



Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne

Child Protection and Safety Policy

Child Safe Policy-Implementation of MO1359

Preamble

Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him. (Psalm 127:3)

God gives the responsibility of raising children to their parents. God wants children to be obedient to their parents. Parents have the primary responsibility for the education of their children. Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will not influence the children in a way which will detrimentally affect the authority and sanctity of the family. LCCC will work in the best interests of the parents and in partnership with families. LCCC works together in partnership with the churches represented by the families. We protect children and respect the families Christian traditions, and though we are Pentecostal we are sensitive to the cultures and church background of the families in our school community. Our enrolment and intake procedures focus on providing a school for families of a Pentecostal Tradition of Christianity and the purpose of this is;

1. Protection of the child in order to avoid conflict with the family values
2. Due to excessive number of enquiries from Pentecostal families, we have modelled the school to service families from the Pentecostal faith.
3. To avoid contention and families being offended who do not believe in speaking in tongues or the manifestation of the gifts of the spirit

In this context we are not at liberty to discuss culturally taboo topics including: sexual orientation, neither do we ask about the children's sexual preferences or communicate ideas in relation to sex, as these issues are private and not freely discussed amongst our unique community. All our families agree to the Biblical context that sex is limited to the confines of marriage. All our community uphold and agree to the Biblical standard on sex and would consider extra marital sex as contravening the laws of God. If a student struggles with their sexuality and wishes to express sentiments contrary to core values and Biblical standards we will provide support for the student and also refer them to their parents and pastors for additional support, while always treating them carefully and respectfully. Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne remains committed to its "Core values and core business" which is to enhance each student academically and build their spiritual experience and relationship with GOD.

This Child Safe Policy was first approved by the School Council on 1st August 2016. The current policy (MO1359) was first tabled at May 2022 School Council Meeting. It is due to be reviewed and updated on 10th February 2025.

This policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the Principal, School Council, management, staff and volunteers to child safety and to provide an outline of the policies and practices we have developed to keep everyone safe from any harm, including abuse.

All children and young people who come to Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne have a right to feel and be safe. The Godly training and welfare of the children and young people in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse.

This policy was developed in collaboration with all our staff, volunteers and the children who attend the school and their parents. It applies to all staff, volunteers, children, young people and individuals involved in our school.

Purpose

The Child Safety Policy demonstrate our College's commitment to creating and maintaining an environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe. The policy provides an overview of our School's approach to implementing Ministerial Order 1359 which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments. The policy informs our School community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and well-being of students across all areas of our work.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- all college staff, volunteers and contractors, whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to College Council members, where indicated
- in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by the LCCC for a student's use, (e.g., camps, excursions, co- curricular activities) and those provided through third party providers
- should be read together alongside our other child safety and well-being policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related policies section below

Policy Statement

Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne is a child safe organisation and is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students. We have no/zero tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environment. We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect. We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly. Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those

from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or sexuality, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences. Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and well-being and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety. We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct and our Staff Student Professional Boundaries Expectations (Appendix 1) set the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments. We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

Managing Risks to Child Safety and Well-being

At Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne, we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and well-being in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and well-being policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use. Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside any risk controls and actions put in place to manage those risks. Our Leadership Team and School Council evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually. In our online environment, the School engages in the following strategies to help promote child safety and manage risks:

- a commitment to a cyber-safety program across all year levels
- the use of filtering software
- the adoption of acceptable usage agreements for students
- Privacy Impact Assessments related to third party software applications
- careful monitoring and response to unacceptable or risky online behaviour Our ICT Student Duty of Care Policy and related policies outlines some of these approaches in more detail.

Establishing a Culturally Safe Environment

At Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected. We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities. We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community:

- our Leadership Team/School Staff provides input to initiatives to develop and embed a culturally safe environment for all our students
- our Biblical Worldview and Character First Program outlines some specific measures and strategies we have in place to maintain an inclusive and culturally safe school for Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students including Aboriginal children and students

Student Empowerment

To support child safety and well-being at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities. Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging through our school values, our Child Safety Code of Conduct and our extensive Pastoral Care program.

We inform students of their rights through our Student Code of Conduct (Student Diary) and our child safety and well-being curriculum program. We give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns to staff and our Child Safety Champion. Our student Child Safety Champion (Administration Manager) and Class Teachers actively contribute to empowering the students to respond to child safety concerns. When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

Family Engagement

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and well-being and helping children to raise any concerns. To support family engagement, at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne, we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and well-being. We will continue to create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this by:

- seeking input from families through our regular communication in the newsletter and specifically through our annual improvement surveys, our student bullying, harassment and online presence survey. Specific feedback on Child Safety is received via the various established college and student feedback sessions
- all of our child safety policies and procedures are available for students and parents on the schools Website and in the Staff Handbook

The school uses regular communications through Assemblies, Chapels and Parent Information Evenings to inform families and the College community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety

- Child Safety posters are displayed across the school and students are regularly made aware of the expectations on their right to a safe environment

Diversity and Equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on well-being and growth for all. We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on. We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international students
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+. If a student wishes to express sentiments contrary to the school's core values and Biblical standards we will provide support for the student and also refer them to their parents and pastors for additional support, while continuing to treat them carefully and respectfully. Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne remains committed to its "Core values and core business" which is to enhance a student academically and build their spiritual experience and relationship with God. We are not permitted to discuss issues relating to sexuality and sexual experience as it's considered a topic for Parent's and Pastor's to explore with the families. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or sexuality, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Suitable Staff and Volunteers

At Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children. Staff Recruitment Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne undertakes a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for all workers and volunteers which aims to:

- promote and protect the safety of all children under the care of the organisation in accordance with the Child Safe Standards
- identify the safest and most suitable people who share Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne's values and commitment to protect children
- prevent a person from working at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne if they pose a risk to children

Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne requires all staff/volunteers to pass through the organisation's recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne which includes the collection and recording of:

- proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
- the person's history of working with children

- references that address suitability for the job and working with children Persons applying for a role as a teacher with Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne must be registered with Victorian Institute of Teaching and are, therefore, not required to hold a Working with Children Clearance. Excluding teachers, all people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Clearance and to provide evidence of this Clearance. Please see the Working with Children website (www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) for further information.

A WWCC Register is maintained by the Principal and Business Manager. Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will also verify a person's history of work involving children and will require appropriate references that address each person's suitability for the job and working with children. The College may also require applicants to provide a police check in accordance with the law and, as appropriate, before they commence working at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne and during their time with Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne at regular intervals. Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will undertake thorough reference checks of all people engaged in child related work.

Staff Induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and well-being induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- our Child Safety Policy (this document) and our Student Well-being Policy
- our Child Safety Code of Conduct
- our Staff Student Professional Boundaries Policy
- our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and our Mandatory Reporting Policy
- any other child safety and well-being information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role. Ongoing Supervision and Management of Staff and Volunteers All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate. The College conducts ongoing monitoring and assessing of a staff member's continuing suitability for child-connected work through our annual staff development reviews.

New staff also undergo a 6-month review which has a focus on determining their knowledge and understanding of child safety as well as a review of expected behaviours. Volunteers work under the supervision of a registered teacher to ensure they understand our College's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy / Staff Student Professional Boundaries Expectations). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate internal mechanisms, and, if required, the following external channels, the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) and Victoria Police, as necessary, to address the severity and urgency of the matter.

Suitability of Volunteers

All volunteers are required to comply with our Volunteers Policy, which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and well-being induction and training, and supervision and management.

Child Safety Knowledge, Skills and Awareness

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and well-being matters. In addition to the child safety and well-being induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment. Staff child safety and well-being training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school child safety and well-being policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completion of the Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations online module annually for those required to do so (all mandated reporters and those front facing to students)
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and well-being and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and record-keeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and well-being risks in the school and Early Learning Centre environment Other professional learning and training on child safety and well-being, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

School Council Training and Education

To ensure our School Council is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and well-being, and to identify and mitigate child safety and well-being risks in our school, the School Council is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and well-being risks in our school
- the School 's child safety and well-being policies, procedures, codes and practices

4.0 Definitions

The following terms in this policy have specific definitions:

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school boarding environment
- school environment
- school boarding environment
- school staff

- school boarding premises staff
- school governing authority
- school boarding premises governing authority
- student
- volunteer

Roles and Responsibilities

This policy applies to all staff (including casual staff and interns), the College Council, volunteers, contractors and external education providers. This is intentionally broad, reflecting the College's commitment to the safety and well-being of children and young people under its care, and is intended to include anyone associated with the College and working with its students.

Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne School Council

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, the College Council members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings
- undertake annual training on child safety
- approve updates to the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- when selecting members of the School Council, ensure that selection includes a focus on child safety and covering all measures and requirements to ensure that candidates have a thorough understanding of child safety within a school and early learning centre environment and a demonstrated commitment to child safety

Leadership Team

The College's Leadership Team are responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359. The Leadership Team will:

- ensure effective child safety and well-being governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and well-being
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and College Council meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student well-being and prevention of responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities

School Staff and Volunteers

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety induction and training provided by the College, and always follow the College's child safety and well-being policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our Child Safety Code of Conduct
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy, including following the Four Critical Actions for Schools and the Four Critical Actions for Student Sexual Offending
- report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to the relevant Class Teacher or Head of School (or, if their Class Teacher or Head of School is involved in the suspicion, report to the Deputy Principal or if you are a contractor, report to the Principal/Administration Manager or another member of the Management Team). Our Child Safety and Mandatory Reporting Flowchart provides additional advice on who to report to in certain circumstances
- where you have developed a reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk, ensure that a report is made to the relevant authorities (such as the police and / or the child protection service) and where applicable, fulfil your obligation as a mandatory reporter (see: Mandatory Reporting Policy)
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students
- Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety

Specific Child Safety Responsibilities

Principal and Deputy Principal are responsible for coordinating responses to child safety incidents and as such must also ensure that they:

- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities. The Principal and the Deputy Principal/Administration Manager, together, will ensure the necessary internal reporting takes place and provide guidance and support for any required external reporting such as to the Police or the appropriate child protection service. Including the Administration Manager in the report, enables the College to apply a consistent approach to both the reporting obligations and the care of the student. If the Principal and/or Deputy Principal does not believe that a mandatory report is warranted, it is important to recognise that this does not mean that the individual's responsibility to both act and report has been met and they must take reasonable steps to ensure that they are satisfied that any reporting that they feel should have occurred, based on the incident, is conducted. If the mandated reporter's concerns continue, even after consultation with the relevant Class Teacher and Deputy Principal and/or any other member of the Leadership Team, including the Principal, that mandated reporter is still legally obliged to make a mandatory report of their concerns, even if the above individuals do not share that belief.
- Have procedures in place for responding to allegations of suspected child abuse in accordance with the requirements of Ministerial Order 1359 and other legal obligations such as mandatory reporting and the Crimes Act (Grooming, Failure to Disclose and Failure to Protect offences), and are proficient with its practice.

- Ensure an appropriate Student Support Plan is developed for students who have experienced child abuse
- Ensure an appropriate Student Support Plan is developed for students who have experienced child abuse
- Manage information sharing requirements and protocols under both the Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Please refer to the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and the Mandatory Reporting Policy for further reporting details and obligations. Our Deputy Principal, as our Child Safety Coordinator, is the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries. In addition, the Child Safety Coordinator/Deputy Principal is responsible for:
 - Promoting a child safety culture across the College which includes listening to students and families and acting on their child safety concerns
 - Monitoring the College's compliance with the Child Safety Policy, and other associated Child Safety policies and Student Duty of Care policies, ensuring that they are fit for purpose, publicly accessible and known and implemented.
 - Supporting staff and volunteers to focus on the child safety needs of vulnerable students
 - Work with the College leadership to respond to child safety incidents
 - Ensure appropriate training and education programs exist and provide child safety updates and information as needed
 - Monitor, review and report on child safety complaints and concerns

Lighthouse Child Safety Champion (Administration Manager)

Our College has established a Child Safety Champion. This staff role provides students with the opportunity to have access to queries, concerns or additional information in relation to child safety. Our College has also established a Child Safety and Well-being Reference Group consisting of the Principal, the Campus Child Safety Champion, the Deputy Principal and the Class Teacher Leaders. The Child Safety and Well-being Reference Group meet regularly (As the need arises) to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safety and well-being and provide input to the Child Safety Risk Register. Our Senior Leadership Team has overall oversight of the Child Safety Risk Register and reports to School Council, which meets monthly.

Relevant Policies Procedures

This Child Safety and Well-being Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Student Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- ICT Student Duty of Care Policy
- Staff Student Professional Boundaries (Appendix 1)
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy

Complaints and Reporting Policy

Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden. We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's Complaint's Policy. The Complaints Policy guide can be found in the policy located in the Staff Handbook and on the Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne Website. If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including the College Council) must follow our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and our Mandatory Reporting Policy for those staff that are mandated. Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school. As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and the relevant staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- Procedural Fairness; to make a fair decision reached
- the Four Critical Actions for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Communications

Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the college community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and well-being policies are available on our website including the Child Safety Policy (this policy), the Student Well-being Policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and our Mandatory Reporting Policy
- displaying Child Safety posters, codes of conduct and information on student rights around the school and Early Learning Centre
- updates in our school newsletter and parent portal
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and College Council meetings.

Privacy and Information Sharing

Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our College collects, uses and discloses information refer to the College's Privacy Policy.

Records Management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and well-being and manage our records in accordance with the Public Record Office Victoria Record keeping Standards, including minimum retention periods, and the Records Retention Schedule for Non-Government Schools.

Review of Child Safety Practices

At Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne, we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices. We will:

- review and improve our policy every 2 years or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community

Appendix 1

Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne - Statement of Commitment

The following child safety code of conduct clearly spells out the professional boundaries and acceptable and unacceptable adult/child relationships and behaviours. All staff members at our school are expected to have read and to implement the following 'Child Safety Code of Conduct' at all times.

Making a professional judgement.

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will;

- Make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the child
- Record interactions and share them with a member of the Principal Class.
- Ensure actions taken are warranted, proportionate, safe and applied equitably
- Discuss any misunderstandings, accidents or threats with a leadership team member
- Be aware of their position of trust and ensure an unequal balance of power is not used for their own or others personal advantage or gratification
- Not use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others
- Not promote relationships which create a personal friendship or are of a sexual nature, or which may become so.

Personal/living space

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will;

- Not invite a child into their home or any home or domestic setting frequented by them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and School Leadership or the home has been designated as a work place e.g. childminders, foster carers
- Be vigilant in maintaining their own privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations
- Not ask children to undertake personal jobs or errands
- Maintain professional boundaries.

Gifts, rewards and favouritism

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will;

- Be aware of their organisation's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts
- Ensure that gifts received or given in situations that may be misconstrued are declared
- Only give gifts to an individual child part of an agreed reward system
- Ensure that when operating reward systems, methods and criteria for selection of children for awards are fair and transparent.

Infatuations

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will;

- Deal with infatuations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned
- Make sure their own behaviour is beyond reproach
- If they become aware of an infatuation developing or any indications that it may, record it and discuss it with a School Leadership so that action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

Communication (including the use of technology)

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will:

- Ensure communication takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries this includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites and blogs.
- Not share any personal information with a child
- Not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child, other than that which may be appropriate as part of their professional role
- Not give their personal contact details to children, including their mobile number, home phone or personal e-mail address, unless the need to do so is agreed with School Leadership and parents
- Only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, provided by their organisation to communicate with children, making sure that parents/carers have given permission for this form of communication to be used
- Only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with School policy
- Only use text messaging as a last resort when no other forms of communication are possible
- Not use internet or web-based communication channels to send messages
- Use internal e-mail systems in accordance with the school's policy.

Social Contact

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will;

- Not have social contact with children unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with School Leadership
- Not have secret social contact with children;
- Always approve any planned social contact with children with School Leadership
- Advise senior management of any social contact that has occurred which may raise concern
- Report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or may compromise the organisation or their own professional standing.

Sexual Contact

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will;

- Not engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of a child, or cause or incite a child to engage in or watch sexual activity, to do so would be considered a criminal offence;
- Not have any form of communication which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive

or provocative or make sexual remarks to, or about a child either verbally, written or electronically

- Not discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children
- Ensure relationships take place within boundaries of respect and professionalism
- Ensure language, attitudes and demeanour do not give rise to comment or speculation
- Be aware that consistently conferring in appropriate special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as part of a grooming process, and as such will give rise to concerns about behaviour.

Physical Contact

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will;

- Be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described
- Only have physical contact with a child when it is necessary and in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities, never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
- Be aware of the child's reactions or feelings and, as far as possible, only use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child and for the minimum time necessary
- Seek permission from the child or the parent, if the child is very young, before physical contact is made and agree what contact is acceptable;
- Not assume that when a child is distressed they seek physical comfort;
- Always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny
- Always encourage children, where possible to undertake self-care tasks independently
- Be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and issues sensitive to of gender
- Where there is regular physical contact needed, the nature of this must be agreed with School Leadership and the parent as part of a formally agreed plan
- Where a child initiates inappropriate physical contact, you must sensitively deter them and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries.

Behaviour Management:

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will;

- Not use any form of degrading treatment to punish a child
- Not use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments
- Ensure any sanctions and rewards are part of an agreed behaviour management policy
- Try to defuse situations before they escalate
- Never use corporal punishment
- Follow the behaviour policy and only use physical intervention in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort, when other behaviour management strategies have failed and where there is a risk of physical injury or serious damage to property
- Be mindful of other factors which may be impacting on a child's behaviour, i.e. bullying, changes in home circumstances

Personal/Intimate Care

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will;

- Adhere to the school's code of conduct
- Make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
- Explain to the child what is happening;
- Carefully and sensitively observe the emotional responses of the child, and record and report any concerns to School Leadership and parents, if appropriate
- Respect children's privacy at all times
- Avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress, other than as part of an agreed care plan
- Not change, in the same place as children
- Not shower or bathe with children
- Not assist with any personal care task which a child can undertake themselves.

One to one situations/home visits

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will:

- Ensure that, when lone working is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been agreed
- Avoid meetings with a child in secluded areas
- Always inform colleagues and/or parents about one to one contact beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
- Carefully consider the need of the child when in one to one situation and always report any situation where the child becomes distressed or angry towards you
- Agree the purpose for any home visit with school leadership unless it is an acknowledged and integral part of your role
- Never put yourself into a one to one situation when little or no information is available about the child.

Transporting

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will:

- Ensure requirements around seat belts and car seats are adhered to
- Not offer lifts outside normal working duties unless this has been brought to the attention of school leadership and been agreed with parents
- Ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine that is likely to impair judgement or ability to drive
- Record details of the journey in accordance with agreed procedures
- Ensure that there are proper procedures in place for vehicle, passenger and driver safety, including appropriate insurance;
- Ensure that any impromptu or emergency lifts are recorded and can be justified if questioned.

Trips and Outings

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will:

- Recognise that they are in a position of trust and ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays clearly within defined boundaries
- Ensure staff/child ratios and gender mix are appropriate
- Always have another adult present in out of work activities, unless otherwise agreed with by school leadership
- Ensure risk assessments are undertaken
- Have parental consent to the activity
- Never share beds with children
- Not share bedrooms unless it is a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been agreed with a school leadership, parents and children.

Photography and Videos

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will:

- Be clear about the purpose of any activity involving photography and what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded
- Be able to justify the reason for having images of children in their possession
- Avoid making images in one to one situations or situations that may be construed as secretive or which show a single child with no surrounding context
- Immediately report any concerns if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found
- Have parental consent to take, display and/or distribute any images of children
- Not use images that may cause distress or offence

Access to inappropriate images and internet usage

Adults at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne will:

- Not access, make or store indecent images of children on the internet, to do so would be illegal and lead to a criminal investigation
- Not make or store images of children, gathered as a result of their work, on personal equipment
- Follow their schools guidance on the use of IT equipment
- Ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material through ICT
- Ensure that any materials shown to children are age appropriate
- Immediately report any concerns, if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found, to the school leadership and follow mandatory reporting policy.

Appendix 2

Child Safety Risks and Risk Management Strategies

The table below comprises a listing of potential child safety risk and risk management strategies.

Risks

- Lack of an organisational culture of child safety
- Familiarity breeding a culture of not reporting issues
- Natural trust of long term employees (who may have developed issues over time)
- Children alone with one other person unsupervised
- Recruitment of an inappropriate person
- Inappropriate behaviour not reported
- Harassment via email, SMS or other media
- Unsupervised recreational or other activities
- Ad-hoc contractors on the premises (e.g. maintenance)
- Vulnerability of staff and students due to unknown personal issues
- Unknown people and environments at excursions and camps
- False allegations

Risk Management Strategies

- Implement an effective child safety risk management strategy
- Child safety code of conduct
- Child safety reporting procedures
- Induction for all visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors
- Train students and staff to detect inappropriate behaviour
- Counselling and other resources
- CCTV for unsupervised areas, and 'hot spot' areas
- Clear windows in walls to enable visibility of occupants
- Non-lockable doors in hot spots
- Assessment of new or changed physical environments for child safety risks
- Supervision or monitoring of activities
- Online searches (Google, Facebook etc)
- Performance management procedures
- Pre-employment reference checks that include checking for child safety
- Criminal history checks and confirming currency of

At Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne we believe that our in-depth Child Safe Policy's, Christian Ethics and Code of Conduct enable for the monitoring of staff, students, parents, volunteers and contractors to ensure children are kept safe in the context of their school experience.

Appendix 3

Incident Report

The child safe standards require organisations that provide services for children to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. You can provide this resource to a child or their family if they disclose an allegation of abuse or safety concern in your organisation. Your staff can also use this resource to record disclosures.

All incident reports must be stored securely.

Incident details _____

Date of incident: _____

Time of incident: _____

Location of incident: _____

Name(s) of child/children involved: _____

Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved: _____

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Please categorise the incident (Please Circle)

Physical violence

Sexual offence

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious neglect

Please describe the incident

When did it take place?

Who was involved?

What did you see?

Other information

Office use:

Date incident report received:

Staff member managing incident:

Follow-up date:

Incident ref. number:

Has the incident been reported? (Please Circle)

Child protection

Police

Another third party (please specify):

Appendix 4

Requirements Checklist

Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne

Staff employment requirements checklist

Please note that ALL documents must be received PRIOR to commencement of employment at Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne

It is a requirement of Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne that all staff (Including casuals) have all the accreditation below. If you do not currently have any of the below qualifications, you will need to gain it prior to commencing with Lighthouse Christian College Cranbourne.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

I have attached a copy of my Working with Children Check card YES/ NO

MANDATORY REPORTING CERTIFICATE

I have attached a copy of my Mandatory Reporting Certificate YES/NO

To complete this module visit: <http://www.elearn.com.au/deecd/mandatoryreporting/external>

Username: deecd Password: external

CHILD PROTECTION CODE OF CONDUCT

I have read the Child Protection and Safety Policy and attached a signed Child Protection Code of Conduct

YES/NO

ADDITIONAL ACCREDITATION

The following certificates are not required; however, if you have them we would appreciate it if you can attach a copy of your certificate.

ANAPHYLAXIS CERTIFICATE

I have attached a copy of my current Anaphylaxis training certification

<https://etrainingvic.allergy.org.au>

YES/NO

FIRST AID CERTIFICATE

I have attached a copy of my current First Aid training certification

YES/NO

Appendix Five

Reporting Templates

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse- Four Critical Actions for Schools

Responding to Student Sexual Offending- Four Critical Actions For Schools

Policy adopted by LCCC School Council: February 2025

Policy Review: January 2027

FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

1 RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY

If there is no risk of immediate harm go to **Action 2**.

- If a child is at immediate risk of harm you **must** ensure their safety by:
 - separating alleged victims and others involved
 - administering first aid
 - calling **000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance** to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
 - identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police.

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.

2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES / REFERRING TO SERVICES

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you **must** report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible. Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.

Q: Where does the source of suspected abuse come from?

WITHIN THE SCHOOL

- VICTORIA POLICE**
- You **must** report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor, volunteer or visitor to Victoria Police.
- You **must also** report **internally** to:
- GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**
- School principal and/or leadership team
 - Employee Conduct Branch
 - DET Incident Support and Operations Centre.
- CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**
- School principal and/or leadership team
 - Diocesan education office.
- INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**
- School principal and/or school chairperson
 - Commission for Children and Young People on **1300 782 978**.

All allegations of reportable conduct **must** be reported as soon as possible to:

- **GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**
Employee Conduct Branch
- **CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**
Diocesan education office
- **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**
Commission for Children and Young People on **1300 782 978**.

WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY

- DHHS CHILD PROTECTION**
- You **must** report to DHHS Child Protection if a child is considered to be:
 - in need of protection from child abuse
 - at risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development.

VICTORIA POLICE

You **must also** report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.

You **must also** report **internally** to:

- **GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS**
School principal and/or leadership team
- DET Incident Support and Operations Centre.
- **CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**
School principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office.
- **INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS**
School principal and/or chairperson.

YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

- You **must** act, by following the Four Critical Actions, as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief* that a child has, or is at risk of being abused.

* A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

As a school staff member, you plays a **critical role** in protecting children in your care.

- It is strongly recommended that you use the **Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template** to keep clear and comprehensive notes, even if you make a decision not to report.

3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

Your principal **must** consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents/carers. They may advise:

- **not to contact** the parents/carer (eg. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish for their parent/carer to be contacted)
- **to contact** the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion)
- **how to communicate** with all relevant parties with consideration for their safety.

4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

Your school **must** provide support for children impacted by abuse. This should include the development of a **Student Support Plan** in consultation with wellbeing professionals. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements. Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals and support.

You **must** follow the **Four Critical Actions** every time you become aware of a further instance or risk of abuse. This includes reporting new information to authorities.

CONTACT

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION

- AREA**
- North Division **1300 664 977**
 - South Division **1300 655 795**
 - East Division **1300 360 391**
 - West Division (Rural) **1800 075 599**
 - West Division (Metro) **1300 664 977**

AFTER HOURS

After hours, weekends, public holidays **13 12 78**.

CHILD FIRST

<https://serv.cesdhhs.vic.gov.au/referral-and-support-teams>

ORANGE DOOR

<https://www.vic.gov.au/familyviolence/the-orange-door.html>

VICTORIA POLICE

000 or your local police station

DET INCIDENT SUPPORT AND OPERATIONS CENTRE

1800 126 126

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT UNIT

1800 126 126

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH

(03) 9637 2595

DIOCESAN OFFICE

Melbourne **(03) 9267 0228**
Ballarat **(03) 5337 7135**
Sale **(03) 5622 6600**
Sandhurst **(03) 5443 2377**

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

VICTORIA
(03) 9825 7200

THE LOOKOUT

The LOOKOUT has a service directory, information, and evidence based guidance to help you respond to family violence: <http://www.lookout.org.au>.

Family violence victims/survivors can be referred to **1800 Respect** for counselling, information and a referral service: **1800 737 732**

PROTECT

THE EDUCATION STATE

VICTORIA
Education and Training
Government

CECV
Child Education Commission of Victoria Inc

