Boarding Premises Staff, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors in particular aspects of St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program, specifically the **Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns Policies and Procedures**
- ensuring that there are clear procedures to allow people to report Reportable Conduct within St Patrick's College
- providing all new School-Based Staff, School Boarding Premises Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors with a copy of the Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures, the Child Safeguarding Reporting and Responding Obligations Policy and Procedures, the Child Safeguarding Codes of Conduct and key contact numbers for reporting child safety and safeguarding concerns
- where authority is delegated from the Principal, promptly managing the College’s response to a child safety incident or concern, and ensuring that the incident, allegation, disclosure or suspicion is taken seriously
- responding appropriately to students involved in child safety incidents or concerns
- offering assistance and support when another member of the St Patrick's College community receives or makes a disclosure of abuse or other harm

- developing processes for minor corrective issues that don't need to be reported to an outside authority.

If a Child Safeguarding Officer cannot perform their role, for example, due to conflicts of interest or absence, these duties must be performed by either another Child Safeguarding Officer, the Principal or the Deputy Principal.

Our Senior Child Safeguarding Officer's and Boarding School Senior Child Safeguarding Officer's Responsibilities

St Patrick's College has appointed at least one Senior Child Safeguarding Officer and Boarding School Senior Child Safeguarding Officer. Their contact details can be found [here](#).

The Senior Child Safeguarding Officer has an important role in the implementation and operation of St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program and is identified in our Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures and other public-facing documents as the individual who the wider community can contact when they have child safety concerns relating to the College. The Boarding School Senior Child Safeguarding Officer has a similar role.

Key Responsibilities of the Senior Child Safeguarding Officer and Boarding School Senior Child Safeguarding Officer

- being a first point of contact for all child safety concerns or queries for the wider community
- ensuring that other Child Safeguarding Officers understand and comply with their key responsibilities
- ensuring that all Child Safeguarding Officers undergo appropriate annual training in St Patrick's College's Child Safety and Safeguarding Program, their legal responsibilities, and how to appropriately respond to child safety concerns and incidents
- coordinating the College's response to child safety incidents in consultation with the Principal, the Principal, the Director of Human Resources, Risk and Compliance Mr. Jamie Bobrowski and EREA VSL
- ensuring that the College's child safeguarding policies and procedures are effectively implemented and communicated to all relevant stakeholders.

School-Based Staff Members' and School Boarding Premises Staff Members' Responsibilities

All School-Based Staff and all School Boarding Premises Staff, including full-time, part-time, casual, relief, teaching and non-teaching Staff, must, as a condition of their employment at St Patrick's College, comply with the Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures and the [Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct \(Vic\)](#), be familiar with our Child Safety and Safeguarding Program and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm and WWC Checks.

All School-Based Staff and all School Boarding Premises Staff must be aware of key indicators of abuse and other harm, be observant, and raise all child safety incidents and concerns with a Child Safeguarding Officer and with external agencies where required.

To meet these obligations, all School-Based Staff and all School Boarding Premises Staff must:

- participate in child safeguarding induction and ongoing training provided by St Patrick's College
- always follow St Patrick's College's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures in the Child Safety and Safeguarding Program
- act in accordance with the [Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct \(Vic\)](#).
- identify and raise child safety incidents and concerns in accordance with the Child Safeguarding Reporting and Responding Obligations Policy and Procedures, and follow the [PROTECT Four Critical Actions](#) and [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#)
- ensure that students views are taken seriously and their voices are heard when making decisions that affect them
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

Volunteers' Responsibilities

Volunteers make a considerable contribution to the St Patrick's College community by giving their time and sharing their skills and expertise with others.

Most, but not all, Volunteers are engaged in "child-connected work" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359. Volunteers who are not adults or who do not work when children are present or expected to be present are NOT engaged in child-connected work.

Categories of Volunteer

St Patrick's College has identified three different categories of Volunteers, based on the level and frequency of their interaction with students: "Direct Contact Volunteers", "Regular Volunteers" and "Casual Volunteers" (set out in the **Definitions**, above). Volunteers' responsibilities and obligations under the Child Safety and Safeguarding Program may depend on their category.

Where the term "Volunteer" is used in the Child Safety and Safeguarding Program, the relevant responsibility or obligation applies to all "Direct Contact Volunteers", "Regular Volunteers" and "Casual Volunteers". However, some Policies and their Procedures specify the category of Volunteer to whom the relevant responsibilities or obligations apply.

Clergy and religious personnel who visit, volunteer or otherwise provide services to the College may fall into any of these categories.

Responsibilities and Obligations of Volunteers

All Volunteers at St Patrick's College are responsible for contributing to the safety, wellbeing and protection of students in the College environment.

To meet these obligations:

- **all Volunteers**, regardless of the degree of contact with students or the frequency or length of engagement, must:
 - comply with St Patrick's College's Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures and the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Vic)
 - understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm and report child safety concerns to external agencies where required by law
 - raise all child safety concerns with a Child Safeguarding Officer or the Principal
- **Direct Contact Volunteers** must also:
 - hold a current WWC clearance; and
 - participate in child safeguarding induction and ongoing training provided by St Patrick's College
- **Regular Volunteers** must also:
 - hold a current WWC clearance; and
 - either:

- participate in modified child safeguarding training prior to commencing volunteer work at St Patrick's College; or
- receive and acknowledge information about the Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures and the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Vic)
- **Casual Volunteers** must also:
 - either:
 - hold a current WWC clearance if required by law or by St Patrick's College to do so; or
 - at St Patrick's College's discretion, complete and provide to St Patrick's College a Statutory Declaration that they have no offences that would result in a WWC exclusion being issued to them under the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) and an Undertaking to advise St Patrick's College if they are convicted of an offence that would result in a WWC exclusion
 - receive and acknowledge information about the Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures and the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Vic).

Volunteers can direct questions about child safety at the College to a Child Safeguarding Officer.

Contractors' Responsibilities

Contractors are not employees of St Patrick's College. However, Direct Contact Contractors are "School-Based Staff" or "School Boarding Premises Staff" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

Some, but not all, Contractors are engaged in "child-connected work" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359. Contractors who are not adults or who do not work when children are present or expected to be present are NOT engaged in child-connected work.

Categories of Contractors

St Patrick's College has identified three different categories of Contractors, based on the level and frequency of their interaction with students: "Direct Contact Contractors", "Regular Contractors" and "Casual Contractors" (set out in the **Definitions**, above). Contractors' responsibilities and obligations under the Child Safety and Safeguarding Program may depend on their category.

Where the term "Contractor" is used, the relevant responsibility or obligation applies to all "Direct Contact Contractors", "Regular Contractors" and "Casual Contractors". However, some Policies and their Procedures specify the category of Contractor to whom the relevant responsibilities or obligations apply.

Responsibilities and Obligations of Contractors

All Contractors engaged by St Patrick's College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment.

To meet these obligations:

- **all Contractors**, irrespective of the degree of contact with students, or the frequency or length of engagement must:
 - comply with St Patrick's College's Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures, and the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Vic)
 - understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm and report child safety concerns to external agencies where required by law
 - raise all child safety concerns with a Child Safeguarding Officer
- **Direct Contact Contractors** must also:
 - hold a current WWC clearance
 - participate in child safeguarding induction and ongoing training provided by St Patrick's College
- **Regular Contractors** must also:
 - hold a current WWC clearance; and
 - either:
 - participate in modified child safeguarding training prior to commencing volunteer work at St Patrick's College; or
 - receive and acknowledge information about the Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures and the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Vic)
- **Casual Contractors** must also:
 - either:
 - hold a current WWC clearance if required by law or St Patrick's College to do so; or
 - at St Patrick's College's discretion, complete and provide to St Patrick's College a Statutory Declaration that they have no offences that would result in a WWC exclusion being issued to them under the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) and an Undertaking to advise St Patrick's College if they are convicted of an offence that would result in a WWC exclusion
 - receive and acknowledge information about the Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures and the Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct (Vic).

St Patrick's College may include these requirements in the written agreement between it and the Contractor.

Where a company or other contracted service provider with multiple employees is engaged as a Contractor by St Patrick's College, St Patrick's College may require, in its contract with the Contractor, that the Contractor undertake these responsibilities and confirm its compliance in writing to St Patrick's College.

Where a Contractor is engaged at short notice, making it impractical to undertake normal screening and/or briefing sessions/procedures, St Patrick's College will take reasonable steps to ensure the safety of students at the College while the work is being completed.

Contractors can direct questions about child safety at St Patrick's College to a Child Safeguarding Officer.

External Education Providers' Responsibilities

An External Education Provider is any organisation that St Patrick's College has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the College. The delivery of such a course may take place on St Patrick's College premises or elsewhere.

For the purposes of our Child Safety and Safeguarding Program, External Education Providers are considered Direct Contact Contractors.

All External Education Providers engaged by St Patrick's College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children, young people and enrolled adults in the College environment.

All External Education Providers engaged by St Patrick's College are required by the College to be familiar with our Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures, and to adhere to the [Child Safeguarding Code of Conduct \(Vic\)](#).

St Patrick's College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

Implementation

This Policy and its Procedures, and the roles and responsibilities they define, are made available to all School-Based Staff, School Boarding Premises Staff, Volunteers, and Contractors, via the College's

PolicyConnect site. They are included in induction training and in ongoing refresher training for School-Based Staff, School Boarding Premises Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors. For more information, refer to [Child Safeguarding Training and Supervision Policy and Procedures](#).

Parents/carers, students and the wider College community are advised about the roles and responsibilities in this Policy and its Procedures in summary in the Child Safeguarding Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures, which is available on our public website and communicated through other mediums such as Complispace-PolicyConnect and Staff Learning Systems, SafeTripBuilder, Passtab, College Website, Contracts, Newsletters, Annual Reports, Annual briefings and the Crest..

They are also available in hard copy by request.

Breach of Child Safety and Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities

St Patrick's College enforces this Policy and its Procedures. In the event of any non-compliance, we will instigate a review, in a timely and fair manner, that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- the restriction of duties
- suspension
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement.

For more information, refer to [Child Safeguarding Compliance and Breach Policy and Procedures](#).

Policy Review

A review of the Child Safety and Safeguarding Responsibilities Policy and Procedures is conducted every two years or earlier if required, such as due to changes in legislation or after any significant child safety incident.

The EREA VSL Board is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is reviewed and updated as needed and for approving this Policy.

EREA VSL and St Patrick's College Policy and Procedures Linkages

- [EREA Statement of Commitment to Child Safety](#)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Child Safeguarding \(Responding and Reporting Obligations\) Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Family and Community Involvement in Child Safeguarding Policy and Procedures](#)

Source of Obligation and Related Legislative Instruments

- [Ministerial Order 1359](#), Clause 6
- EREA VSL Safeguarding Framework

Related Forms and Documents

- Department of Education and Training, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and Independent Schools Victoria, [PROTECT Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse - A Template for Victorian Schools](#)
- Department of Education and Training, Catholic Education Commission of Victoria and Independent Schools Victoria, [PROTECT Responding to Suspected Student Sexual Offending: Template for all Victorian Schools](#)

References and Resources

- Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority, Child Safe Standard 2: [Leadership, governance and culture guidance](#).

Policy Administration

Responsible Officer	EREA VSL Chief Executive Officer
Policy Owner	EREA VSL Director of Safeguarding
Approving Body	EREA VSL Board
Approval Date	February 2024
Risk Rating	High
Date of next review	February 2026
Policy Database Information	
Version	1.0
Related Documents	
Superseded Documents	