



**ST DOMINIC'S
PRIORY COLLEGE**

EDUCATING GIRLS, INSPIRING CONFIDENCE

inspiring confidence

ST DOMINIC'S PRIORY COLLEGE

CHILD & YOUNG PERSON SAFE ENVIRONMENTS POLICY

LAST REVIEW DATE	NEXT REVIEW DATE
June 2024	June 2027
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	College Principal

St Dominic's Priory College Ltd | Est 1884 | ABN: 25 085 110 379 | CRICOS: 01102G

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We acknowledge St Dominic's Priory College is situated on Kurna Land and we pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.



PREFACE

COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

St Dominic's Priory College ('the College') has zero tolerance to children and young people coming to harm of any kind. The safeguarding of our children and young people is intrinsic to our Dominican identity, and College Vision Statement:

Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ, we are a girls' College committed to truth and compassion. In the spirit of St Dominic, we contemplate the possibilities and honour the sacred dignity of each person through word and action. We aspire to provide an innovative, rigorous and inclusive education that leads girls and young women to achieve excellence in their studies and confidence in their future.

As Dominicans, the College is actively invested in fostering a community of safeguarding that recognises and upholds the dignity and rights of all children and young people. In alignment with the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, the *Children & Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, and the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, the College is further committed to creating and maintaining a child safe environment, wherein:

- Every person within the College who interacts with children and young people commits to establishing safe and supportive relationships.
- Diversity within our community is respected, and each child and young person is valued and treated equitably.
- Children and young people are well-informed of their right to feel safe and know who to talk with if they have concerns or are feeling unsafe.
- Activities with children are proactively planned, organised and reviewed; with potential risks duly considered, reduced and eliminated where possible.
- Our Community of Staff and Volunteers actively seek to become, and remain informed, of the causes and signs of harm or risks of harm to children and young people, and the strategies to prevent, safeguard against, or respond effectively.

Further information about the College's principles and objectives can be found within the [2021 – 2025 Strategic Plan](#).

To read the College's **Safeguarding Commitment Statement** in full, and access *College Policies, Procedures* and other resources, please [click here](#).

GOVERNANCE

Dominican Education Australia (DEA) is the governing authority of St Dominic's Priory College, an independent Catholic School. A Board of Directors, established in 1987, governs the College which is incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001 (Cwlth)*. The Trustees of DEA and the College Board of Directors assures our Catholicity, fidelity to the Dominican charism, formation of Board members, excellence in teaching and learning and financial stability.

For more information about DEA visit: <https://dominicaneducationaustralia.com/>

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 St Dominic's Priory College (the 'College') is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who access our service and sites. The College recognises the importance of having a well-established environment, where all children and young people are valued and safe.
- 1.2 This Policy aims to ensure that all relevant stakeholders involved in the College are aware of their duty of care responsibilities associated with providing a safe and secure environment. The College aims to establish an organisation-wide approach to all matters relating to safeguarding children and young people. Our approach involves all persons working at the College adhering to community policies. This is achieved by encouraging active participation in promoting and maintaining a safe and secure environment for all children and young people.

2. COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 2.1 This Policy is in accordance with the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, along with the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards. St Dominic's Priory College is dedicated to guaranteeing the safety and protection of all children and young people.
- 2.2 St Dominic's Priory College is committed to ensuring all children and young people are respected and valued, and encouraged to participate regardless of their gender, abilities, socio-economic or cultural background. Equity is upheld at St Dominic's Priory College, and the College also has zero tolerance for any bullying or harassment.
- 2.3 Posters displaying the key contact information for services that can assist children and young people are displayed across the campus. Services include:

BEYOND BLUE
beyondblue.org.au
 1300 224 636

1800 RESPECT
1800respect.org.au
 1800 737 732

CONVERSATIONS MATTER
conversationsmatter.com.au

REACH OUT
au.reachout.com

HEADSPACE
headspace.org.au
 1800 650 890

SANE AUSTRALIA
sane.org
 1800 18 7263

KIDS HELP LINE
kidshelpline.com.au
 1800 0551 800

SUICIDE CALL BACK SERVICE
 1300 659 467

LIFELINE
lifeline.org.au
 13 11 14

YARROW PLACE
wchn.sa.gov.au/our-network/yarrow-place
1800 817 421

3. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 The following policy applies to all persons working within St Dominic's Priory College, including Board members, contract workers, volunteers, staff, students, and others associated with the College.

4. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Policy, key terms have been defined below.

- 4.1 **Child or young person** – persons under 18 years of age, or any student enrolled at the College.
- 4.2 **Harm** – Section 17 of the *Safety Act* defines 'harm' to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.
- 4.3 **Mandatory Notifiers** – People who are obliged by law to notify the Department for Child Protection SA via the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child is or has been harmed or is at risk of harm. Section 31 (1) of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* establishes mandated notifiers.
- 4.4 **Working with Children Check (WWCC)** – People working or volunteering with children in South Australia must, by law, have a valid, not prohibited Working with Children Check. A Working with Children Check is an assessment of whether a person poses an unacceptable risk to children. As part of the process, the Screening Unit will look at criminal history, child protection information and other information.

5. COMMUNICATION

- 5.1 This policy has been made publicly available on the St Dominic's Priory College website which is accessible to all children and young people, staff members, volunteers, families and any other key stakeholders. This policy can also be accessed via the College's internal Content Management Systems; SEQTA and SharePoint.

6. PARTICIPATION, FEEDBACK AND COMPLAINTS

- 6.1 St Dominic's Priory College encourages and respects the views of children and young people who access our services. The College has engaged children and young people's experiences by conducting a number of anonymous surveys in a year. These surveys capture student attitudes and feeling towards the service and facilities provided by the school such that the College effectively involve children and young people in decisions that affect them. They also provide children and young people with an avenue to raise matters, complaints and concerns.
- 6.2 St Dominic's Priory College ensures that children, young people and their families / carers know their rights and how they can access services, advice and complaints processes available to them.

- 6.3 All families also have the ability to provide anonymous feedback to the College at any point in time using provided online surveys. This feedback is incorporated into decision-making by the College. The College's Student Leadership Team and Student Representative Council (SRC) are also key avenues by which elected students can raise concerns and provide their ideas and feedback. The College responds to complaints, ideas, and feedback promptly and fairly.

7. CODES OF CONDUCT

- 7.1 All employees, volunteers and contractors working with St Dominic's Priory College are required to comply with the St Dominic's Priory College Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct is provided as part of the formal induction and onboarding process, and is also available on the internal network for staff (Sharepoint). Further to this, the College has the following Codes of Conduct:
- St Dominic's Priory College Code of Conduct
 - St Dominic's Priory College Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
 - SACCS Code of Conduct
- 7.2 Any person who believes, on reasonable grounds, that the Code of Conduct may have been breached are invited to refer to Section 6 of the Code.

8. RECRUITMENT

- 8.1 St Dominic's Priory College is committed to taking all reasonable steps to ensure that all persons recruited are the most suitable and appropriate to work and provide service to children and young people.
- 8.2 Applicants for prescribed positions will be screened for their suitability for employment purposes. The screening will involve the verification of Department of Human Services (DHS) Working with Children Checks, Catholic Education South Australia electronic screening, interviews, referee checks, Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (RRRHAN-EC) accreditation, checking qualifications and previous employment history in working with children.
- 8.3 These procedures are in accordance with the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016*, which requires staff and volunteers in the College to have a valid, 'not prohibited' Working with Children Check. During the induction process, all new employees / volunteers will be made clear regarding their responsibilities to children and young people, which include record keeping, information sharing, and reporting obligations. St Dominic's Priory College will verify all Working with Children Checks through the DHS Screening Unit portal before any person commences working with children and young people.
- 8.4 If St Dominic's Priory College is made aware of any serious criminal offence, child protection information or disciplinary or misconduct information regarding any of the staff, the College will notify the Screening Unit.

9. PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- 9.1 St Dominic's Priory College implements a variety of practices to support Staff members in the College to ensure a child-safe environment is achieved. This includes a comprehensive Induction, with access to all College policies, including policies relating to the safeguarding of children and young people. These policies are signed off as being read upon employment, and revisited regularly. The College provides professional learning for all staff that focuses on the wellbeing and safety of children and young people.

10. REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO HARM OR RISK OF HARM

- 10.1 St Dominic's Priory College ensures that those who are mandated notifiers, as per the *South Australian Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*, understand their obligations to notify the Department for Children's Protection's Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a suspicion on reasonable grounds that a child or young person has or is being harmed, or is at risk of harm.
- 10.2 Section 30 of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* establishes that the following people are mandated notifiers:
- medical practitioner
 - pharmacist
 - registered or enrolled nurse
 - dentist
 - psychologist
 - police officer
 - community corrections officer under the *Correctional Services Act 1982*
 - social worker
 - minister of religion
 - person who is an employee of, or volunteer in, an organisation formed for religious or spiritual purposes
 - teacher employed as such in a school (within the meaning of the *Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011*) or a preschool or kindergarten
 - employee of, or volunteer in, and organisation that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational, child care or residential services wholly or partly for children or young people, being a person who:
 - provides such services directly to children or young people
 - holds a management position in the organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of those services to children or young people
 - officer or employee of a prescribed organisation who holds a management position in the organisation, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of services to children.

- 10.3 St Dominic's Priory College is committed to ensuring that staff are able to identify, report, and respond to children and young people at risk of harm. The College ensures that all staff have a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC), valid and up to date RRHAN-EC training, and are provided a staff induction that goes over key aspects of the processes in place to support children and young people. The College recognises that the duty of care is not exhausted by making a notification, and that support might be required to enhance the child or young person's wellbeing when a notification is made, and will identify appropriate services for the child, young person and/or their family.
- 10.4 An internal report to the College Principal (or delegate) is made in conjunction with any formal report to external authorities. The process for internal reporting is communicated as part of the Staff Induction and included in the ongoing Safeguarding Professional Development program.
- 10.5 St Dominic's Priory College acknowledges that failure by mandated notifiers to report is an offence under the *South Australian Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* and carries a maximum penalty of a \$10,000 fine. According to the provisions of the *Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935* that came into effect on 1 June 2022 – Section 64A failure to report child sexual abuse results in a maximum penalty of three (3) years imprisonment, and Section 65 failure to protect a child from sexual abuse results in a maximum of 15 years imprisonment.

11. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 11.1 St Dominic's Priory College is committed to identifying and assessing potential sources of harm and takes actions to ensure the likelihood of the harm is decreased. The risk assessment tools will be utilised where appropriate to determine if a child or young person is at risk. Please view Appendix A for the Risk Management Plan to ensure a child-safe environment.

12. RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 12.1 The policies, codes and procedures listed below complement and support St Dominic's Priory College's Child Safe Environments Policy:
- St Dominic's Priory College Safeguarding Children and Young People Suite:
 - Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement
 - Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
 - Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct
 - Safeguarding Children Young People Terms of Reference
 - St Dominic's Priory College Staff Code of Conduct
 - St Dominic's Priory College Parent Code of Conduct
 - Professional Boundaries Policy for Staff Employed at St Dominic's Priory College
 - St Dominic's Priory College Whistleblower Policy
 - [SACCS Duty of Care Policy / Procedure](#)
 - [SACCS Reporting Harm of Children and Young People Procedure](#)

- [SACCS Procedure for Engaging and Inducting Volunteers](#)
- [SACCS Recruitment of Staff in Catholic Schools Procedure](#)
- [SACCS Student Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Policy 2022](#)
- [SACCS Engaging Contractors in Catholic Schools Procedure](#)
- [Sexual Behaviour in Children and Young People Procedure & Guideline 2022](#)

13. POLICY REVIEW

13.1 This policy document will be reviewed at least once every five (5) years in accordance with the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017*. St Dominic's Priory College will lodge a new Child Safe Environments Compliance Statement with the Department each time the policy is reviewed and updated. The Policy will also be reviewed if a need arises due to a critical incident, identification of new risks, or any other scenario that prompts the need for it.

14. REVISION RECORD

Document Title	Child Safe Environments Policy					
Document Type	Policy					
Document Date	May 2023					
Process Owner	College Principal					
Contact	Dr. Helen Steele (hsteele@stdominic.sa.edu.au)					
Approval Authority	College Leadership					
Review Date	2024; 2027					
Distribution	Website	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	SEQTA	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Sharepoint	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
History	Edition	Date	Description of change			
	1.0	2023	Drafted			
	2.0	2024	Reviewed			

APPENDIX A RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN



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RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Responsible Officer(s)	College Leadership	Date of Review	31 October 2022
Approved by	College Board of Directors	Date of Next Review	2025
Date	31 October 2022		
Organisation Name	St Dominic's Priory College		
Purpose	To ensure St Dominic's Priory College provides a child-safe environment for all children and young people.		
Locations	In the St Dominic's Priory College premises, Bus transportation, sports grounds and any other area where teaching, learning or extra-curricular activities are held.		

RISK NAME AND DESCRIPTION

ACTIONS TO MINIMISE RISK

Culture of the organisation is not child-safe focused

- Child-centred Codes of Conduct are in place that sets the behavioural standards expected, including what happens when a breach occurs.
- Culture of management reflects the strong commitment of the College to the safety of children and young people.
- All teaching staff at the College are accredited in the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum (KS:CPC)
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations are embedded in policies and procedures.
- We meet the requirements of the *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017* and the *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016* (which mandates Working with Children Checks).
- Our child safe environments policies and procedures are made available to staff, volunteers, children, young people and their families, via the College's website and internal database.
- Child Safeguarding Committee meets once a term to work through concerns, plan professional learning and review processes and practices.

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RISK NAME AND DESCRIPTION	ACTIONS TO MINIMISE RISK
<p>Organisational staff (including employees and volunteers) harm children / young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment processes including undertaking referee checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed / volunteer with our organisation is completed. Interview questions (no prior preparation) should gauge an applicant's understanding of Child Safe principles and actions that would be taken to prevent harm to children and young people. All employees and volunteers have WWCC with 'not prohibited' result prior to working with children and young people. WWC is updated every five (5) years. Information on the College's complaints and feedback processes, and a copy of our Child Safe Environments Policy is made available to children, young people, and their families.
<p>We hold overnight and/or off-site activities with children / young people.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For overnight activities (e.g. camps and excursions), children and young people must be supervised by a minimum of two (2) adults of the same gender as the children attending. Recruitment processes including undertaking referee checks to ensure the suitability of persons before they are employed / volunteer with the College is completed. All employees / volunteers over the age of 14 years have a 'not prohibited' WWCC.
<p>Children / young people do not feel included and children / young people and their families are not supported to report concerns, complaints and feedback.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children, young people and their families are encouraged to participate in our organisation and provide feedback by filling out anonymous surveys throughout the academic year that helps to express their concerns. The Grievance Policy is available on the College website, detailing on how complaints will be handled. Complaints processes are in place and promoted to children, young people and

RISK NAME AND DESCRIPTION	ACTIONS TO MINIMISE RISK
<p>College staff (including employees and volunteers) do not understand their obligations to report harm and risk of harm to the Child Abuse Report Line and SA Police if child/young person is at immediate risk or requiring an internal reporting process before meeting legal obligations to report to CARL.</p>	<p>their families to make sure that they feel safe reporting to the College.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All employees and volunteers must abide by the Child Safe Environments Policy and Code of Conduct (the latter being signed upon commencement with the College). • The College meets the requirements of the <i>Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017</i> (which mandates child safe environments) and the <i>Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016</i> (which mandates Working with Children Checks). • The Child Safe Environments Policy is reviewed at least once in every five-year period. When this happens, a new Child Safe Environments Compliance Statement is lodged with the Department of Human Services. • All staff in the College are required to go through the RRHAN-EC training which highlights these responsibilities.
<p>Any breach of privacy without consent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consent to take pictures / recordings of children and young people is sought from parents at time of enrolment. • Any events where photography is taken, children or young people who do not have photo permissions are noted and excluded accordingly. • Staff are required to seek authorisation from the College Principal (or delegate) before taking photos of students on personal devices. All photos of students captured on personal devices are required to be downloaded to the College network and promptly deleted from personal devices.
<p>Protecting privacy and confidentiality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any private or confidential information is only shared with staff members who must be notified about the information. • The College adheres to the SACCS Privacy Policy to deal with private and confidential information.

RISK NAME AND DESCRIPTION	ACTIONS TO MINIMISE RISK
<p>Engaging in online activities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate supervision is provided for all online activities • The College's IT Department has installed programs that enable sites that may cause harm to children and young people to be disabled. • Teachers monitor all students when they use computers in the computer labs. • Social media is blocked in the College on College devices, and while other devices have access to College internet services. • All students are required to adhere to the College's Mobile Phone Policy, which stipulates that personal electronic devices are not used during the school day, unless for an educational purpose that has been expressly directed/permitted by a staff member who then supervises the use. • Educational programs in line with the Child Protection Curriculum about online safety, are taught explicitly, within Pastoral Care programs and Information Evenings for parents / caregivers which are provided.