



**POLICY TITLE: ENGAGING FAMILIES IN CHILD SAFETY POLICY**

**DEVELOPED / REVIEWED BY**

Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy  
 Siena College Policy Committee  
 MACS (Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools)

**REVIEW SUMMARY**

Catholic education is an active partnership between family and school, where families are recognised as the first and ongoing educators of their children. Schools and families partner in the shared privilege and responsibility for children and young people’s faith formation, learning, safety and wellbeing.

At Siena College, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our College. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice, and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel (CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety).

*The Dominican Ideals are a commitment to truth explored in dialogue, a vibrant preaching of the Gospel, a critical appreciation of culture and cultures, and a love of the beautiful. Our goal in each of our Educational Ministries is to foster these values, together with a spirit of prayer and contemplation, respect for the dignity and uniqueness of each individual, and the pursuit of excellence. (Dominican Education Australia)*

**DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS**

This document was first developed by Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy, Antonella Rosati, in July 2022 based on the revised Child Safe Standards, which came into effect from 1 July 2022.

**RATIONALE**

The purpose of this Policy is to outline the strategies and actions that we have in place at Siena College to ensure that families, carers, and other members of the school community are informed about relevant child safety and wellbeing matters and are involved in the promotion of child safety and wellbeing at the school.

This Policy takes into account the specific requirements of the Child Safe Standards as set out in [Ministerial Order No. 1359](#).

**DEFINITIONS**

<b>parent/guardian/carer</b>	Includes a guardian/carer and every person who has parental responsibility for the child including parental responsibility under the <i>Family Law Act 1975 (Cwlth)</i> and any person with whom a child normally or regularly resides.
<b>child safety</b>	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 suspicions, incidents, disclosures, or allegations of child abuse (Ministerial Order No. 1359)



<b>college staff</b>	<p>An individual working for the College who is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• directly engaged or employed by the College</li> <li>• a contracted service provider engaged by Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) engaged to perform child-related work for Siena College</li> <li>• a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with MACS (Ministerial Order No. 1359)</li> </ul>
<b>volunteer</b>	<p>A person who performs work without remuneration or reward for Siena College in the College environment.</p>

## PRINCIPLES / GUIDING PRINCIPLES

At Siena College, the following principles underpin our commitment to family engagement:

- Parents/Guardians/Carers should have the opportunity to participate in decisions relating to child safety and wellbeing which affect their child.
- The College engages and openly communicates with Parents/Guardians/Carers and other members of the school community about our child safe approach.
- All members of the College community should have access to information relating to child safety and wellbeing.
- Parents/Guardians/Carers and other members of the College community must have the opportunity to provide input into the development and review of the College policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing.
- Parents/Guardians/Carers and other members of the College community have the right to be informed about the operations and governance of the College in relation to child safety and wellbeing.

## PROCEDURES

Siena College is committed to ensuring that all members of our College community are kept informed about relevant child safety and wellbeing matters and are involved in the promotion of child safety and wellbeing at Siena College.

We implement the following strategies and actions to ensure that we can meet this commitment.

### **Strategies / actions used by school leadership**

The Principal, and Leadership Team at Siena College recognise their particular responsibilities to communicate and engage with families, carers, and other members of the College community in relation to issues regarding child safety and wellbeing. Strategies and actions used to carry out this responsibility include:

- utilising the Siena College Engaging Families in Child Safety Policy to inform and guide curriculum planning, policies, and practices
- supporting staff, through appropriate professional learning, to strengthen their communication and engagement skills and to understand the value and importance of effective communication and engagement

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- identifying opportunities for parents and carers to participate in decisions that affect their child's safety and wellbeing
- ensuring that existing policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing are made publicly available so that they are easily accessible to families, carers, and other members of the College community
- engaging with families, carers, and other members of the College community to collaboratively develop and periodically review policies and practices relating to child safety and wellbeing
- creating opportunities to ensure that members of the College community are adequately informed about the College operations and governance relating to child safety and wellbeing

#### Strategies / actions used by Siena College staff, volunteers, contractors, and clergy

Staff, volunteers, contractors and clergy at Siena College also have a responsibility to support the Principal and Leadership Team in communicating and engaging with families, carers and other members of the College community regarding child safety and wellbeing. Strategies and actions used to carry out this responsibility include:

- creating and maintaining open lines of communication with families, carers, and other members of the College community, particularly with respect to child safety and wellbeing matters
- liaising with parents and carers in relation to any concerns and/or decisions that affect their child and giving them the opportunity to contribute to any discussions, where appropriate
- ensuring that parents, carers, and others in the College community are updated and involved in child safety and wellbeing
- ensuring they act in accordance with the principles set out in this Policy when managing issues relating to child safety and wellbeing

#### RESPONSIBILITY

- Principal (Primary Responsibility)
- All Siena College Staff

#### RELATED LEGISLATION

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic.)
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic.)
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.)
- *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic.)
- Child Safe Standards as set out in [Ministerial Order No. 1359](#)

#### RELATED SIENA COLLEGE POLICIES

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy June 2022
- Mandatory Reporting Policy June 2022
- Reportable Conduct Policy June 2022
- School Complaints Handling Policy June 2022

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#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety <https://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/getmedia/b9155052-8eb2-48e3-9384-b5ff8407941d/Commitment-Statement-A3.aspx>
- Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct June 2022
- Staff and Student Professional Boundaries June 2022

#### NEXT REVIEW

July 2023

#### POLICY LOCATION

<https://sienacentral.siena.vic.edu.au/cms/file/13970?returnUrl=L2hvbWVwYWdlLzMONTI%3D>

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