

Child Safe Framework



We are
Christ-
centred,
child-
focused



CATHOLIC EDUCATION
WESTERN AUSTRALIA

A message from Dr Debra Sayce

Schools are Christ-centred, child-focused places of learning and faith formation. We believe children and young people reach their God-given potential through developing and flourishing in a safe environment. Therefore, no child or young person can learn and flourish if he or she feels unsafe.

Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) is committed to creating child safe and child friendly schools.

We need to work together to provide school environments that are not only safe, but allow and encourage students to learn about healthy and respectful relationships. The dignity of children and their right to be, and feel safe in our Catholic schools is central to our success as educators and as a system in supporting each child to have *life to the full*.

To this end, child safety continues to be a key priority for our system and will receive even greater visibility in 2018. The recent Royal Commission identified areas that we need to address in order to create safe school environments. We have developed our CEWA Child Safe Framework to guide us in our work to create school environments that are Christ-centred and child-focused places of learning.

We **all** have a role to play in promoting and modelling professional behaviours and healthy and respectful relationships. School leaders, educators, staff, parents/guardians and all members of our Catholic school communities share the responsibility of creating a child safe culture.

Let us continue to share good practice and work together to ensure our students learn in a safe and supportive environment.

Introduction to the Child Safe Framework

The Catholic Education Western Australia (CEWA) Child Safe Framework comprises nine elements that together help our students and children to be and feel safe, which are based on the latest research and recognised best practices.

The nine elements combine to support a child safe culture founded on healthy and respectful relationships. The Framework has been designed to map with existing frameworks within CEWA and the broader education context.

The Framework elements provide a lens that will help you to access policies, practices and behaviours to identify the 'next steps' for your school to improve your students' outcomes, including modelling and developing positive relationships and creating child safe environments.

The Child Safe Framework applies to all Catholic Schools and care centres in Western Australia, and the staff, parents, volunteers and school communities.

The Child Safe Framework sets out best practice to develop the knowledge, mindsets, practice and behaviours that enable and sustain a child safe culture and wellbeing for all CEWA students.

The nine elements of the Framework cover all aspects for child safety in Catholic schools and care centres. The elements are not mutually exclusive and when all elements are active, they explicitly contribute to a safe learning organisation.





Support & Healing

Support and Healing focuses on responding to those who have been injured or hurt through abuse and harm and to enable them to heal.

Catholic schools are communities designed to be living witness to Christ's love and redemption, therefore our first element of the CEWA Child Safe Framework focuses on healing and support for the person who has been harmed, the accused and the community.



Voice of the Child

Voice of the Child highlights the inalienable right of each child to be heard and to have a voice in all that happens to them.

The voice of the child is important, not because adults need to protect weak and defenceless children but because they have the right to be heard and involved in programs and matters that affect them.

A child safe environment is incomplete without this voice.

Key Principles

Situational prevention: The intentional design of various elements within our schools – including staffing, governance, leadership, physical and online environments, behaviours and culture – to prevent abuse.

Extended guardianship: When our leaders, staff and school community share a collective responsibility to take an active role in the safety and wellbeing of students.

Healthy and respectful relationships



Culture

Culture recognises that whilst the Principal in a school has the non-delegable duty of care, all members of a school community are responsible for an environment that prioritises the best interests of the child or young person.

The role of our schools and care centres is to support parents as first educators of their children.

This is developed over time and based on the understanding that healthy relationships are the core of child safety.

Good decision-making contributes to the culture we seek under the CEWA Child Safe Framework.

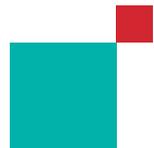


Governance & Leadership

Governance and Leadership articulates the role of the Principal in leading child safe places of learning.

As instructional leaders, they must understand and promote the many facets that create an environment where children are safe and can flourish.

Good governance focuses on what is best practice rather than on compliance.



For further information, visit:

<http://childsafeframework.cewa.edu.au>



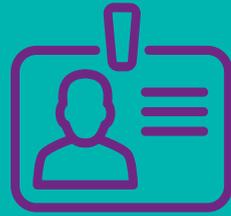
Policy & Procedures

Policy and Procedures are structures and processes that are thorough, flexible and empowering to those who enact them.

Best practice and stakeholder consultation inform their development.

They are accessible to the school community, easy to understand and fully implemented.

There are clear procedures in the Code of Conduct for raising and discussing concerns.



Human Resource Practices

Human Resource Practices assist our schools and care centres to take all possible steps to identify the most suitable people to work in our system.

Commitment to child safety is emphasised in the recruitment process.

Once staff and volunteers have started work at your school or care centre, they will be given opportunities for ongoing support, supervision and training.

Glossary of Terms

Abuse: Child abuse can take many forms; sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional/psychological abuse and neglect.

Child safe organisation: values children and understands safety doesn't just happen. A commitment to protecting the child is embedded in the organisation's culture and is understood and accepted by everyone.



Investigating & Reporting

Investigating and Reporting include the development of transparent processes that are fair, reasonable and clearly understood by the community.

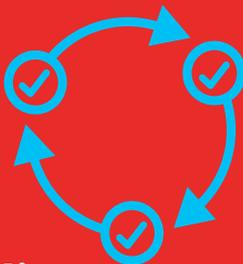
Accurate and detailed collection of data for the purpose of informing future framework iterations is important.



Risk Management

Risk Management ensures that experience, wisdom and knowledge of issues and potential risks are applied to new and ongoing situations in order to mitigate or prevent risk of harm to a child or young person.

This includes both physical and online environments. Research on situational crime prevention informs risk management.



Quality Assurance

Quality Assurance means systematic, continual improvement under the Framework is evident. There is rigorous ongoing evaluation and assessment of the Framework and its impact on child safety.

This requires a range of robust and effective monitoring tools and processes which include self-assessment, cyclic review and external audit.

Next Steps



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