



Child Safe Environments Policy

Pilgrim School



Title	Child Safe Environments Policy
Version	1.1
Current Date of Last Review	2024
Proposed Review Date	2026
Related Legislation and Regulatory Requirements	<p>Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 Statutes Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse) Act 2021 (SA) 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) Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (including National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018) Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</p> <p>Relevant Conventions National Principles for Child Safe Organisations The United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child</p> <p>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</p>
Cross Sector Guidelines (SA)	<p>Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people Managing allegations of sexual misconduct in SA education and care settings Sexual Behaviour in Children and Young People Procedure, Guideline and Resources (SA, 2022) Responding to online safety incidents in South Australian schools Suicide Postvention Guidelines 2020</p>
Related School Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work, Health and Safety Policy • Volunteers Guidelines and Code of Conduct • Grievance Policy • Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy • Staff Selection Guidelines • New Staff Induction Checklist • Emergency and Critical Incident Procedure • Behaviour Support Policy • Camps Guidelines • External Providers Guidelines
Responsibility	Leadership Team
Status	Active
Approved by	

Date	Version	Revision Description – Prepared/ Reviewed
2023	1.0	Prepared by Julie Wicks
2024	1.1	Julie Wicks, Andrew Edmondson & Kristen Heath

Purpose

Children and young people have a right to be safe and protected at all times, including when accessing services in the community. We comply with both the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 and the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and align this policy with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Background

Pilgrim School believes that creating child safe environments is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by all sectors of the school community. Sharing responsibility for the care and protection of children helps to develop a stronger, more child-focused community.

Commitment to Creating a Child Safe Environment

Child safe environments are safe and friendly settings where children and young people are protected and feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Bullying and harassment of children and young people at Pilgrim School will not be tolerated.

Pilgrim School:

- is committed to the safety and protection of children as the first priority;
- 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;
- values and embrace the opinions and views of children and young people;
- is focused, and take action on, the protection of children and young people from harm;
- provides accessible information about services that can assist children;
- takes action to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional and psychological harm or risk of harm.

The commitment to protect and support children and young people is embedded in the School culture so that everyone is aware of their responsibilities.

Creating 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.

Legal Obligations

Pilgrim School is committed to promoting the safety, wellbeing and participation of children and young people. This includes:

- a commitment to supporting mandatory notifiers to report and respond to children and young people at risk of harm, 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.

Scope of policy

This policy applies to staff, volunteers, contractors (collectively referred to as workers) as well as students, children, young people and families. All workers are required to sign the Code of Conduct.

Communication

This Child Safe Environments policy and related documents are available on our website and are available to all workers as part of their induction following recruitment.

We encourage and respect the views of children and young people and involve them in decision making as appropriate. We provide clear age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanations to children and young people including their right to safety, their right to be listened to and that they can provide feedback or make a complaint if they have a concern, to any worker or ask their parent/guardian to do this on their behalf. We will listen to and act upon any complaints or concerns that a child or young person raises with us.

Definitions

Child or young person - persons under 18 years of age.

Workers - all employees, volunteers and contractors

Complainant – person who makes a complaint.

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.

National Police Check - a summary of an individual's offender history in Australia and a record of their criminal history relating to convictions, finding of guilt or pending court proceedings. They are available from South Australia Police (SAPOL) or organisations accredited by the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission.

Working with Children Check - 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.

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. At a school level, workers have different responsibilities, including requirements relating to mandatory reporting, as outlined below:

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;
- ensuring that staff are supported when making a mandatory report; and
- 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 and volunteers have completed Working with Children Checks and RRHAN-EC training, and that third parties have completed Working with Children Checks where required.

Workers

All workers of Pilgrim School 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);
- taking action if children and young people have disclosed information about inappropriate behaviours of adults.

Code of Conduct

The Pilgrim School Child Safe Environments Code of Conduct provide the minimum expected behaviour of all workers within Pilgrim School. Refer to Appendix 1 Child Safe Environments Code of Conduct

Breaches of either of this Code of Conduct can be reported to a member of the Leadership Team or Principal resulting in disciplinary action or, in the case of serious breaches, dismissal. Phone: 08 8270 3033 or email pilgrim@pilgrim.sa.edu.au

Recruitment

To ensure we engage the most suitable people to work with children and young people we have the following recruitment practices in place:

- our commitment to child safety is included in all job advertisements
- clear position descriptions that include our commitment to child safety and wellbeing
- written applications from applicants
- face-to-face interviews to determine the applicant's knowledge of child safeguarding
- at least 2 referee checks and qualification checks.

In accordance with the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016, our organisation is registered with the DHS Screening Unit and we link all Working with Children Checks (WWCC). All workers who will be working in a role with children and young people must hold a current, not prohibited WWCC issued by the Screening Unit of the Department of Human Services, provide evidence of this prior to employment and renew this every 5 years. We will verify the accuracy of all WWCCs in the DHS Screening Unit portal as required by law. We will immediately contact the Department of Human Services Screening Unit when we become aware of certain information regarding any person involved with our organisation, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

Training, supervision and support for workers

We have strategies in place to supervise, train and support workers to understand our organisation's Child Safe Environments policy, their mandatory reporting obligations, how to build culturally safe environments and their responsibilities to create a child safe and friendly environment. Our strategies include:

Training:

- complete Responding to Risk of Harm, Abuse and Neglect Training every 3 years
- Mandatory Notification Information Booklet available at: https://dhs.sa.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/103179/CSE-Mandatory-notification-information-booklet.PDF
- include child safety on meeting agendas

Supervision:

- supervision sessions that include a focus on child safety and wellbeing

Support:

- an induction process for all new workers including a copy of this policy document
- regular support sessions highlighting child safeguarding
- child safety officer who has an educative role within your organisation.

Reporting and responding to harm or risk of harm

We aim to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and risk of 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.

Mandated notifiers in our organisation are workers who:

- provide services to children and young people
- hold 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 and young people.

Mandated notifiers have a legal obligation to notify the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable belief that a child or young person is or may be at risk of harm. If the child or young person is at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000.

Even if not a mandated reporter, any person can report harm or risk of harm to a child or young person. The individual who identifies the harm or risk of harm is encouraged to make the report to authorities and can request the support from another worker to do so if required.

All serious concerns of suspected harm or risk of harm must be reported to CARL by phoning 13 14 78. The telephone line is available 24 hours a day. Serious concerns include the suspicion that a child or infant is in imminent or immediate danger of serious harm or serious injury, or is experiencing chronic neglect. 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 can be reported via eCARL, which is the online child protection reporting system.

Pilgrim School will maintain records of all mandated reports made (See Appendix 3). Pilgrim School will provide support to the student involved. The Wellbeing Coordinator/Pastoral Care Worker may provide support in the first instance and will refer to agencies where appropriate.

It is a requirement that workers inform the Principal of any mandatory notifications made. This will ensure that the Principal can put in place the appropriate action to support the child. If the concerns or allegations raised in the notification involve the Principal, then the Deputy Principal must be informed instead.

If a worker is reported to CARL or SAPOL for causing harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, they will be removed from any role that involves working with any child or young person until authorities have concluded their investigation.

Failure to Report

(applicable to all adult workers even if not a mandated notifier)

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 Pilgrim School 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 Pilgrim School staff, volunteers and contractors 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.

Reporting and responding to general complaints or feedback

Providing opportunities for complaints and feedback ensures that children, young people and their families feel valued and respected and enables us to improve the quality of our service. Children, young people and their families are aware that they can provide feedback or make a complaint.

Compliments, complaints or feedback can be provided verbally or in writing to any worker or direct to management either by telephone on 08 8270 3033 via email at pilgrim@pilgrim.sa.edu.au or by post addressed to 2-8 Campus Drive, Aberfoyle Park, SA, 5159

We will deal with all complaints and feedback received from children, young people or their families promptly, sensitively and fairly. We will:

- listen to the complaint/feedback
- advise of the time expected for an outcome
- if a worker receives a complaint, they must forward it to management as soon as possible
- management will respond to the complainant in a timely manner
- clearly document and securely store decisions and actions taken in response to complaints and feedback
- make sure that procedural fairness is followed at all times.

If the child, young person or their family is not happy with the outcome from the complaints process they can contact:

- the Pilgrim School Board through secretary@pilgrim.sa.edu.au
- Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner 8226 8666
- Australian Human Rights Commission Online: www.humanrights.gov.au
Tel: 1300 656 419

- South Australian Equal Opportunities Commission (for complaints relating to discrimination) Online: www.eoc.sa.gov.au Tel: 08 8207 1977.

Vulnerable Students

Pilgrim School 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.

Pilgrim School will ensure that:

- School staff will consult with a student with a disability, their parent and/or other associates (such as external allied health professionals). During consultation, staff will discuss 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.

Curriculum

Pilgrim School recognises the importance of addressing matters raised in the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum (KS:CPC). The two main themes of the KS:CPC are 'we all have the right to be safe' and 'we can help ourselves to be safe by talking to people we trust'.

The KS:CPC acknowledges that all children and young people have a right to:

- be treated with respect and to be protected from harm;
- be asked for their opinions about things that affect their lives and to be listened to;
- feel and be safe in their interactions with adult and other children and young people; and
- understand as early as possible what is meant by 'feeling and being safe'.

The two themes are explored through four Focus Areas, which are examined in growing complexity in accordance with the age of the learners:

- The right to be safe;
- Relationships;
- Recognising and reporting harm or abuse; and
- Protective strategies.

Pilgrim School is committed to ensuring that the curriculum addresses student agency where children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them.

Online Safety

Pilgrim School acknowledges and accepts its responsibility to ensure that children are supported and educated about online safety.

Pilgrim School is committed to following the requirements outlined in the 'Responding to Online Safety Incidents in South Australian Schools Guideline'. Pilgrim School is committed to creating a safer online environment by teaching cyber safety in Inquiry Units and in Digital Technology lessons. Resources produced by the eSafety Commissioner will be used <https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators>.

Pilgrim School has developed Digital Technologies Use Agreement for students, and a Prevention of Bullying and Harassment Policy. These documents also address online safety.

Risk Management

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

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
Physical contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• any physical contact must be appropriate to the delivery of services being provided• where physical contact is required, this is undertaken in a safe way by explaining why contact is required and what will happen, and asking the child/young person for their permission (or their family if this is more appropriate) before proceeding• unnecessary physical contact is not allowed
Online communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• cyber safety and social media guidelines are in place and provided to all workers• appropriate supervision is provided for all online activities• organisational staff must not communicate with children or young people via social media

<p>Transport of children and young people in private vehicles</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workers must not transport a child or young person unless specifically approved • parents/guardians must provide consent before transporting a child or young person • workers must have a valid, unrestricted driver's licence • the vehicle must be registered, insured and in roadworthy condition • a worker must not be alone in a vehicle with a child or young person
<p>Supervision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the end of class/training/programs, children will be supervised until they are collected • when providing one to one consultation with a child or young person, it will be in line of sight of another adult
<p>Taking images of children and young people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consent of child young person and their parent/guardian required • images must be presented in a way that de- identifies the child
<p>Physical environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain a risk register that is reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness • conduct risk assessments for all activities • ensure all equipment is in good working order
<p>Privacy and confidentiality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all documents containing confidential information will be stored privately in a locked filing cabinet (or similar place with restricted access) • digital files containing confidential information shall be protected electronically by restricting the access to only those requiring it to perform their duties • workers must not disclose information regarding any child or young person without written consent of the child, young person and their parent/guardian

Overnight and/or off-site activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consent of parent or guardian must be given • children and young people will be supervised by a minimum of 2 adults • privacy when children or young people are bathing, toileting and dressing must be provided • children and young people will not be left under the supervision of unauthorised persons • sleeping arrangements will not compromise the safety of children or young people • children and young people have the right to contact their parents, or another adult, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or distressed during the stay
Change room requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wherever possible, adults of the same gender as the children or young people will be present • supervision will be provided ensuring the child or young person's right to privacy • adults must not shower or change whilst supervising children or young people • phones, cameras and recording devices must not be used in change room

Policy Review

Pilgrim School's Child Safe Environment Policy will be reviewed and updated every 3 years. The Child Safe Environment Policy may 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 the Child Safe Environment Policy, Pilgrim School will lodge a new Compliance Statement with the SA Department of Human Services.

Appendix 1

Child Safe Environments Code of Conduct

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for workers. All workers are responsible for promoting and protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by:

- sticking to the organisation's child safe policy at all times and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people
- treating everyone including those of different race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes and religious beliefs with respect and honesty and ensure equity is upheld
- being a positive role model to children and young people in all conduct with them
- setting clear boundaries and maintaining appropriate behaviours with children and young people – boundaries help everyone to understand their roles
- listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people
- being alert to bullying behaviours and responding promptly and appropriately
- ensuring another adult is always present or in sight when conducting one to one consulting, coaching, instruction or other activity
- being alert to children and young people who have been harmed, or may be at risk of harm and reporting this quickly to the Child Abuse Report Line (13 14 78)
- responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian
- encouraging children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.

Workers must not:

- engage in rough physical games
- develop any 'special' relationships with children and young people that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment
- do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.

Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct should be reported as soon as practicable to management either in person, by telephone on 08 8270 3033, or via email at pilgrim@pilgrim.sa.edu.au. Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly and transparently. Any worker who breaches the Code of Conduct will face disciplinary action and depending on severity of the breach, the worker may have their employment

Appendix 2

Mandatory Notification Record Template

<h1 style="margin: 0;">Mandatory Notification Record</h1> <p style="margin: 0; font-size: 0.9em;">Please click check boxes to answer 'Yes'</p>	
Name of child/young person including also known as:	Type text here
DOB Type text here Year level (if applicable) Type text here Name of site Type text here	
Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Torres Strait Islander	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Student with disability	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Under the Guardianship of the Chief Executive of the Department for Child Protection	<input type="checkbox"/> YES
Name of notifier	Type text here
Names of others contributing to notification	Type text here
Date of notification	Type text here
Family related	Non-family related
<input type="checkbox"/> The child or young person has suffered harm (including harm caused by physical, emotional, sexual abuse or neglect). <input type="checkbox"/> There is a likelihood that the child or young person will suffer harm. <input type="checkbox"/> The likelihood a child or young person will be removed from the state: <input type="checkbox"/> for an unlawful medical or other procedure, including female genital mutilation <input type="checkbox"/> for a child marriage <input type="checkbox"/> to take part in criminal activity. <input type="checkbox"/> Parents or guardians of a child or young person: <input type="checkbox"/> are unable or unwilling to care for the child or young person <input type="checkbox"/> have abandoned the child or young person <input type="checkbox"/> have died. <input type="checkbox"/> School-aged child or young person is persistently absent from school without satisfactory explanation. <input type="checkbox"/> Child or young person is homeless or is living somewhere unsafe. <input type="checkbox"/> Concerns about an unborn child.	Adult <input type="checkbox"/> YES Employee/volunteer/ contractor at the site? <input type="checkbox"/> YES Minor <input type="checkbox"/> YES Child/young person at the site? <input type="checkbox"/> YES
	Type of notification
	E-notification <input type="checkbox"/> YES Phone call to Child Abuse Report Line <input type="checkbox"/> YES
Additional information if relevant (for example advice received in conversation with CARL)	
Type text here. Document will expand to accommodate the size of comment.	
Principal/Director/Manager name and signature	
Type text here.	
NB: This is a template. Print and store securely (locked file). Do not save an electronic copy. Do not store in a student's school file.	