

2018



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

CHILD SAFETY IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Introducing the Child Safe Framework



Christ-centred, child-focused

Catholic schools: creating environments where children feel safe, are engaged and can flourish

All children have the right to a good education. Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) schools and early years learning and care centres are Christ-centred, and child-focused learning communities that support each child to develop to their full God-given potential. Key to this is ensuring the learning environment is engaging, safe and supportive.

The Child Safe Framework has been designed to support schools in maintaining such an environment. The framework outlines the policies, practices and behaviours found in our schools that underpin a culture prioritising the best interests of children and young people.

All members of our Catholic school community share the responsibility for this healthy culture. Your school relies on strong partnerships with you – as parents and carers – to provide your child with the best possible learning and development opportunities. Working together, we can ensure all children and young people flourish in a safe, healthy environment.

The framework is based upon the following key concepts:

Situational prevention

Evaluating various elements within our schools – including physical and online environments, staffing, governance, behaviours and culture with an aim to eliminate or mitigate situations that present risk for children and young people.

Extended guardianship

When our leaders, staff and wider school community share a collective responsibility to actively support an environment that is engaging, supportive and safe. At a basic level this involves talking about behaviours that don't contribute to engaging supportive and safe environments.

Healthy and respectful relationships

Pope Francis says in *AMORIS LAETITIA*, as an essential requirement of love, “every human being is bound to live agreeably with those around him”.

Modelling healthy and respectful relationships creates an engaging, safe and supportive environment. It also equips children and young people with the understanding of how they should be treated.

Good relationships are vital if Catholic schools are to achieve their aims. Both parents and the school need to work at building constructive relationships.¹

¹ *Mandate: Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia 2009-2015*, para. 76.

The Nine Elements of the Child Safe Framework



Support & Healing

Support & Healing: Responding to those who have been injured or hurt through abuse and harm and assisting them to heal.



Voice of the Child

Voice of the Child: Recognising each child and young person's right to be heard and to have a voice in all decisions affecting them.



Culture

Culture: All members of the school community share responsibility for, and actively promote an environment that prioritises the best interests of children and young people.



Governance & Leadership

Governance & Leadership: School leaders create and promote environments that are safe, supportive and engaging. They make their decisions based on the best interests of children and young people.



Policy & Procedures

Policy & Procedures: Having structures and processes that are accessible, consistent and transparent. Policies must be understood, implemented and actioned every day.



Human Resource Practices

Human Resource Practices: Assisting our schools and care centres to identify the most suitable people to work with children and young people, and to provide appropriate training.



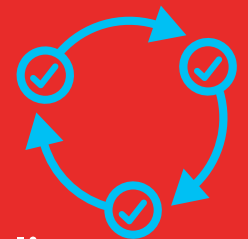
Risk Management

Risk Management: Proactively identifying and limiting potential risks.



Investigating & Reporting

Investigating & Reporting: Following, or developing and implementing where required, processes that are transparent, fair and clearly understood by the community.



Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance: Improving systematically and continually through ongoing evaluation and assessment.

What can I do to support my child?

- **Talk with your child** about how comfortable they feel at school.
- **Provide regular feedback** to your child's school.
- **Ask your school for a copy of their Code of Conduct**, and understand how it applies to you as a parent.
- **Speak to your school** if you have any concerns.

Child safety and protection is everyone's concern. We all have a role to play in promoting and modelling healthy and respectful relationships. School leaders, educators, staff, parents, carers and all members of our Catholic school communities share the responsibility of creating a child safe culture.

Let us continue to work together and equip ourselves with the necessary knowledge to ensure our children and young people reach their full potential in a safe and supportive Christ-centred, child-focused environment.



Contact

Please go to <https://childsafce.cewa.edu.au/> for further information about the Framework.