



CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

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1. Purpose and Scope

The Child Safe Environment Policy (the Policy) aims to describe the child safe environment principles and practices at Temple Christian College (the College or School), including an outline of roles and responsibilities.

Temple Christian College acknowledges child protection is paramount, and every child and young person has the right to be always safe from harm or risk of harm.

The Policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, work experience students, children, young people, and families (collectively referred to throughout the Policy as workers and personnel).

Workers and personnel will be required to meet all requirements in accordance with this policy, which is accessible to all members of the School community via the School website and/or on request.



2. Background

Whilst the primary responsibility for the child or young person's welfare lies with the child's family, the College acknowledges child safe environments is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by all sectors of our school community. Sharing responsibility for the care and protection of children helps to develop a stronger, more child-focused community.

The College is committed to the safety of children and young people, and will ensure:

- That children and young people are valued, respected and encouraged to participate and that the safety and protection of children and young people is always the first priority. Examples include ensuring that the curriculum addresses student agency where children and young people are informed about their rights, their representation on student leadership committees, encouraged to participate in decisions affecting them, and are taken seriously;
- Compliance with the [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017](#), [Child Safety \(Prohibited Persons\) Act 2016](#) and the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#).
- Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated; and
- Information about services that can assist children and young people are displayed in areas accessible to children and young people.

The College recognises principles of good practice which state that a child safe organisation:

- Takes a preventative, proactive and participatory stance on child protection issues where the safety and wellbeing of children is the paramount consideration when developing activities, policies and management practices;
- Is one that values and embraces the opinions and views of children;
- Encourages and assists children to build skills that will assist them to participate in society; and
- Takes action to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological harm or risk of harm.

The College is also committed to adhering to legal obligations promoting the safety, wellbeing and participation of children and young people. This includes:

- Supporting mandatory notifiers to report and respond to children and young people at risk of harm as outlined in the mandatory notification section;
- Ensuring safe environments for children and young people are maintained; and
- Lodging a Child Safe Environments Compliance Statement with the SA Department of Human Services.

In recognition of its duty of care to students, the College is committed to building a safe and supportive environment consistent with the above statements, and the College's biblical Christian values.

3. Role Responsibilities

Maintaining a child safe environment is the responsibility of the Board, the Principal and of all staff members. The School Board has the overarching responsibility for maintaining



a child safe environment for children and young people. At the school-level, workers and personnel have different responsibilities, including requirements relating to mandatory reporting, as outlined below:

Responsibilities of the Principal

The Principal is responsible for the following:

- promoting child protection wherever possible, and ensuring that child protection is included regularly in staff training;
- ensuring that child protection is included in the school's curriculum;
- when a mandatory report has been made, assisting staff to complete site documentation, and then signing the mandatory notification record and ensuring this is stored correctly;
- ensuring that students and staff receive adequate support if involved in a harm or risk of harm situation;
- ensuring that staff are supported when making a mandatory report; and
- ensuring that staff and volunteers have completed Working with Children Checks (WWCC) and Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect (RHAAN) training, and that third parties have completed WWCCs where required.

Responsibilities of Staff

All staff of the School community are responsible for the following:

- reporting any suspected harm or risk of harm to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78;
- advising the Principal when a report has been made (unless the report involves the Principal in which case it should be reported to a senior leader);
- when concerning behaviour has been observed, the worker or personnel who witnessed it must alert an appropriate senior staff member;
- taking action if children and young people have disclosed information about inappropriate behaviours of other adults.

4. Code of Conduct and Professional Boundaries

Temple Christian College has developed a Child Safe Environment Code of Conduct (separate document) using Department of Human Services and AISSA resource guides, to specify standards of conduct and care, professional boundaries, ethical behaviour, and unacceptable behaviour when working and interacting with children.

This is based on information outlined in the [Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people guidelines](#). The aim is to provide guidance to workers and personnel on how best to support students, and how to avoid or manage difficult situations. The Code of Conduct applies to all workers and personnel (where relevant) and breaches of the Code may result in disciplinary action or, in the case of serious breaches, dismissal.

For Workers and Personnel Compulsory behaviour



- Must comply with the school's Child Safe Environment Policy;
- Must behave as positive role models to students;
- Must promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students;
- Must promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability;
- Suspicions of harm or risk of harm must be reported to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL – 13 14 78) and to the Principal, or to an appropriate member of senior leadership if the situation involves the Principal;
- Concerning behaviour or breaches of the Child Safe Environment Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal, or to an appropriate member of senior leadership if the breach concerns the Principal. The Principal (or other person) will be responsible for developing an appropriate plan of action and ensuring it is followed;
- Students must be treated with respect and encouraged to speak up and participate;
- Actions must be undertaken transparently and with the knowledge and consent of the Principal;
- When working one-on-one with children and young people, actions must be:
 - **Public** – ensure the environment is visible, public and busy. Use the site's authorised ICT systems;
 - **Authorised** – parents must be informed and have given consent and the activity must be authorised by the Principal;
 - **Timely** – the activity must be a legitimate part of your role, support must be provided within normal work hours where possible, and sessions should be concise and not unnecessarily prolonged; and
 - **Purposeful** – the activity should address or be linked to an identified wellbeing and/or learning need of the child or young person.
- Manage challenging behaviour through non-physical intervention, such as directing other children and young people to move away from the situation, talking to the child, directing the child or young person to a safe place, and directing other children to a safe place. Physical restraint should only be used as a last resort and must only be used when the safety of a child or young person or adult is threatened. Physical restraint must not be used as a response to property destruction, disruption to the education or care activity, refusal to comply, verbal threats, leaving an education care setting, or a need to maintain good order unless someone's safety is clearly threatened;
- Become as familiar as possible with the values of various cultural groups enrolled at the College, as different cultures have different attitudes and traditions surrounding the concept of appropriate touch; and
- Ensure that the privacy of students is respected, and that personal information is managed in accordance with the school's Privacy Policy.

Unacceptable behaviour

- Failure to act when an allegation of harm or risk of harm is made, including failure to report the allegation;
- Failure to intervene in situations where sexual harassment is occurring;
- Inappropriate comments about a child or young person's appearance, including excessive flattering comments;
- Inappropriate comments, conversations or enquiries of a sexual nature;



- Use of inappropriate nicknames;
- Obscene gestures and/or language;
- Jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature;
- Facilitating/permitting access to pornographic material;
- Facilitating/permitting access to sexually explicit material that is not part of an endorsed curriculum;
- Correspondence of a personal nature via any medium (including phone, text message, letters, email, social media, internet posts) that is unrelated to your role. This does not include class cards or bereavement cards;
- Discussing personal lifestyle details or your opinions, other staff or children and young people unless directly relevant to the learning topic and with the individual's consent;
- Corporal punishment (for example, physical discipline or smacking);
- Inappropriate use of physical restraint/restrictive practices;
- Unwarranted or unwanted touching of a child or young person personally or with objects (for example, pencil or ruler);
- Initiating, permitting or requesting inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person (for example, massage, kisses, tickling games) or facilitating situations that unnecessarily result in close physical contact with a child or young person;
- Inviting/allowing/encouraging children and young people to attend your home;
- Attending children and young people's homes or their social gatherings;
- Being alone with a child or young person outside your responsibilities;
- Entering change rooms or toilets occupied by children or young people when supervision is not required or appropriate;
- Transporting a child or young person unaccompanied and without written permission of parent or guardian;
- Using toilet facilities allocated to children and young people;
- Undressing using facilities allocated to children and young people, or in their presence;
- Tutoring (outside the school's directions or knowledge);
- Giving personal gifts or special favours;
- Singling the same children and young people out for special duties and responsibilities;
- Privately giving money and/or gifts to individual children/young people;
- Photographing, audio recording or filming children or young people via any medium when not authorised by the site leader to do so and without required parental consent and consent of child or young person;
- Using personal rather than school equipment for approved activities, unless authorised by the site leader to do so;
- Correspondence or communication (via any medium) to or from children and young people where a violation of professional boundaries is indicated and where the correspondence has not been provided to the Principal/leader via the staff member;
- Still/moving images or audio recordings of children and young people on personal equipment or kept in personal locations such as car or home that have not been authorised by the Principal;



- Uploading or publishing still/moving images or audio recordings of children and young people to any location, without child/young persons, parental and site leader's consent;
- Creating or using private chat rooms; and
- Filing/recording students for the use of behaviour training/modification without obtaining prior permission from the Principal, child/young person and parents.

5. Recruitment, Selection, Screening and Background Checks

Temple Christian College adheres to the requirements of the [Child Safety \(Prohibited Persons\) Act 2016](#) which requires that staff and volunteers have a current, 'not prohibited' Working with Children Check issued by the Department of Human Services (DHS) Screening Unit.

The College will ensure that all workers and personnel (i.e., employees, volunteers, service users and third parties) have a current Working with Children Check, and that these are updated every 5 years. Verification will be done online through the Organisation Portal via the DHS Screening Unit. The College will not employ a person or allow someone to volunteer unless a Working with Children Check has been conducted in the preceding 5 years.

In order to thoroughly incorporate Child Safe Environment principles, key strategies are in place to screen and assess potential employees and volunteers. These include:

- position descriptions with a commitment to child safety and wellbeing.
- undertaking face-to-face interviews.
- confirming qualifications.
- requesting referee reports and obtaining reference checks.

During their period of engagement or employment with the School, the following strategies are also in place for ongoing training and awareness. These include:

- child safe environment information, policies and procedures included in the induction of new staff.
- completion and renewal of the child safety training 'Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect for Education and Care' every 3 years.
- completion of the training 'Protective Practices'.
- child safety items raised regularly on meeting agendas.
- child safety information and timely reminders communicated regularly via appropriate channels, including emails, meetings, online platforms and newsletters.
- child safety information accessible online via the school website and the staff handbook.

The College will advise the DHS Screening Unit when the organisation becomes aware of certain information regarding any person involved with the College, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

6. Mandatory Reporting

Temple Christian College adheres to the requirements of the [Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017](#). Mandated notifiers in the College are any worker or personnel



who:

- provide services directly to children or young people, or;
- hold a management position in the College the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children and young people.

Mandated notifiers have a legal obligation to report a reasonable belief that a child or young person is being or has been harmed or is at risk of harm. Even if not a mandated notifier, anyone can make a voluntary report to authorities. The person who identifies the harm is the person to make the report.

Any other general complaints not regarding harm or risk of harm to children or young people are to follow the school's Complaints and Dispute Resolution procedure (available on the School website) and is not to be confused with this.

Reporting

A reasonable belief of suspected harm or risk of harm must be reported via CARL by phoning 13 14 78. The telephone line is available 24 hours a day. If a child or young person is at immediate risk, call SA Police on 000.

The following information is required to be provided when making a report to CARL:

- the child's name, age, date of birth and address;
- a description of the injury, harm or risk of harm (current and previous);
- the child's current situation;
- the location of the child, parent or caregiver and alleged perpetrator; and
- when and how you found out about the harm or risk of harm.

Non-Serious Concerns

Non-serious concerns can be reported via [eCARL](#), which is the online child protection reporting system.

School Records and Support

The College will maintain records of all mandated reports made utilising relevant systems, with appropriate permission levels applied to restrict access due to the sensitive information. The College will also ensure that adequate support is provided to the student involved, including referrals to appropriate services and continuing to monitor their circumstances following the report.

It is a requirement that following a report to authorities as above, the Principal be informed of any mandatory notifications made. This will ensure that the Principal can put in place the appropriate action to support the child or young person. If the concerns or allegations raised in the notification involve the Principal, then an appropriate member of senior leadership must be informed instead.

If a worker or personnel in the College has caused harm to children and young people, and following a report to authorities, the worker/personnel will be removed from any role



that has contact with children and young people until authorities have concluded their investigation.

Failure to Report

The [Statutes Amendment \(Child Sexual Abuse\) Act 2021](#) established criminal offences of:

1. Failure to report child sexual abuse: a prescribed person is guilty of an offence if they fail to report to police that they know or suspect that another person (the abuser) is an employee of Temple Christian College and is, has, or is likely to sexually abuse a child; and
2. Failure to protect a child from sexual abuse: a prescribed person is guilty of an offence if they know there is a substantial risk that another person, who is also an employee, will engage in the sexual abuse of a child; and the prescribed person has the power or responsibility to reduce or remove that risk but negligently fails to do so.

These offences carry a penalty of imprisonment. It is critical that all Temple Christian College workers and personnel understand their legal obligations.

The offences have been created because the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse found that historically institutions working with children under-reported suspicions of child sexual abuse to police when a staff member was involved.

7. Reporting Complaints and Resolving Disputes

Temple Christian College is committed to ensuring that all disputes and complaints raised within the school community are dealt with promptly in a responsive, sensitive, objective, confidential and fair way.

The school views complaints and disputes as part of an important feedback and accountability process to help improve performance, systems, and service delivery.

Any member of the community will be able to provide feedback or make a complaint by completing the Complaints and Dispute Resolution form that is available via the school website.

The overall procedure for reviewing any complaint raised with the school will involve:

1. The school receiving a complaint via a completed Complaints and Dispute Resolution form.
2. The school investigates the complaint which may include interviewing the parties involved, any witnesses/bystanders identified, and others related to the incident.
3. The school determines an outcome, of which the following may be considered:
 - A review of relevant school policies, procedures, or processes.
 - Application of a variety of consequences depending on the severity of the circumstance.
 - Contacting a third party, if required by law, or where an immediate threat has been identified to someone such as contacting the SA Police.
 - Any other action deemed necessary and appropriate by the school.



4. Relevant parties will be updated throughout the process, including the final outcome, using sensitivity, confidentiality and in accordance with the school's privacy policy.
5. The incident will be documented and securely stored in accordance with the school's record management procedure.

Throughout the above process, the school is committed to ensuring procedural fairness is adhered to and followed and that additional support and information is available to impacted members of the school community, and where required. Additional support may include referring to external services, government or community agencies where needed.

8. Risk Management

To help maintain a safe environment for children and young people, Temple Christian College will review its risks regularly and implement strategies to minimise and manage these risks.

9. Vulnerable Students

Temple Christian College acknowledges that there are vulnerable students who may be at a higher risk of experiencing harm or risk of harm due to their circumstances. These students may struggle with advocating for themselves or communicating their experiences to other people. Vulnerable students include students with disability, students in care and new arrival students.

The College will ensure that:

- School staff will consult with a student with disability, their parent and/or other associates (such as external allied health professionals). During consultation, staff will discuss the impact of the disability to assess the student's ability to advocate for themselves;
- Staff will be mindful of the individual circumstances of vulnerable students and will be mindful of the potential signs of harm or risk of harm that vulnerable students may exhibit; and
- Individual student needs and circumstances will be considered when teaching the child protection curriculum. This includes being mindful of and sensitive to cultural differences.

10. Online Safety

Temple Christian College acknowledges and accepts its responsibility to ensure that children are protected from harm when participating online.

The College is committed to following the requirements outlined in the [Responding to Online Safety Incidents in South Australian Schools Guideline](#) and to creating a safer online environment by developing and implementing policies and resources that will be used.

The following has been developed by the College to support online safe practices:

- Responsible Use of Information and Communication Technology Resources for Staff/Students.



- Photo and Video Policy
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy (using AISSA resource guides)

These documents are accessible via the school website.

11. Policy Review

The College's Child Safe Environment Policy and other related policies will be reviewed regularly every 2-5 years for currency. These policies will also be reviewed and updated when the school:

- Expands the services it offers to children and young people;
- Undergoes a substantial change to the responsible or managing authority; or
- Experiences an event or incident where children or young people were or could have been at risk of harm.

When changes are made to policies related to child safety, the College will relodge its Compliance Statement with the SA Department of Human Services.

12. Additional Resources

Related Temple Christian College Policies and Procedures

- Child Safe Environment Code of Conduct
- Responsible Use of Information and Communication Technology Resources for Staff/Students
- Photo and Video Policy
- Mandatory Notification Procedure in SEQTA
- Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Legislative

[Children and Young People \(Safety\) Act 2017](#)

[Child Safety \(Prohibited Persons\) Act 2016](#)

[Statutes Amendment \(Child Sexual Abuse\) Act 2021](#)

[Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935 \(SA\)](#)

[Equal Opportunity Act 1984 \(SA\)](#)

[Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Cth\)](#)

[Teacher Registration and Standards Act 2004 \(SA\)](#)

[Education and Early Childhood Services \(Registration and Standards\) Act 2011\(SA\)](#)

[Education Act 2013 \(Cth\)](#)

[Disability Discrimination Act 1992 \(Cth\)](#)

Relevant Conventions

[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)

[The United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child](#)

Relevant Standards and Frameworks

[Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

[National Quality Framework](#)

[Safe & Supported: The National Framework for Protecting Australia's Children 2021 - 2031](#)



[Child Safe Organisations National Principles](#)
[Disability Standards for Education 2005](#)
[Homestay Standards](#)

Relevant Cross Sector Guidelines

[Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people](#)
[Managing allegations of sexual misconduct in SA education and care settings](#)
[Responding to problem sexual behaviour in children and young people](#)

Relevant Guidelines / Training

- *Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care via*
<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/rrhan-ec/fundamentals-course-responding-risks-harm-abuse-and-neglect-education-and-care>
- *Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people guidelines for staff working or volunteering via*
<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/doc/protective-practices-staff-their-interactions-children-and-young-people>