

## Child Safe Policy

### 1. Overview

Unity College's Child Safe Policy implements and is to be read, and understood, in conjunction with the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) published by the Australian Human Rights Commission.

This Child Safe Policy, which includes our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing, has been approved and endorsed by Unity College Board on 23 August 2022.

This Child Safe Policy is published on our College's public website and provided to new Staff, and to Direct Contact Volunteers at induction.

It is also communicated through other mediums such as newsletters, diaries and welcome packs for Board Members, staff members and Direct Contact Volunteers.

### 2. Purpose

Our Child Safe Policy, which includes our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing, was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the College to child safety, and to provide an outline of the policies and practices that we have developed to keep our students safe, including from abuse or other harm. It is an overarching policy that provides the key elements of our approach to the College as a child safe organisation and sets the tone for the College's entire Child Safe Program.

The Child Safe Policy provides the framework for:

- the implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection, safety and wellbeing within the College
- the creation of a safe and supportive College environment and a positive and robust child safe culture
- the promotion and open discussion of child safety issues within the College and
- compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection and child safety in SA

### **3. Scope**

The College's Child Safe Policy applies to all adults in the College community, including Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, External Education Providers, parents/carers and other family members. This Policy applies in all College environments, both physical and online, and on-site and off-site College grounds (e.g. camps and excursions).

### **4. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing**

All children and young people who come to Learning Community have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We are committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We have a zero tolerance for child abuse, grooming and other harm and are committed to acting in students' best interests and keeping them safe from harm.

"In the Lutheran school the gospel is to inform all programs, relationships and activities" (LCA and Its School statement). The love of God in Jesus Christ is to govern all that is done, in response to this love, people in the school community are directed to their fellow human beings. Where they love others, they love him. Christ's promise is that whatever is done for others is done for him. Informed and transformed by God's creative, redemptive and sanctifying love, God's people are concerned with the total needs of their fellow human beings.

The Child Safe program in place at Learning Community defines power as the capacity to set and care for boundaries. Boundaries are the structures which support human development within community; boundaries may be personal, communal, spiritual, psychological or physical. In Christ, there is an empowerment by the gospel to recognise boundaries and prevent their destructive crossing and to care for those who have been violated. Our responsibility of leadership is to care for professional boundaries through the establishment of structures that protect them. Structures provide for support, examination, and action to ensure that school leaders, staff and students act according to boundaries that help, protect and uphold the dignity, worth and safety of each individual. (Valuing Safe Communities: Statement of values)"

The Learning Community regards its child safe responsibilities with the utmost importance and is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintaining a child safe culture.

Each member of the Learning Community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role that they play individually, and collectively, to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all that they do, and every decision that they make.

## Child Safe Principles and Standards

### 5. National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (National Principles) were developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission in response to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The National Principles are comprised of 10 Principles that were informed by, but go further than, the 10 Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission. They are:



## **6. Children and Young People's Rights to Safety, Information and Participation**

Unity College is a child safe and child-centred organisation. Our environment is friendly and welcoming to all children and young people.

We actively seek to include students in decisions that affect them. This includes decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and classroom learning and assessment environments.

We ensure students know about their rights to safety, information and participation. We recognise the importance of friendships and support from peers. We actively seek to understand what makes students feel safe in our organisation and regularly communicate with students about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

## **7. Parents/Carers, Families and Community Involvement at the College**

The College recognises that parents and carers have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their children. We ensure they participate in decisions affecting their children.

We ensure families and relevant communities know about the College's operations and policies, including its Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct, record keeping practices, risk management, and complaints and investigation processes.

We actively seek to include families and relevant communities in decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and classroom learning and assessment environments.

We build cultural safety at the College through partnerships with relevant communities.

## **8. Valuing Diversity in the College Community**

Our College values diversity and does not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:

- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families
- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
- support students with disability and their families and act to promote their participation
- support students and families of diverse sexuality and act to promote their participation
- seek to recruit a workforce that reflects a diversity of cultures, abilities and identities

- ensure all Staff and Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors have training about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, disability, culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and those with particular experiences or needs
- have a physical environment that actively celebrates diverse cultures and recognises cultural difference
- commit to promoting the inclusion of students of differing abilities.

## **9. Our Child Safe Program**

Unity College is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Safe Program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. We adopt a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors including the nature of our College's activities, physical and online environments and the characteristics of the student body.

Our Child Safe Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse, grooming and other harm and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse and to promote a child safe environment. It includes:

- Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- clear information as to what constitutes child abuse, grooming and other harm and associated key indicators of child abuse, grooming and other harm
- clear procedures for responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns internally, and for responding incidents or allegations of child abuse, grooming or other harm
- strategies to support, encourage and enable Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, External Education Providers, parents/carers and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
- procedures for recruiting and screening members of the Executive Team, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- procedures for reporting to external agencies, including Mandatory Reporting to the Department of Communities, Reporting to Police and Reportable Conduct
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe strategies to support and encourage the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and students with disability
- child safe training information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse, grooming or other harm to protect, support and assist children

- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations)
- a system for continuous review and improvement.

As a part of Unity College's induction process, all Staff as well as Direct Contact Volunteers and relevant Contractors are required to complete induction in our child safe policies, practices and procedures. All Staff, as well as Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors also receive refresher and ongoing child safe training at least annually.

Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors are supported and supervised by the College's Child Safety Contact Officers and Executive Team to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child safety.

#### **10. Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns to the College**

Our Child Safe Program provides detailed guidance for Unity College Board members, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors on how to identify key indicators of child abuse, grooming and other harm and how to report child safety incidents or concerns internally at the College. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child safety incidents or concerns to relevant external authorities.

Students at the College are provided with information about and encouraged to use multiple pathways to raise child safety incidents or concerns about or at the College. These include informal and formal ways, an 'anonymous' way, and through external child advocacy or child safety organisations.

Parents/carers, family members and other community members who have child safety concerns or who suspect that a child or young person associated with the College may be subject to abuse, grooming or other harm can contact the College's Senior Child Safety Contact Officer – Francois Pienaar, by phoning 0433583114 or emailing [principal@unitycollege.sa.edu.au](mailto:principal@unitycollege.sa.edu.au) or if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of the Board.

Any person can also contact the Senior Child Safety Contact Officer, or the Chair of the Board if they have concerns regarding the College's leadership in relation to child safety.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a "need to know basis".

Whenever there are concerns that a child or young person is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.

#### **11. Responsibilities for Child Safe at the College**

Child safe is everyone's responsibility. All adults in the College community have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of students. Specific responsibilities include:

### **The College's Child Safety Contact Officers**

A number of senior staff members are nominated as the College's Child Safety Contact Officers. Our Child Safety Contact Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child safety and protection issues. They are a point of contact for raising child safety concerns within the College. They are also responsible for championing child safe within the College and assisting in coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

Our Child Safety Contact Officers are:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Contact No.</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
<b>Adam Yeager</b>	Senior Chaplain	8532 0100	<a href="mailto:ayeager@unitycollege.sa.edu.au">ayeager@unitycollege.sa.edu.au</a>
<b>Jesscia Herrmann</b>	Student Counsellor	8532 0100	<a href="mailto:jherrmann@unitycollege.sa.edu.au">jherrmann@unitycollege.sa.edu.au</a>

Unity College has also appointed Francois Pienaar as the College's Senior Child Safety Contact Officer. The Senior Child Safety Contact Officer is contactable by phone on 0433583114 or by emailing [principal@unitycollege.sa.edu.au](mailto:principal@unitycollege.sa.edu.au).

The Senior Child Safety Contact Officer has additional child safe responsibilities, such as being a first point of contact for all child safety concerns or queries for the wider community and coordinating the College's response to child safety incidents in consultation with the Executive Team and Unity College Board.

### **Unity College Board**

Unity College Board is responsible for approving our Child Safe Program and ensuring that the College has appropriate resources to effectively implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and our Child Safe Program.

### **Unity College Board Child Safe Champion**

The Unity College Board is the College's governing body. It is responsible for approving our Child Safe Program and ensuring that the College has appropriate resources to effectively implement the National Principals, and our Child Safe Program.

### **The Principal**

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for, the operational management of the College, and the Child Safe Program. The Principal is responsible for taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Safe Policy and the College's Child Safe Program is implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within the College.

### **The College Executive Team**

Each member of the College Executive Team is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available in their area of operations to allow the College's Child Safe Program to be effectively implemented within the College, and to support the Principal in the practical application of the College's child safe strategies, policies, procedures and work systems.

### **Staff**

All Staff are required to comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct, be familiar with our Child Safe Program and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse, grooming and other harm, and Working With Children (WWC) Checks. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key indicators of abuse, grooming and other harm, to be observant, and to raise all child safety incidents and concerns with a Child Safety Contact Officer.

## **Volunteers**

All Volunteers at the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment.

All Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers are required to comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse, grooming and other harm.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key indicators of child abuse, grooming and other harm, to be observant, and to raise all child safety concerns with a Child Safety Contact Officer.

## **Contractors**

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

All Contractors engaged by the College are required to comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct. Direct Contact and Regular Contractors are required to understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse, grooming and other harm. The College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the Contractor.

Direct Contact and Regular Contractors include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches and College cleaners. This also includes peripatetic music teachers and other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the College, but have an agreement with the College to use the College's facilities.

## **External Education Providers**

An External Education Provider is any organisation that the 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 College premises or elsewhere. All External Education Providers engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in all College environments. All External Education Providers engaged by the College are required by the College to comply with our Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Codes of Conduct. Unity College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

## **12. Child Safe Human Resources Management**

Unity College applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of Staff, Volunteers and Contractors. Our recruitment procedures ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children and young people. All Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors are required to maintain a current WWC Card.

The College ensures that the Executive Team, Staff and Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors undergo child safe induction, and ongoing education and training as part of our commitment to safeguarding children from harm.

Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors are subject to regular supervision and performance monitoring while engaging with students.

The College ensures that professional development programs for Staff include child safe education and training programs.

## **13. Child Safe Risk Management**

The College recognises the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and we use this information to inform our policies, procedures and activity planning.

The College has developed a Risk Management Program to assist in the identification, assessment and management of child safety risks in all College environments.

## **14. Record Keeping**

The College has a Child Safe Record Keeping policy and is committed to best practice record keeping. In accordance with our policy, and as required by our procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns, all internal and external reports of child safety incidents and concerns, as well as any other responses by the College are recorded using the Responding to an Incident, Disclosure or Suspicion of Child Abuse or Other Harm Template, available.

In maintaining records of child safety incidents or concerns, the College maintains confidentiality and privacy for students and families in accordance with federal and state privacy legislation.

## 15. Policy and Program Review

Unity College is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Safe Program. The Program is regularly reviewed for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection and child safety related laws, regulations and standards.

The College is committed to actively seeking, actioning, and incorporating into this Policy, feedback from students, families, the wider College community, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors, and will communicate any adjustments or amendments widely throughout the College community.

## 16. Non-Compliance with our Child Safe Policy

Unity College enforces this Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Codes of Conduct. In the event of any non-compliance, we will instigate a review 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.

<b>Child Safe Policy</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
V1	Ratified by College Board	May 2022
Review		