



# ICOM Newsletter

## Special Child Safety Issue



22 August 2016



Term 3, Issue 6

### Principal's Message

Assalamu Alaikum Warahmatu  
Allah Wabarakatuhu

Dear Parents,

As we should all expect and demand, every child has the right to feel safe and secure while at school.

At the Islamic College of Melbourne we aim to:

- Provide a positive environment in which all teachers assume responsibility for student welfare, endeavouring to provide successful experiences for all students.
- Develop a supportive environment where children feel safe and secure and in which a sense of belonging and welfare is strengthened.
- Develop an environment with zero-tolerance of child abuse
- Develop students' positive social behaviours and problem solving skills
- Develop staff members that are confident, skilled and proactive in the promotion of student welfare.
- Establish communication processes and protocols

that are clear and well known to ensure the effective support of student welfare.

The Victorian Education Minister has introduced compulsory requirements that will apply to all organisations that provide services for children. This was introduced to help protect children from all forms of abuse, such as physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect and domestic violence. There are seven child safe standards that form part of the Victorian Governments' response to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry.

The college is committed to child safety and to prevent child abuse by creating a college culture and structure to address any issues related to child abuse. All staff, volunteers and school members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by adhering to the code of conduct.

The School Board and management at the Islamic College of Melbourne are committed

to cooperating fully with the requirements raised in the ministerial order and to comply with all the standards introduced. The college has been implementing policies, procedures, practices and standards relating to child safety. The college believes that this step is a positive one and will continuously strive to improve the safety of all students at the college.

I was happy to see the number of parents who came for the information session last week, which discussed the importance of the ministerial order and the implementation of these new standards. It was wonderful to see the level of enthusiasm with parents as the cooperation between the college and parents is the cornerstone of ensuring the safety and well-being of students.

The college staff have had extensive professional development sessions regarding the college's child safety policies, procedures, practices, strategies and their expectations relating to these issues. By signing

the code of conduct, all staff have indicated that they are willing and committed to abiding by the requirements set by both the college and the ministerial order.

Students were also given the opportunity to learn about the new standards in place and their role in the implementation of the policies, strategies and practices in the college. Students now understand the importance of these standards, their rights and that they have the opportunity to openly discuss any concerns for their safety and the safety of others.

All policies and procedures related to child safety are accessible to parents through the parent portal. The college encourages parents to read through all the policies and procedures uploaded on this site. As always, my office is always open to discuss any issues you may have.

**Dr. Abdul M. Kamareddine**  
*Principal*

## What are the Child Safe Standards?

The Department of Human Services has explained the Child Safety Standards as follows; Victoria has introduced compulsory minimum standards that will apply to organisations that provide services for children to help protect children from all forms of abuse. The child safe standards form part of the Victorian Government's response to the Betrayal of Trust Inquiry.

The child safe standards are as follows:

In complying with the child safe standards, an entity to which the standards apply must include the following principles as part of each standard:

- promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
- promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, an entity to which the standards apply must have:

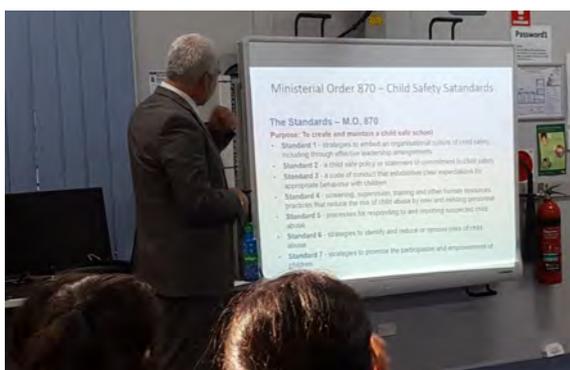
- Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
- Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
- Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

For full details please visit the DHHS website at: <http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards>

## Student & Parent Information Sessions

The college understands that the key to success in the implementation of its child safe strategies and ensuring a child safe environment is to inform not only the college's staff but also its students, parents and ICOM's wider community. Three extensive sessions were held for college staff to discuss the college's updated policies, procedures, practices and strategies in light of the child safe standards. The college held two information sessions for students.

Parents were invited to an information session to discuss the college's approach to ensure that ICOM is and always will be a child safe school.



## Child Safety Policy and Statement of Commitment

ICOM's child safety policy is an overarching document that provides an overview of key elements of the Islamic College of Melbourne's strategies and approach to child safety. This policy also describes the college's commitment to keep children safe from harm. It forms the foundation of the college's procedures, practices, decision making processes, and ultimately the college's culture with respect to child safety.

To successfully embed a culture of child safety, the commitment to **zero tolerance of child abuse** is led by the college's governing authority, and is openly and transparently shared throughout the college community. This child safety policy is accessible, publicly available and understood by the college community.

Our college's child safety policy:

- clearly states a zero tolerance of child abuse
- details the college's child safe processes and procedures, and links to existing documents that include child safety considerations - for example, its reporting procedures (including leadership responsibilities), how to respond to an allegation of child abuse, human resources and recruitment practices, and risk management strategy and procedures
- clearly states the college's commitment to cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability
- details expectations and requirements of staff and volunteers to ensure the protection of children, and the training and support staff receive
- includes contact details for people to access information in relation to child safety, such as the college's Child Safety Officers (College Counsellor and College Nurse) . A Child Safety Officer is a person who has knowledge of child safety issues, and could be a point of contact for others who have questions or concerns or want to report an allegation of child abuse. The college's Child Safety Officers can be contacted on 03 8742 1739.

### What is child abuse?

Child abuse is an act by parents or caregivers which endangers a child or young person's physical or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident, but usually takes place over time. In Victoria, under the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 a child or young person is a person under eighteen years of age. There are a number of different types of abuse, they include:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Emotional abuse
- Neglect
- Domestic Violence



### Statement of commitment to child safety

The college is committed to child safety and to prevent child abuse by creating a college culture and structure to address any issues related to child abuse. All staff, volunteers and school members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by adhering to the code of conduct.

The college clearly opposes any practice that involves conduct of a reportable nature and will be constantly looking to implement measures and strategies that are aimed at preventing reportable conduct and other harm coming to children in its care.

The college is committed to:

- having zero tolerance for child abuse
- actively working to listen to and empower children
- having systems to protect children from abuse, making sure all allegations and concerns are taken very seriously and re-

sponding to them consistently in line with the college's policies and procedures

- promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

The college will be reviewing **every two years** the effectiveness of its child safe strategies and practices listed in this policy and the code of conduct. We encourage any ideas or suggestions from college staff, students and/or community that may assist to identify any risk to child safety, or improve child safe practices in the college. Furthermore our strategies will be reviewed following any incidents, and will be documented and recorded. If any amendments, changes, adoption of new strategies or opportunities for improvement arise, an action plan will be developed to be implemented within a specific time frame. However any changes or adopted recommendations/suggestions will be communicated to the college governing body for their approval. Following the approval of the governing body of any changes or recommendations relating to child safe practices, such changes or recommendations will then be communicated to staff and students. The changes or recommendation will be published on the college newsletter, website, parent portal and staff intra-net.

The college is committed to child safety and the following will be attended to in order to ensure student safety:

- screen and supervise staff and provide other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse
- manage the school environment on campus, online and at other locations
- monitor adherence to the policy or statement by ensuring that the policy is communicated clearly with the college's staff, students and community and make sure everyone understands their responsibilities and duties in respect to child safety matters
- support, encourage and enable staff to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters by conducting briefings, PD's and uploading the child safety policy and other related policies



on the college staff intranet. Also to encourage staff to discuss any child safety issues in the Professional Learning Team meetings and to document their discussions and recommendations for follow up purposes

- support, encourage and enable parents to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters by conducting information sessions, uploading the child safety policy and other related policies on the parent portal and communicating it through the college newsletter
- support, encourage and enable children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters by conducting information sessions, briefings to inform them about their rights, responsibilities, how and whom they can approach to report any inappropriate behaviours relating to child safety or concerns
- support or assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse by referring them to the college's Child Safety Officers and ensuring that the college maintains confidentiality unless legally required to disclose.

### **ICOM child safety strategies**

Below are the college's child safety strategies. The college may amend, add or remove any of the listed strategies as the need arises or following any incidents. The college will review these strategies on an ongoing basis.

#### **1) Strategies for the college's governing authority**

- The college governing authority communicates that it has **zero tolerance of child abuse** (in any form).
- Child safety is a standing item for discussion at meetings of the college governing authority.
- Child safety strategies are developed and enhanced through ongoing review of the effectiveness of practice.
- An appropriate reporting process is in place for child abuse that includes overseeing outcomes.
- The college governing authority oversees the implementation and improvement of child safety strategies.
- The college governing authority communicates with the college

community about the college's child safety strategies and their implementation.

- The college reports on child safety in its annual report.

#### **2) Strategies for college staff (includes contractors and volunteers)**

- Ensuring awareness of the child safety strategies and the allocated roles and responsibilities.
  - Pre-employment reference checks that include checking for child safety.
  - Checking of identification for staff as part of recruitment.
  - Criminal history checks and confirming currency of Working with Children Check/Victorian Institute of Teaching registration.
  - Obtaining certified copies of qualifications for staff as part of recruitment.
  - Query gaps in employment history.
  - Psychometric testing.
  - Induction of child safety for all staff and visitors.
  - Child safety is a standing item for discussion at staff and manager meetings.
  - To train staff to detect inappropriate behaviour.
  - Staff to report inappropriate behaviour.
  - Screening and review of the suitability of existing staff through performance appraisal procedures.
  - Positive behaviours are recognised and encouraged.
  - Foster a culture of openness with approachable and supportive managers.
  - No staff member is to meet with individual students behind closed doors, must always be visible to outside staff. This applies to overnight camps, counselling, first aid, bus travel, student with high support needs.
- #### **3) Strategies for students**
- Students are made aware of how to detect and report inappropriate behaviour.
  - Students are encouraged to report inappropriate behaviour.
  - The college has nominated two Child Safety Officers that students can approach in relation to child safety concerns.
  - The college has child safety reporting procedures.

- The college provides counselling and other resources to support students.
- Students are to notify the college's Child Safety Officers if they believe inappropriate behaviour has occurred.

#### **4) Environment**

The college has child safety strategies in place for all physical environments, that includes:

- regularly reviewing the physical environment to ensure all risks are identified and managed
- assessing new or changed physical environments for child safety risks
- supervising or monitoring activities.

The college has child safety strategies for its online environments (e.g. student email, intranets, online learning systems, social media) including:

- clear boundaries of roles between staff and students
- proactive strategies to detect inappropriate behaviour such as online searches (Google, Facebook etc).
- Visitors are appropriately screened, supervised and made aware of the college's child safety strategies.



### **Our commitment to child safety**

- Our college is committed to child safety.
- We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.
- We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.
- We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.
- We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.
- Our college is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.
- Our college has robust human resources and recruitment practices for

all staff and volunteers.

- Our college is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.
- We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.
- We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

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

### Our students

This policy is intended to empower students who are vital and active participants in our college. We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our college, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular we:

promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children  
promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds  
ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

### Our staff and volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our college.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to sign and abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.



### Training and supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our college understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our college culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be inducted and will be supervised regularly 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 the college's code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

### Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsi-

bilities. Our college understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. Please see the Working with Children Check website [www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) for further information.

We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the recruitment process is complete. We do retain our own records (but not the actual criminal record) if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision making process.

If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

### Fair procedures for personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as a college take.

## Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

## Legislative responsibilities

Our college takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

**Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.

**Failure to protect:** People of authority in our college will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

Any personnel who are **mandatory reporters** must comply with their duties.

## Risk management

In Victoria, schools are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.



We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include:

- risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock). Staff to keep doors open when meeting with individual students or they should be visible to others through glass or windows,
  - online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in college on social media, excluding the college email)
  - monitor student interactions in the college grounds between the Primary and Secondary students (for example, boys/girls improper interactions, senior students with junior students)
  - toilet/change room facilities are assigned by age groups and strictly ensure that senior students do not use the junior students toilets/change rooms
  - toilet/change room facilities are assigned for males and females separately, strictly ensure that male students only use the male facilities and female students only use female facilities
  - students are not allowed to remain in the classroom during recess or lunch times without appropriate supervision
  - staff are to be vigilant with regards to isolated areas in the college to avoid possible harassment or bullying
  - students hugging staff or vice versa is prohibited, even if it is part of the person's culture
  - staff are to maintain a professional staff/student relationship at all times
  - male teachers are not to touch or tap Secondary female students
  - female teachers are not to touch or tap Secondary male students
  - college must seriously investigate any accusations made by students or staff members
  - college must take measures to protect any student or staff member who reports any concerns and ensure they are safe.
- Refer to related policies in this regards, such as the Social Media Policy, Electronic Devices and Internet Use Policy, OHS Policy, Emergency Management Plan,

Child safety policy and Statement of Commitment... etc.

## Regular review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

## Allegations, concerns and complaints

Our college takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

Besides the college, all staff members have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above) and refer to the procedure for reporting child abuse in the college's Mandatory Reporting Policy.

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observed
- someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it observing suspicious behaviour.

# PROTECT

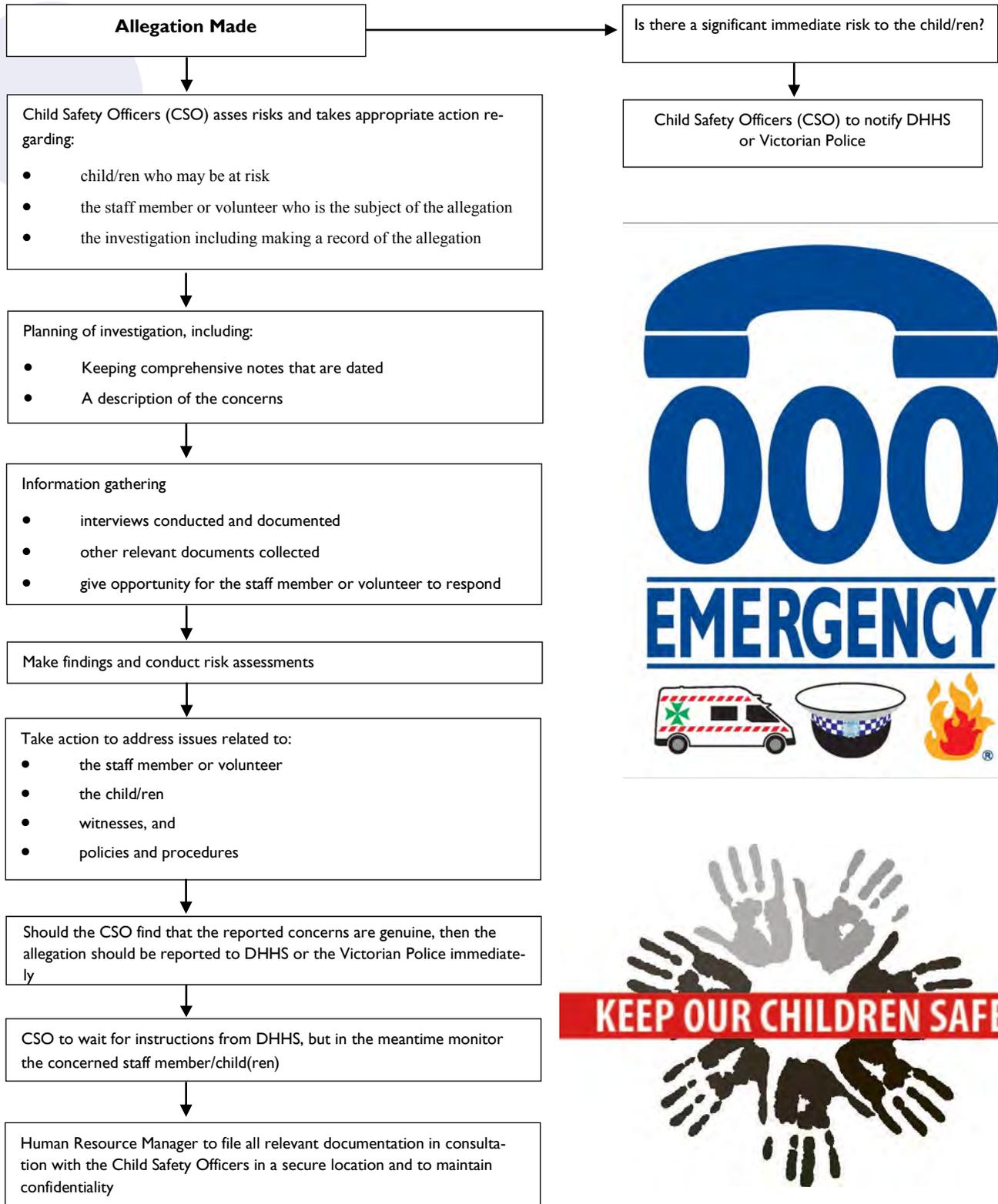
Protecting children & young people from abuse is our responsibility



# Steps in the investigating and reporting process

## I) Investigation

The flow chart below provides an overview of the key actions that the college will observe when responding to and investigating a reportable allegation against a staff member or volunteer and notifying the concerned departments accordingly.



Continue..

## b) Reporting

**Step 1-** In case of emergency or if a child is in immediate danger contact Triple Zero (000) or the local police station. Alternatively, to report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hours 7 days, toll free)

**Step 2-** Keep comprehensive notes that are dated and include the following information: a description of the concerns (e.g. physical injuries, student behaviour) the source of those concerns (e.g. observation, report from child or another person). The actions taken as a result of the concerns (e.g. consultation with principal, report to DHHS Child Protection etc.).

**Step 3-** Discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with one of the Child Safety Officers. The individual staff member should then make their own assessment about whether they should make a report about the child or young person and to whom the report should be made.

**Step 4-** Gather the relevant information necessary to make the report. This should include the following information:

- Full name, date of birth, and residential address of the child or young person
- The details of the concerns and the reasons for those concerns
- The individual staff member's involvement with the child and young person
- Details of any other agencies who may be involved with the child or young person.

**Step 5-** Make a report to the relevant agency

To report concerns that are life threatening phone 000 or the local police station. To report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit to DHHS Child Protection, call the Child Protection Crisis Line on 13 12 78 (24 hrs 7 days, toll free)

**Step 6-** Make a written record of the report which includes the following information:

- The date and time of the report and a summary of what was reported.
- The name and position of the person who made the report and the person who received the report.

**Step 7-** Notify the relevant Child Safety Officer of the report to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST.

In the case of international students, the principal must notify the Department's International Education Division on (03) 9637 2990 to ensure that appropriate support is arranged for the student.

In the case of Koorie students, the principal must notify the Regional Office to ensure that the regional Koorie support officer can arrange appropriate support for the student.

Find attached a copy of the college's Allegations Against Staff or Volunteers Form at the end of this newsletter.



# Code of Conduct

The code of conduct outlines expected standards for appropriate behaviour with and in the company of children, including online conduct.

The purpose of a child safety code of conduct:

- is intended to promote child safety in the school environment.
- spells out professional boundaries and acceptable and unacceptable adult/child relationships and behaviour. It should be unambiguous, widely disseminated and supported by supervision, professional development and training.
- helps schools, staff and volunteers to raise behavioural issues. It provides a reference point for discussion when there may otherwise be confusion, uncertainty, or a lack of confidence about boundaries for appropriate behaviour with children.

The code of conduct is consistent with the college's child safety strategies, policies and procedures. It is developed in consideration of the diversity of the students enrolled at the college, including children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and vulnerable children. In considering this diversity, children must always be protected from harm.

The college uses this code of conduct:

- as part of induction training for new staff and volunteers
- as part of refresher training for existing staff and volunteers
- to inform parents/carers and other persons associated with the college what behaviour they can expect from the college's staff and volunteers
- to support and inform college protocols and reporting procedures should breaches of the code be suspected or identified

## Acceptable Behaviours

All staff, volunteers and board members of the Islamic College of Melbourne are required to observe child safe principles and

expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of the Islamic College of Melbourne are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to the Islamic College of Melbourne child safe policy at all times / upholding the Islamic College of Melbourne's statement of commitment to child safety at all time
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Islamic College of Melbourne's Child Safety Officers and ensuring any allegations are reported to the police or child protection
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to

mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*

- reporting any child safety concerns to the Islamic College of Melbourne's Child Safety Officers
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child/ren are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant college activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

## Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff and volunteers must not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometime, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children

Continue..

## ICOM Newsletter

- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of our college without our child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate)
- have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters or communicating with students through the college emailing system to assist students with their work)
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs

- consume alcohol or drugs at the college or at college events in the presence of children.

### **Reporting or Raising Concerns about Staff or Volunteer Conduct**

Any student or staff member who has concerns regarding staff or volunteer conduct must report this concern to the Child Safety Officers using the report template for this purpose. The issue will be investigated and if the findings indicate any grounds or doubt in respect of the conduct of the staff member or volunteer, this will be immediately reported. Below is the process for investigation any reported concerns and how the college handles them:

#### **a) Response to Allegations**

When responding to allegations about a staff member or volunteer, the Child Safety Officers should immediately look into the matter. However, any allegation of reportable conduct to be made against the Principal needs to be made to the Chairman of the School Board.

#### **b) Steps in the investigative process**

Please refer to the flow chart located in Policy 14.3.5. Responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse.

#### **c) Risk Assessment**

When an incident is reported or observed the Child Safety Officers will:-

conduct an initial and subsequent risk assessment, including an assessment of the safety of the child/ren concerned;

decide what action, if any, e.g. suspension, is to be taken regarding the employee who has had an allegation made against them, and

assess and monitor the risk of continued access of the employee (who has had an allegation made or conviction recorded against them), to children attending the School.

#### **d) Documentation and Record Keeping**

All documents held by the college and relating to an allegation or conviction of reportable conduct or details of behaviour that does not constitute reportable conduct will be kept on a strictly confidential basis.

Should the Department of Human Services or Victorian Police be notified in accordance with the college's obligations, the related documents will be kept indefinitely and stored in a secure location separate to the employee's file.

The Human Resource Manager in consultation with the Child Safety Officers will be responsible for keeping and storing all records relating to all matters addressed by this code of conduct and only those persons whom the college is obliged to advise of this information or need to be aware of the contents of such documents will have access to them.

## Where can I go for more information and support?

You can contact DHHS Child Protection and Victoria Police directly to discuss any concerns you may have for the wellbeing of a child. If you have any concerns about your child or another child at your child's school talk to the principal or another staff member at the school about your concerns. You can also raise this matter with DHHS Child Protection and the Victoria Police.

For further information on where to go for support to keep your children safe from harm visit the Victorian Government's Better Health Channel: <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/parenting-support-to-help-prevent-abuse>

For more information on:

- your child's school's role in preventing and managing child abuse: [www.education.vic.gov.au/protect](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/protect)
- indicators of abuse, visit [www.education.vic.gov.au/protect](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/protect)

If you are concerned or unsure about your school's response and/or would like to talk to someone outside of the school please contact:

- Victorian Government schools Regional Office ([www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/regions.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/Pages/regions.aspx))
- Catholic Schools local Diocesan education office ([www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/About-Us/Dioceses](http://www.cecv.catholic.edu.au/About-Us/Dioceses))
- Independent Schools Victoria ([www.is.vic.edu.au/who-we-are/contact-us/](http://www.is.vic.edu.au/who-we-are/contact-us/))



## Allegations against Staff, Contractors, External Providers, Visitors or Volunteers Form

### Incident Report - Child Safety

The child safe standards require organisations that provide services for children to have processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse. Parents, students, staff, volunteer or other members of the college community can use this form to disclose an allegation of abuse or safety concern at the college or to record disclosures.

All incident reports are stored securely and will be dealt with in a confidential manner.

#### Incident details

Name of person reporting the incident:	
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.

Does the child identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

No  Yes, Aboriginal  Yes, Torres Strait Islander

Please categorise the incident

Physical violence

Sexual offence

Serious emotional or psychological abuse

Serious neglect

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

Please describe the incident

When did it take place?	
Who was involved?	
What did you see?	
Other information	

Parent/carer/child use

Date of incident:	
Time of incident:	
Location of incident:	
Name(s) of child/children involved:	
Name(s) of staff/volunteer involved:	

Office use:

Date incident report received:	
Staff member managing incident:	
Follow-up date:	
Incident ref. number:	

Has the incident been reported?

Child protection	
Police	
Another third party (please specify):	

Incident reporter wishes to remain anonymous?

(Mark with an 'X' as applicable)

Yes  No

Reporter's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Child Safety Officer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Human Resource Manager Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Faith Knowledge Success

Updated: 1/8/16

Would you like to leave some feedback about this newsletter? If so please let us know by emailing to: [k.khairul@icom.vic.edu.au](mailto:k.khairul@icom.vic.edu.au)