



SOPHIA
MUNDI

Steiner Education and IB World School

Child Safety Policy

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1 CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Sophia Mundi is a child-safe school and is committed to meeting our legal duty of care to children. Every child, without discrimination, has a right to feel and be safe.

Our School is a place where children are nurtured and supported, so that they can develop their latent capacities and grow into well-rounded human beings. This can happen only when our children are safe and feel safe. We are therefore committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We do not tolerate any form of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures. We take appropriate actions to protect the safety of children from physical, sexual, emotional, racial and cultural or religious abuse, and from neglect. We identify risks early to prevent child abuse.

We are committed to the cultural safety of all of our children, including Aboriginal children and children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and we are committed to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome.

This overarching policy is underpinned by more detailed policies, which are available on our website: <http://www.sophiamundi.vic.edu.au>

Our Child Protection Policy provides a rigorous policy framework for complying with our moral and legal obligations to prevent child abuse and report child safety concerns. In addition, we have numerous other policies directed to ensure the safety of children, identifying and minimising risks to the safety of children, and dealing with incidents affecting the safety of children, should they occur.

We recognise that the world is changing quickly, and new kinds of risks to child safety regularly arise. We are committed to regularly reviewing and amending our policies, and developing new policies, in a timely way to address new risks as and when they arise, and to ensure that our policies are appropriate to dealing with all known risks.

All staff and volunteers must ensure that their behaviours and actions respect, protect and safeguard children; and must abide by our Child Safety Code of Conduct (set out below).

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone who works at or with Sophia Mundi understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility, and understands our Child Safety Policy, Child Protection Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct. Our School works to create a culture in which everyone feels comfortable to discuss suspicions or allegations of child abuse or other child safety issues. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We have a rigorous recruitment process directed to employing excellent teachers and staff who will create a safe environment for children. Our recruitment process includes police checks and detailed reference checks. Additionally, we ensure that all persons working at or with our School, including volunteers, hold a working with children check as required by the *Working with Children Act 2005*.

2 CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Sophia Mundi requires all staff, volunteers (including Board members), parents, guardians and carers to observe our expectation that children will be safe, and will feel safe, at school and at all other times when they are in the care of Sophia Mundi.

Staff and volunteers must support the safety of children by:

- doing all things possible to ensure that children are safe;
- respecting children for who they are, in all their diversity;
- adhering to Sophia Mundi's Child Safety Policy and Child Protection Policy;
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from child abuse, and reporting any form of child abuse
- reporting any other child safety concern;
- making sure that, if there is any child safety concerns, including any allegation or concern about child abuse, all relevant children are safe;
- listening carefully to children at all times, particularly if what they are telling you relates to the safety of a child;
- not tolerating any form of discrimination.

Staff and volunteers must not:

- do anything that creates a risk of child abuse;
- tolerate any form of child abuse;
- fail to take reasonable steps to protect children from abuse;
- fail to report suspected or actual child abuse or child safety concerns;
- engage in any form of discrimination in relation to a child, or in a child's presence.

3 REGULAR REVIEW

The Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct will be reviewed and improved by the Board each year, in consultation with the children, the College of Teachers and the parent body. They may be reviewed more often as the need arises.

4 ALLEGATIONS, CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Our Child Protection Policy is available on the website, and contains detailed reporting requirements, especially for staff.

However, if you are aware of any child safety concern, and are unsure of the appropriate reporting mechanism, please contact the Principal.

5 LEGAL AND REGULATORY BASIS FOR COMPLIANCE

Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015 (Vic.)

Ministerial Order 870 January 2016 (Vic.)

Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards: Mandated Registration Requirements

Crimes Act 1958 (amended) (Vic.)

Betrayal of Trust Report 2014 (Vic.)

Working with Children Act 2005.

Date Implemented	
Author	Emrys Nekvapil/ Fiona Cock
Approved By	Board of Directors Emrys Nekvapil – 2016 Kerry Laughton – June 2019
Communication	School webpage
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Responsible for Review	Kerry Laughton (Chair of Board of Directors)
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