

FORM 1

Commitment Statement to Child Safety

June 2022

A safe and nurturing culture for all children in Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood Education and Care Services

The Statement is intended to provide the central focus for child safety across Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood education and Care services in the Sandhurst Diocese, built around a unified understanding of the moral imperative and overarching commitments that underpin our drive for improvement and cultural change.

The care, safety and wellbeing of children is a central and fundamental responsibility of Catholic education. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood Education and Care Services are committed to providing a safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people through:

1. Upholding the primacy of the safety and wellbeing of children

At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a safe and nurturing culture, SCECE&C Ltd will actively and continually develop and review all policies, processes and practices, informed by emerging thinking and evidence.

2. Empowering families, children, young people and staff to have a voice and raise concerns

SCECE&C Ltd, in partnership with all Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood Education and Care services and families, will ensure children, are engaged and active participants in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on their safety.

This means that the views of staff (including Early Learning Centre staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and the CES Ltd Office), children, and families are taken seriously, and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner. Children are also provided with the necessary skills and appropriate knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.

3. Implementing rigorous risk-management and employment practices

Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood Education and Care staff will systematically and continually identify and assess risks to child safety and will eliminate (where possible) or reduce all potential sources of harm. Effective risk management will be embedded through effective, transparent and well- understood policies, procedures and practices.

All Sandhurst Catholic Early Childhood Education and Care Services and the CES Ltd Office will employ highly competent and professional staff who are formed and challenged to maintain the safety of all children. The high-quality of staff appointments will be upheld through rigorous employment and staff review processes and practices.

SCECE&C Ltd will stay abreast of current legislation and will meet their legislative duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of children in their care, including the Victorian Child Safe Standards (Victorian Government 2016), mandatory reporting, grooming, failure to disclose, grooming and failure to protect requirements and those requirements of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

4. References

Congregation for Catholic education 1997, The Catholic School on the Threshold of the Third Millennium, Vatican, Vatican City, accessed 24 February 2016