CHILD PROTECTION POLICY v12

Contents

Introduction:

Marist Youth Care is committed to nurturing the well-being of children and young people, to respecting their dignity, ensuring their safety and to protecting them from any form of harm, neglect, exploitation or abuse.

Marist Youth Care, an agency of the Marist Brothers, promotes and supports the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and families who access their services. We are guided in our work by our Marist values which include a strong client focus, respect, integrity, perseverance and innovation.

Children and young people have a fundamental right to be safe and to grow and develop in environments that are free from violence, exploitation and harm. The safety and protection of children requires a commitment from all levels of the community. At the same time, the community has clear expectations that children will be protected from all forms of harm including sexual, physical and psychological harm as well as ill-treatment and neglect. Marist Youth Care (Marist180) is supportive of these expectations and strives to promote the safety and protection of children.

Marist180 is guided in its decisions on child safety, welfare, well-being and protection strategies by the objects and principles within the key child protection legislation and guidelines in NSW, Western Australia, Victoria, Queensland and the ACT as well as consistency with the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

This overarching child protection policy creates the framework under which more specific policies, 'Identify and Respond to Child Abuse and Neglect' and 'Promote Child Safety in the Workplace', are placed. Within this framework a range of other related policies and procedures will provide

guidance in the provision of services that promote safety and wellbeing for children and young people.

Statement of Principles:

- Marist180 is proactive in creating safe and supportive environments for children and young people. A safe environment is one where the risk of significant harm is minimised and clients, carers and employees feel safe and secure.

  Harm relates not only to dangers in the physical environment but also refers to violence, physical threats, verbal abuse, threatening gestures, neglect, emotional or psychological harm, sexual harassment and abuse, grooming behaviour and racial vilification.

- A supportive environment facilitates and enhances the social, academic, physical and emotional development of children, young people, carers, employees and all those involved with the work of the agency.

- Marist180 is committed to fostering the wellbeing of children and young people and to protecting them from any form of exploitation, abuse or neglect.

- Marist180 is committed to maintaining practices that create a culture of safety within which children, young people, carers and employees are supported and protected.

Scope of Policy:

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers who are engaged by Marist180 in working with children and young people.

The Child Protection Policy Framework

• Identify and Respond to Child Abuse and Neglect

Marist180 has developed policy specifically to assist employees and carers to understand the broader responsibilities of the Agency and their specific responsibilities as employees and carers in the area of child protection. This policy is guided by the key legislation and guidelines in NSW, Victoria, Western Australia, Queensland and the ACT.

Related policy areas include 'Promote Child Safety in the Workplace', 'Child Protection Records and Information Exchange' and 'Child Safety Processes and Practices'.

- ## Promote Child Safety in the Workplace

Marist180 takes a positive approach to the promotion of child safe workplaces. This is in line with the legislative and policy requirements of governing and funding bodies, as well as the principles of Marist180's child protection policy that support the development of a culture of safety within which children, young people, carers and employees are supported and protected.

Key aspects considered in this policy area include recruitment and employment screening, management of allegations against employees, and induction and training procedures.

Related policy areas include 'Child Protection Records and Information Exchange' and 'identify and Respond to Child Abuse and Neglect'.

Training:
All staff must participate in a child protection induction and in annual updates. This Includes all staff – principals, workplace managers, teaching and non-teaching staff, part-time, temporary and casual staff and those who join during the year.

Relationship to other Agency Policies

Policy related to child protection does not sit in isolation, but rather relates to other broader policy expectations of the agency. Key operational policy areas including the agency 'Code of Conduct', 'Duty of Care', 'Risk Assessment and Management' are intrinsically linked to the 'Child Protection Policy Framework'.

Related Policies, Procedures and Legislation

Related Documents	• Marist Brothers, Province of Australia: Child Protection Policy – Keeping Children Safe. • NSW Interagency Guidelines for Child Wellbeing and Child Protection • Marist180 Child Protection Framework • Marist180 Identify and Respond to Child Abuse and Neglect Policy • Marist180 Identify and Respond to Child Abuse and Neglect Procedures • Marist180 - Promote Child Safety in the Workplace Policy • Marist180 Child Protection Records and Information Exchange Policy • Marist180 - Information Exchange Procedures • Marist180 Child Safety Processes and Practices
	• UN Convention on the Right of the Child 1990 • Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)

Relevant Legislation	• The Child *Protection Legislation Act Amendment 2015* (NSW) • NSW Ombudsman's Act 1974 (NSW) • Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW) • *Child Protection (Working with Children) Amendment Act 2016* • Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT) • Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (VIC) • Working with Children Act 2005 (VIC) • Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (VIC) • The Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012 • Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA) • Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004 (WA) • Child Care Services Act 2007 (WA) • Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD) • Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (QLD) Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (QLD)

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