



## CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAM AND CHILD SAFE POLICY

### CATEGORY

Governance (Leadership)

### The Child Protection Program

This Child Protection Program is made up of work systems, practices, policies and procedures designed to maintain a safe and supportive school environment, and to embed an organisational culture of child safety within the College community.

The Program deals specifically with creating and maintaining a child safe organisation, including child protection issues. It is designed to ensure compliance with:

- the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- child protection laws and regulations in WA
- registration requirements that are relevant to child safe organisations and child protection, as set out in the Registration Standards for Non-Government Schools (determined by the Minister for Education under section 159(1) of the School Education Act 1999 (WA)) (the Registration Standards), including:
  - Registration Standard 10 – Preventing and Responding to Child Abuse
  - Registration Standard 9 – Complaints (together with our Complaints Handling Program)
  - Registration Standard 7 – Critical and Emergency Incidents (together with our Critical and Emergency Incidents policies and procedures)
  - Registration Standard 8 – Boarding (together with our Boarding Program)
- relevant aspects of the Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools 2020 (Registration Standards Guide) which assists the College to comply with the Registration requirements, in particular Chapter 2 (Registration Standards) and Chapter 4 (Levels of Care).

Broader child safety issues arising from our common law duty of care are dealt with through our Student Duty of Care Program.

### Child Safe Policy

This Child Safe Policy implements the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#).

This Child Safe Policy has been approved by the Council on **17<sup>th</sup> August 2020**. It is to be reviewed on **17<sup>th</sup> August 2023**.

The Child Safe Policy is published on our College's public website and provided to all College staff members whether they be permanent, temporary, casual, teaching, non-teaching, Ministers of Religion (Chaplains), peripatetic, coaches, umpires, instructors, tutors and hobbyists. For the purpose of this policy, a staff member also includes volunteers, practicum students and interns, trainees and work experience placements.

A PDF version of Penrhos College's Child Safe Policy and our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety is available on our Policy Portal.

## **Purpose**

Our Child Safe Policy was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of the College to child safety, and to provide an outline of the policies and practices that we have developed to keep our students safe, including from abuse or other harm.

It is an overarching policy that provides the key elements of our approach to the College as a child safe organisation and sets the tone for the College's entire Child Protection Program.

The Child Safe Policy provides the framework for:

- the implementation of the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection, safety and wellbeing within the College
- the creation of a safe and supportive College environment and a positive and robust child safe culture
- the promotion and open discussion of child safety issues within the College and
- compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection and child safety in WA.

## **Scope**

The College's Child Safe Policy applies to all adults in the College community, including Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, External Education Providers, parents/guardians and other family members. This policy applies in all College environments, both physical and online, and on-site and off-site College grounds (e.g. camps and excursions).

## **Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing**

All children and young people who come to Penrhos College have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe and are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We have a zero tolerance for child abuse and other harm and are committed to acting in students' best interests and keeping them safe from harm.

The College regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintaining a child safe culture.

Each member of the College community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role that they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all that they do and every decision that they make.

The College's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety has been designed to reflect the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

### **Children's Rights to Safety, Information and Participation**

Penrhos College is a child safe and child-centred organisation. Our environment is friendly and welcoming to all children and young people.

We actively seek to include students in decisions that affect them. This includes decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and classroom learning and assessment environments.

We ensure students know about their rights to safety, information and participation. We recognise the importance of friendships and support from peers. We actively seek to understand what makes students feel safe in our organisation and regularly communicate with students about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

### **Parents/Carers, Families and Community Involvement at the College**

The College recognises that parents and carers have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their children. We ensure they participate in decisions affecting their children.

We ensure families and relevant communities know about the College's operations and policies, including its Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct, record keeping practices, risk management, and complaints and investigation processes.

We actively seek to include families and relevant communities in decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and classroom learning and assessment environments.

We build cultural safety at the College through partnerships with relevant communities.

### **Valuing Diversity in the College Community**

Our College values diversity and does not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:

- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families
- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and from diverse faith backgrounds and their families
- welcome students with disability and their families and act to promote their participation
- welcome students and families of diverse sexuality and act to promote their participation
- seek to recruit a workforce that reflects a diversity of cultures, abilities and identities
- ensure all Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors have training about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, disability, culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and those with particular experiences or needs
- have a physical environment that actively celebrates diverse cultures and recognises cultural difference
- commit to ensuring our facilities promote the inclusion of students of all abilities.

## **Our Child Protection Program**

Penrhos College is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Protection Program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. We adopt a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors including the nature of our College's activities, physical and online environments and the characteristics of the student body.

Our Child Protection Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse, grooming and other harm and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse and to promote a child safe environment. It includes:

- Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- clear information as to what constitutes child abuse, grooming and other harm and associated key indicators of child abuse, grooming and other harm
- clear procedures for responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns internally, and for responding incidents or allegations of child abuse, grooming or other harm
- strategies to support, encourage and enable Staff, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, parents/guardians and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
- procedures for recruiting and screening members of the College Leadership Team, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- procedures for reporting to external agencies, including Mandatory Reporting to Department for Child Protection and Family Support (CPFS) and Reporting to Police
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe
- strategies to support and encourage the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and students with disability
- child protection training
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse, grooming or other harm to protect, support and assist children
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations)
- a system for continuous review and improvement.

As a part of Penrhos College's induction process, all Staff as well as Relief Teachers and Direct Contact Volunteers are required to complete induction in our child protection policies, practices and procedures. All Staff, as well as Direct Contact Volunteers also receive refresher and ongoing child protection training at least annually.

Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors are supported and supervised by the College's Child Protection Officers and College Leadership Team to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child safety.

## Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns to the College

Our Child Protection Program provides detailed guidance for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors on how to identify key indicators of child abuse, grooming and other harm and how to report child safety incidents or concerns internally at the College. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child safety incidents or concerns to relevant external authorities.

Students at the College are provided with information about and encouraged to use multiple pathways to raise child safety incidents or concerns about or at the College. These include informal and formal ways, an 'anonymous' way, and through external child advocacy or child safety organisations.

Parents/guardians, family members and other community members who have child safety concerns or who suspect that a child or young person associated with the College may be subject to abuse, grooming or other harm can contact:

- one of the College's Child Protection Officer (College Psychologist), via phone or email, or
- the Principal or, if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of the Council.

Students, parents/guardians, family members and other community members can also raise child safety incidents or concerns through the College's Complaints Handling Policy.

Any person can also contact a Child Protection Officer, the Principal or the Chair of Council if they have concerns regarding the College's leadership in relation to child safety.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a "need to know basis".

Whenever there are concerns that a child or young person is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.

## Responsibilities for Child Protection at the College

Child Protection is everyone's responsibility. All adults in the College community have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of students. Specific responsibilities include:

### The College's Child Protection Officers

A number of senior staff members are nominated as the College's Child Protection Officers. Our Child Protection Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child safety and protection issues. They are a point of contact for raising child safety concerns within the College. They are also responsible for championing child protection within the College and assisting in coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

Contact details for our Child Protection Officers are set out below:

Name	Position	Contact No.	Email Address
Tracy Hart	College Psychologist	9368 9581	hartt@penrhos.wa.edu.au
Jane Clarke	College Psychologist (SS)	9368 9522	clarkej@penrhos.wa.edu.au
Elissa Sarich	College Psychologist (SS)	9368 9533	sarics@penrhos.wa.edu.au
Katherine Russell-Smith	College Psychologist (JS)	9368 9560	russek@penrhos.wa.edu.au

## **The Senior Child Protection Officer**

Penrhos College has also appointed Rob Taylor, acting Principal, as the College's Senior Child Protection Officer. The Senior Child Protection Officer is contactable by phone on 9368 9514 or by emailing [taylor@penrhos.wa.edu.au](mailto:taylor@penrhos.wa.edu.au)

The Senior Child Protection Officer has additional child protection responsibilities, such as being a first point of contact for all child safety concerns or queries for the wider community and coordinating the College's response to child safety incidents in consultation with the College Leadership Team and the Council.

## **Council**

The Council is responsible for approving our Child Protection Program and ensuring that the College has appropriate resources to effectively implement the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and our Child Protection Program.

## **The Principal**

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for, the operational management of the College, and the Child Protection Program. The Principal is responsible for taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Safe Policy and the College's Child Protection Program is implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within the College.

## **The College Leadership Team**

Each member of the College Leadership Team is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available in their area of operations to allow the College's Child Protection Program to be effectively implemented within the College, and to support the Principal in the practical application of the College's child protection strategies, policies, procedures and work systems.

## **Staff Members**

All Staff are required to comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct, be familiar with our Child Protection Program and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse, grooming and other harm, and Working with Children Checks. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key indicators of abuse, grooming and other harm, to be observant, and to raise all child safety incidents and concerns with one of the College's Child Protection Officers.

## **Volunteers**

All Volunteers at the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment.

All Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers are required to comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse, grooming and other harm.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key indicators of child abuse, grooming and other harm, to be observant, and to raise all child safety concerns with one of the College's Child Protection Officers.

## **Contractors**

All Contractors engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment.

All Direct Contact and Regular Contractors engaged by the College are required to comply with our Child

Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse, grooming and other harm. The College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the Contractor.

Direct Contact and Regular Contractors may include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches and College cleaners. This also includes peripatetic music teachers and other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the College, but have an agreement with the College to use the College's facilities.

### **External Education Providers**

An External Education Provider is any organisation that the College has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the College. The delivery of such a course may take place on College premises or elsewhere.

All External Education Providers engaged by the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in all College environments. All External Education Providers engaged by the College are required by the College to comply with our Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Codes of Conduct. Penrhos College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

### **Child Safe People Services Management**

Penrhos College applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of Staff and Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers. Our recruitment procedures comply with the College's Child Safe People Services Management and ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children and young people. All Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors are required to maintain a valid and clear Working with Children Check.

The College ensures that the College Leadership Team, Staff and Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors undergo child protection induction, and ongoing education and training as part of our commitment to safeguarding children from harm.

Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors are subject to regular supervision and performance monitoring whilst engaging with students.

The College ensures that professional development programs for Staff include child protection education and training programs.

### **Child Safe Risk Management**

The College recognises the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and we use this information to inform our policies, procedures and activity planning.

The College has developed a comprehensive Risk Management Program to assist in the identification, assessment and management of child safety risks in all College environments.

### **Record Keeping**

The College has a Child Protection Record Keeping policy and is committed to best practice record keeping.

In maintaining records of child safety incidents or concerns, the College maintains confidentiality and privacy for students and families in accordance with federal and state privacy legislation.

## **Policy and Program Review**

Penrhos College is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Protection Program. The Program is regularly reviewed for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection and child safety related laws, regulations and standards.

The College is committed to actively seeking, actioning, and incorporating into this Policy, feedback from students, families, the wider College community, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors, and will communicate any adjustments or amendments widely throughout the College community.

## **Non-Compliance with Our Child Safe Policy**

Penrhos College enforces this Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Codes of Conduct. In the event of any non-compliance, we will instigate a review that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- the restriction of duties
- suspension or
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement.