Child Safety Policy

Policy Scope
This policy relates to the staff at ACC Hume Ltd.

Policy
The school is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all children in its care. This policy includes:

1. Relevant documentation links
2. Statements on children and child safety
3. Failure to Disclose and Protect
4. Statements on the failure to disclose and the failure to protect
5. Roles & responsibilities
6. Definition of Mandatory Reports
7. Mandatory Reporting Procedures
8. Procedures for Staff & Volunteers who are not Mandatory Reporters
9. Procedures for the implementation of the Working with Children Check and ensuring compliance
10. Procedures for staff and volunteers including:
    a. Recruitment
    b. Procedure for Volunteers
    c. The code of conduct
    d. Training & supervision
11. Procedures for communicating the importance of child safety to the school community
12. Policy Review
13. Appendices:
    a. Incident Report
    b. Code of Conduct
    c. Child Safety Risk Assessment Matrix
    d. Volunteer Job Description as it relates to issues of Child Safety

Relevant Documentation
1. Ministerial Order No. 870
2. VRQA (Child Safety Standards)
3. DHS - Child Safe Standards
4. DHS - Child Safe Toolkit
5. Moores Child Protection Toolkit
6. The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct
Statement on Children
Children are vital and active participants in our organisation. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say. We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:
1. promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
2. promote the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
3. ensure that children with a disability, and children who are vulnerable, are safe and can participate equally

Statement on Child Safety
1. Our organisation is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe and happy. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety of all children. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child’s safety.
2. Our organisation is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.
3. Our organisation recognises that these obligations extend to all school environments including all campuses, online environments and other locations such as camps, sporting events and excursions.
4. Our organisation is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. We have specific procedures and training in place that support our leadership, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

Failure to Disclose
Any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 must disclose that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence, except in limited circumstances such as where the information has already been reported to DHHS Child Protection.

The offence applies to all adults in Victoria, not just professionals who work with children.

Failure to Protect
Any staff member in a position of authority, who becomes aware that an adult associated with their organisation (such as an employee, contractor, volunteer or visitor) poses a risk of sexual abuse to a child under the care, authority or supervision of the organisation, must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce that risk. This may include, for example, removing the
adult from child-related work pending investigation. If a staff member in a position of authority fails to take reasonable steps in these circumstances, this may amount to a criminal offence.

Roles & Responsibilities

1. The School Board is responsible for developing and maintaining the Child Safety policy. The School Board will implement changes to the policy when necessary or required.
2. The Principal is responsible for the implementation and management of the Child Safety policy.
3. The Principal is the person who is responsible for completing incident reports (see Appendix 1 Incident Report) and responding to allegations. If the Principal is the subject of the allegation, the School Board will conduct the investigation.
4. The Principal is the person responsible for ensuring that staff and volunteers are aware of their obligations (see Appendix 2 - Code of Conduct).
5. The Principal is responsible for completing the annual audit of Child Safety risks (see Appendix 3 - Child Safety Risk Assessment). The Principal will submit the completed audit to the School Board.
6. All staff and volunteers are responsible for adhering to the Code of Conduct (see Appendix 2 - Code of Conduct)

Definition of Mandatory Reporting

Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), principals and police) must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.
Mandatory Reporting Procedures

Step 1 - Establish a Reasonable Belief
Mandatory Reporters may wish to consider the following questions to assist them in deciding if their belief is based on reasonable grounds:

1. Can you describe the reasons why you believe a child has been, or is being sexually abused?
2. What has the child said or done to suggest they are being sexual abused?
3. Have you observed, or been told about, the presence of any of the ‘possible indicators’ of sexual abuse?
4. Did the child disclose sexual abuse? What did they say happened? Who did they disclose to and when?
5. What other behaviours have you observed and/or interactions with the child are of concern to you? What is the frequency and severity of the behaviour? How long has it been occurring?

Step 2 - Complete a Report to DHHS Child Protection and the Victoria Police
Once a mandatory reporter has formed a belief based on reasonable grounds, they are required to make the report, not the school principal. Prior to forming a belief, the mandatory reporter may, if they wish, consult with colleagues with specialist knowledge, for example, the principal, psychologist, school counsellor.

Step 3 - Secure all records
1. The Mandatory Reporter is responsible for securing all records relating to the allegation of the offense.
2. In the event that a reasonable belief is not established, all records relating to the allegation must still be retained in a confidential place.
Procedure for Staff & Volunteers who are not Mandatory Reporters

Step 1 - Inform a Mandatory Reporter
1. Inform the Principal of your concern (the Principal is a Mandatory Reporter)
2. Complete an Incident Report (See Appendix 1)

Step 2 - Establish a Reasonable Belief
Mandatory Reporters may wish to consider the following questions to assist them in deciding if their belief is based on reasonable grounds:

1. Can you describe the reasons why you believe a child has been, or is being sexually abused?
2. What has the child said or done to suggest they are being sexual abused?
3. Have you observed, or been told about, the presence of any of the ‘possible indicators’ of sexual abuse?
4. Did the child disclose sexual abuse? What did they say happened? Who did they disclose to and when?
5. What other behaviours have you observed and/or interactions with the child are of concern to you? What is the frequency and severity of the behaviour? How long has it been occurring?

Step 3 - Complete a Report to DHHS Child Protection and the Victoria Police
The Principal will complete a report to the relevant authorities.

Step 4 - Secure all records
1. The Mandatory Reporter is responsible for securing all records relating to the allegation of the offense.
2. In the event that a reasonable belief is not established, all records relating to the allegation must still be retained in a confidential place.
Procedures for the implementation of the Working with Children Check
All people engaged in child-related work not registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, including volunteers, shall hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check as required by Victorian law.

Process for ensuring compliance with the Working With Children Check Requirement
1. The Administration Officer will supply the online link to new employees.
   a. The new employee will complete the online application and receive an online application number
   b. WWC will process the application and send the new employee the number
   c. The new employee will submit a copy of the WWC Confirmation Letter to the Administration Officer with their date of birth
2. The Administration Officer will verify the WWC Application
3. The Administration Officer prints off the verification
   a. Append the verification to the staff member’s personal file
4. The Administration Officer will review the status of staff WWC on an annual basis.
Procedures for staff and volunteers

Recruitment
The school implements the following processes to ensure that issues relating to Child Safety are raised during staff recruitment.
1. The Online Employment Application Form includes a question related to the applicant’s engagement with children within the last 12 months
2. The Interview Question Template includes a question relating to the Statement on Child Safety

Procedure for Volunteers
All volunteers will:
1. If required, hold a current Working with Children Check
2. If required, attend an induction prior to working
3. All volunteers must be approved by the Principal
4. All volunteers under the supervision of a school staff member whilst working with students

The Code of Conduct
In addition to maintaining a Working with Children Check, all staff and volunteers must adhere to the Code of Conduct as specified in Appendix 2.

The Principal will ensure that all staff and volunteers read and sign off on the Code of Conduct on an annual basis.

Teachers are also bound by the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct.

Training & Supervision

The Principal will ensure that:
1. Documentation is maintained including V.I.T. registration, WWC and the Code of Conduct
2. Staff and volunteers are aware of their obligations as per the Child Safety Policy
   a. Staff & volunteers review their obligations on an annual basis
   b. The review is minuted
3. Staff complete the “In Safe Hands” training on an annual basis.
4. Volunteers are supervised by a staff member as they work on the school campus
Procedures for Communicating the Importance of Child Safety to the School Community

The school communicates the importance of child safety through the following processes:

1. The Board will raise the profile of the Child Safety Standards by discussing concerns and potential risks regularly at Board Meetings
2. The Principal will raise the profile of Child Safe Standards by discussing concerns and potential risks regularly at Staff Meetings and to the school community through the eNews
3. Feedback on Child Safe Standards can be placed at any time in the Suggestion Box at Reception
4. Additional school policies relate to the implementation of the Child Safety policy including the following documents:
   a. Enrolment
   b. Anti-Discrimination & Equal Opportunity

The school communicates the importance of child safety to its students by:

1. Informing students that they have the right to be protected
2. Showing students how they can raise a concern or an allegation about themselves or others
3. Informing students that they can raise their concerns with the Principal

Policy Review
On change of legislation or at the discretion of the School Board of ACC Hume Ltd.

Policy Version
2.0
## APPENDIX 1 - INCIDENT REPORT

### Section 1 - Incident Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of the Incident:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time of the Incident:</td>
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<td>Location of the Incident:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name(s) of child/children involved:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Section 2 - Indigenous

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Does the child identify as Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❏ Aboriginal</td>
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<tr>
<td>❏ Torres Strait Islander</td>
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<tr>
<td>❏ Both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>❏ Neither</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Section 3 - Incident Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classify the incident using the following categories:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>❏ Physical Violence</td>
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<tr>
<td>❏ Sexual Offence</td>
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<tr>
<td>❏ Serious Emotional or Psychological Abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>❏ Serious Neglect</td>
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<tr>
<td>❏ Other ___________________________________________</td>
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### Section 4 - Incident Description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regarding the incident: What did you see? What happened?</th>
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APPENDIX 2 - CODE OF CONDUCT

All personnel of Australian Christian College - Hume are responsible for supporting the safety, participation and wellbeing of children by:

1. adhering to the Child Safety Policy, and other related policies, at all times
2. taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
3. treating everyone with respect
4. listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they, or another child, has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
5. promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
6. promoting the cultural safety of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
7. promoting the safety, participation of children with a disability
8. ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
9. reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Principal, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
10. reporting any child safety concerns to the Principal
11. if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe

Staff and volunteers must not:

1. develop any ‘special’ relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example: the offering of gifts)
2. exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical putting children at risk of abuse
3. do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
4. engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children
5. use inappropriate language in the presence of children
6. discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
7. ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the Principal.

I agree to abide by this code of conduct:

Name: ___________________ Signature: ___________________ Date: _____
APPENDIX 3 - CHILD SAFETY RISK ASSESSMENT

To be completed by the Principal on an annual basis and submitted to the School Board.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Risk</th>
<th>Existing Risk Management Strategy (if applicable)</th>
<th>Likelihood &amp; Consequences</th>
<th>Proposed Risk Management Strategy</th>
<th>Person(s) responsible:</th>
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APPENDIX 4 - VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION RELATING TO CHILD SAFETY

The school appreciates and values the assistance of volunteers. A ‘volunteer’ is an unpaid person who assists the school staff by providing support in the delivery of its programs. Volunteers are to serve the vision of the school and to apply the College’s Vision and Mission to all aspects of your role. Your main role is to assist the teacher in the delivery of the education of the students in their care.

Qualifications:
1. Parent Volunteers assisting directly in their child’s class do not require a Working with Children Check
2. All other Volunteers require a Working with Children Check

Training:
1. All Volunteers must complete a Volunteer Induction
2. Sign the Code of Conduct

Responsibilities:
1. Respect and uphold the Christian ethos of the school
2. Adhere to the policies of the school
3. Follow the directions of the teacher or staff member in charge
4. Be prepared to listen and respond to concerns or allegations relating to child abuse
5. Use the Incident Report form to record details as necessary
6. Meet legal obligations in regards to disclosure