*Charles La Trobe P-12 College takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all* ***Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 870 (2015)***

Statement of Commitment

The College school council is committed to developing strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school; allocate roles and responsibilities for achieving the strategies; put the strategies into practice; inform the school community of these; periodically review the effectiveness of the strategies in place and, if appropriate, revise these strategies.

Charles La Trobe P-12 College acts to protect students from abuse and provide an environment where students feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. It is committed to embedding a culture in which child safety is part of everyone’s everyday thinking and practice. This is achieved through proactive leadership in demonstrating the appropriate values, attitudes and behaviours within the school.

Charles La Trobe P-12 College fosters a culture of openness, inclusiveness and awareness where students and adults are aware of what to do if they observe, or are subject to, abuse or inappropriate behaviour.

All staff and volunteers are required to consider the safety of all students and to recognise the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal students, cultural safety for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the safety of students with disabilities.

Governance in a child safe environment

School council is committed to taking a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety issues. The safety and wellbeing of students at Charles La Trobe P-12 College is of paramount consideration when developing activities, policies and management practices.

Leadership responsibilities

Leadership is responsible for embedding a culture of child safety which protects students from abuse, for being aware of child abuse allegations and risks, and for ensuring an appropriate response.

All allegations of child abuse and child safety concerns are treated very seriously. Charles La Trobe P-12 College complies with all legal requirements including reporting suspicions of child abuse to police and/or child protection. If we believe a student is at immediate risk of abuse we phone 000.

Identifying and analysing risks of abuse

Charles La Trobe P-12 College’s approach is to prevent, detect and respond to child abuse risks. This includes a risk management strategy and policy that specifies how the school identifies, assesses, and takes steps to reduce or remove child abuse risks.

Child safe policies and codes of conduct

Charles La Trobe P-12 College has developed child safe policies which outline its commitment to promoting students’ wellbeing and protecting students from abuse.

Codes of conduct specify the standards of conduct and care required when working and interacting with students.

Employees and volunteers

Charles La Trobe P-12 College takes all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. This includes police record and identity checks, Working with Children Checks where required, face-to-face interviews and detailed reference checks from previous employers, including from the applicant’s most recent line managers.

Supporting, supervising, and enhancing performance

Charles La Trobe P-12 College ensures that all persons who work with students, including volunteers, have ongoing supervision, support and training so that their performance is developed and enhanced to help protect children from abuse. In particular, leadership and staff are fully aware of their responsibilities.

Promotion of inclusion

Charles La Trobe P-12 College is committed to inclusion of all students and their families. In particular, the school culture supports:

* cultural safety for Aboriginal students by working in partnership with Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal community organisations
* cultural safety for students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds by using inclusive language and images in policy documents, and communications such as the website and newsletters
  + the safety of students with disabilities by ensuring that all Charles La Trobe P-12 College programs are accessible to them and by ensuring appropriate training and supervision of staff and volunteers working with children with them.

Promoting the participation of students in decision-making

Charles La Trobe P-12 College promotes the involvement and participation of students in developing and maintaining child safe environments by providing opportunities for students to express their views on child safe policies and codes of conduct and using this feedback to improve policies and practices.

Students are listened to and taken seriously, particularly if they are disclosing abuse or concerns for their safety or for the safety of other children.

Further information

*Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority*

Child safe standards website (all schools): [**www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe**](http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe)

*The Victorian Institute of Teaching*

For *Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics* and information about employer responsibilities to report action taken against registered teachers in response to allegations and concerns about registered teachers. [**www.vit.edu.au**](http://www.vit.edu.au)

*Duty of Care*

[**http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/dutyofcare.aspx)

*Child Protection – Reporting Obligations*

[**http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/childprotection.aspx**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/childprotection.aspx)

*Student Health and Safety*

[**http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/default.aspx**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/default.aspx)

*Information Privacy*

[**http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/privacy.aspx**](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/privacy.aspx)

**Ratification**

This policy was ratified by the College School Council on August 23rd, 2016.

This policy was reviewed and re-ratified on 12th December, 2017.

**References**

VRQA Website <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/default.html>

DET Website <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/childsafestandards.aspx>

Commission for Children and Young People Website

<http://www.ccyp.vic.gov.au/>