CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING RECORD KEEPING POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all College records relating to Child Safety and Wellbeing are created, maintained and disposed of in accordance with Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards, including minimum retention periods.

This policy takes into account relevant requirements within the State of Victoria, including the specific requirements of the Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 1359 and the Public Record Office of Victoria Recordkeeping Standards (to the extent that they apply to the College).

SCOPE

This policy applies to all College school staff, contractors, volunteers and clergy. It should be read in conjunction with related school policies and codes of conduct, including:

1. Child Safety Code of Conduct
2. Child Safety Policy
3. Complaints Handling Policy
4. Privacy Collection Notice

VERSION CONTROL

Prepared by	Risk and Compliance Manager
Version	1.1
Approved by	The Salesian College Board
Approval date	July 2025
Next review	2027

ISSUE HISTORY

Date Modified	Modified by	Version	Details
4 June 2025	Risk and Compliance Manager	1.1	Cyclical review of the policy.

DEFINITIONS

Child A child or young person who is under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse

Child abuse includes:

(a) any act committed against a Child involving:
  (i) a sexual offence
  (ii) an offence under section 49B(2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming)

(b) the infliction, on a Child, of:
  (i) physical violence
  (ii) serious emotional or psychological harm

(c) serious neglect of a Child.

Child-connected work

Work that involves direct contact with children that is regular and not incidental to the work.

Child safety

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).

Child Safety and Wellbeing Record

Any Record that involves or relates to matters concerning Child safety or which involves or relates to matters involving the safety or wellbeing of a Child, which may include Records relating to:

- concerns or complaints relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child
- safety incidents involving a child
- Mandatory reporting
- Reportable allegations
- Reportable conduct
- other matters relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child.

Mandatory reporting

Is the legal requirement under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.) to protect children from harm relating to physical and sexual abuse. The Principal, registered teachers and early childhood teachers, school counsellors, religious clergy, medical practitioners and nurses at a school are mandatory reporters under this Act (PROTECT: Identifying and responding to all forms of abuse in Victorian schools).

Record

This means all information that the school creates, sends or receives, that provides evidence of decisions, directions and school activities. Records may be in any format (whether formal or informal), including digital or physical format, and may include documents, email correspondence, financial statements, text messages, meeting notes, audio-visual recordings, photographs, website pages and social media posts.

Reportable allegation

Any information that leads a person to form a reasonable belief that an employee has committed either:

- reportable conduct
- misconduct that may involve reportable conduct

whether or not the conduct or misconduct is alleged to have occurred within the course of the person's employment (as defined in the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic)).

Reportable conduct

Reportable conduct, as defined in the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) means:

- a sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of a child, whether or not a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded
- sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of a child
- any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- significant neglect of a child.

School environment

This means any of the following physical, online or virtual places used during or outside school hours:

- a campus of the school
- online or virtual school environments made available or authorised by the College for use by a child or student (including email, intranet systems, software, applications, collaboration tools and online services)
- other locations provided by the school or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for school camps, approved homestay accommodation, delivery of education and training, sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events) (Ministerial Order No. 1359).

School staff

An individual working in a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
- a contracted service provider engaged by the College (whether or not a body corporate and whether or not any other person is an intermediary) engaged to perform child-related work for the College.
- a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the College (Ministerial Order No. 1359).

Volunteer

A person who performs work without remuneration or reward for the College in the school environment.

PRINCIPLES

At Salesian College we are committed to ensuring that we have good recordkeeping processes in place, particularly with respect to Child Safety and Wellbeing Records. We recognise that good recordkeeping helps to:

- protect the rights of students, school staff, volunteers and the school community
- support collaboration and informed decision-making
- ensure transparency and accountability by providing proof of school practices, communications, decisions and actions
- support continuity and consistency in management and administration
- provide an audit trail to meet operational and legal requirements
- reduce the risk of being unable to produce evidence of school activities.

POLICY

Salesian College will ensure that:

- Full and accurate records of school activities and decisions relating to Child Safety and Wellbeing are created and kept to meet legislative requirements and community needs.
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Records are organised so they can be readily accessed and used for authorised purposes.
- Systems and processes are developed to ensure Child Safety and Wellbeing Records are kept secure from unauthorised access, amendment, use, release and disposal.
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Records are stored in secure physical locations and systems that will protect them from misuse, damage, deterioration or loss.
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Records are preserved in a readable and accessible format for their minimum required retention period.
- School staff and volunteers seek written authorisation from the Director of Governance and Strategy prior to disposing of Child Safety and Wellbeing Records.
- School staff and volunteers do not dispose of any Child Safety and Wellbeing Records that are likely to be required in a legal proceeding.
- The method used to dispose of Child Safety and Wellbeing Records is secure and permanent.
- A register of Child Safety and Wellbeing Records disposal is kept.

Child Safety and Wellbeing Recordkeeping procedures set out more detailed guidance for processes that the College has in place to ensure that it meets the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards in relation to the creation, maintenance and disposal of Child Safety and Wellbeing Records.

Note: The College uses the Australia Standards of Archivists Records Retention and Disposal Schedule for Non-Government Schools.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)
- Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)

RELATED POLICIES

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Record Keeping Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Privacy Collection Notice
- Records Retention and Disposal Schedule

REFERENCES

- Ministerial Order No. 1359: Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises
- Public Records Office, Victoria Recordkeeping Standards