



Safeguarding

Safeguarding Policy

1 BACKGROUND

St Edward's College is a Catholic School in the Edmund Rice tradition. The charism of Blessed Edmund Rice expressed through the touchstones of Liberating Education, Gospel Spirituality, Inclusive Community, Justice and Solidarity, underpins our continued commitment to a safe and inclusive environment for all.

2 STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

EREA NSW Colleges Ltd is committed to embedding a culture where the safety, wellbeing, and participation of all children and young people under our care is paramount. Each school and every employee, volunteer and contractor, have legal and ethical obligations to respond swiftly when concerned about a student's safety and our commitment means we will ensure that we meet these obligations rigorously.

EREA NSW Colleges Ltd has zero tolerance for child abuse. As identified by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG), we acknowledge that child abuse is an ongoing and prevalent issue for children and young people and hence we need to continually improve and strengthen how we protect students from harm through robust, accessible and clear policies and procedures.

3 PURPOSE

Our Safeguarding Policy demonstrates the strong commitment of the College to child safety and to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly environment. It provides an outline of the policies and practices that we have developed to keep our students safe, including from abuse and other harm.

Our Safeguarding Policy outlines the key elements of our approach to implementing the NSW Child Safe Standards and EREA NSW Colleges Ltd safeguarding requirements, and to the College as a child safe organisation.

It informs the College community about everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards students and guides the policies, processes and practices for the safety, wellbeing and protection of students across all areas of our work.

4 PRINCIPLES

- EREA NSW Colleges Ltd and St Edward's College are committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and participation of all children and young people under our care.
- The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board and St Edward's College have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected and their voices heard, and where they are safe and feel safe.
- As an organisation that provides services to children in NSW, the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board and St Edward's College are committed to building and embedding a safe and supportive environment for all. As such the College is committed to the requirements of the NSW Child Safe Standards.
- As a Catholic entity, The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board and St Edward's College are also guided by the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, which are also in line with the NSW Child Safe Standards.
- Requiring compliance with these NSW Child Safe Standards is one of the strategies employed by The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board to embed a culture of child safety at St Edward's College.
- St Edward's College also endorses, implements, and complies with the Statement of Commitment to Child Safety.

5 SCOPE

The Safeguarding Policy applies to all "Staff, Volunteers and Contractors" of the College", as well as to other people who are associated with the College, such as parents and carers when they are visiting the College or attending a College event.

This Policy and its Procedures apply in all College, including physical and online environments, on-site and off-site College grounds (e.g. extra-curricular activities such as sport and other programs, camps and excursions, interstate and overseas travel), and environments provided by External Education Providers and other Contractors.

6 DEFINITIONS

“Child” / “Child or Young Person”

For the purpose of the policy the term “child” and the phrase “child or young person” refer to a person who is aged under 18. In NSW a “Child” is defined as any person aged under 16 years and a “Young Person” is defined as any person aged 16 years and over and under 18 years.

“Child Abuse and Other Harm”

The phrase “child abuse and other harm” is not defined in NSW law. However, various sources of legislation provide definitions, concepts and conduct (set out in “Child Safety Incident or Concern”, below) which, together, provide guidance as to what is child abuse and other harm in NSW.

For the purposes of this Policy, the phrase “child abuse and other harm” refers to incidents of or concerns about (including concerns about a risk of) physical, sexual, psychological and emotional harm, neglect, grooming and exposure to domestic violence, regardless of by whom or how this harm occurs.

“Child Safety Incident or Concern”

St Edward's College uses the phrase, “child safety incident or concern”, which includes, but goes further than, the concept of “child abuse and other harm”.

Child safety incidents or concerns can take many forms. These include not only the abuse of a child or young person by their parents/carers, but also conduct by other people that can cause harm to a child or young person or to a student aged 18 or over.

We define “child safety incidents or concerns” as an incident of or concern about:

- a child or young person being “at risk of significant harm”, as defined in the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection Act) 1998 (NSW) (Care and Protection Act), such as:
 - being, or at risk of being, physically or sexually abused or ill-treated

- living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, being at risk of serious physical or psychological harm
- their parents/carers failing to meet their physical, psychological, educational or medical needs
- their parents/carers behaving in such a way towards them that they are suffering or at risk of suffering serious psychological harm
- a child or young person being, or at risk of being, the victim of a “child abuse offence” as defined in the Crimes Act 1900 (NSW) (Crimes Act), or a student aged 18 or over being, or at risk of being, the victim of a similar offence, such as:
 - a sexual offence (a sexual act, sexual intercourse, sexual touching, production of child abuse material, voyeurism or grooming offence) or an attempt to commit such an offence
 - assault and physical harm (wounding or causing grievous bodily harm, assault causing actual bodily harm, assault at a school, administering or causing the ingestion of an intoxicating substance, and female genital mutilation)
- “Reportable Conduct” by an employee, Volunteer or Contractor, as defined in the Children’s Guardian Act 2019 (NSW) (Children’s Guardian Act), such as:
 - a sexual offence against, with or in the presence of a child or young person
 - sexual misconduct with, towards or in the presence of a child or young person
 - ill-treatment of a child or young person
 - neglect of a child or young person
 - assault against a child or young person
 - behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child or young person
 - Any offence under Section 43B (failure to protect) or section 316A (failure to report) of the Crimes Act 1900.
 - All definitions of reportable conduct are clearly defined in the relevant legislation and in the OCG Reportable Conduct Fact Sheets 1 and 8.
- a breach of our Safeguarding Codes of Conduct, such as:
 - a teacher engaging in unauthorised after-hours meetings with a student
 - a Volunteer sports coach engaging in inappropriate online personal communications with a student
 - a Contractor music tutor publishing online photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent.

“Child Safe Scheme”

The Child Safe Scheme in NSW means that child-related organisations must put into action the NSW Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. All child-related organisation in NSW must apply the NSW Child Safe Standards to better prevent and respond to child abuse.

“Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)”

DCJ are the peak government agency for managing matters of children and young people at “Risk of Significant Harm.” DCJ are responsible for the legislative requirements pursuant to the *Children and Young Persons (Care & Protection) Act 1998*.

“EREA NSW Colleges Ltd”

Entity that operates EREA schools in NSW. It is the proprietor of the College

“External Education Providers”

An “External Education Provider” is any organisation that the College has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the College.

The delivery of such a course may take place on College premises or elsewhere. They are considered Direct Contact Contractors.

“Mandatory Report/Reporters”

Mandatory Reporters and Reports are defined under the *Children and Young Persons (Care & Protection) Act 1998*.

Mandatory reporters are people who deliver the following services, wholly or partly, to children as part of their paid or professional work:

- Health care (e.g. registered medical practitioners, specialists, general practice nurses, midwives, occupational therapists, speech therapists, psychologists, dentists and other allied health professionals working in sole practice or in public or private health practices)
- Welfare (e.g. psychologists, social workers, caseworkers and youth workers)
- Education (e.g. teachers, counsellors, principals)
- Children’s services (e.g. childcare workers, family day carers and home-based carers)
- Residential services (e.g. refuge workers)
- Law enforcement (e.g. police)

A Mandatory Report is to be completed by a Mandatory Reporter when a Mandatory Reporter believes on *reasonable grounds* that a child or young person is at *risk of significant harm*.

“Risk of Significant Harm”

The *Children and Young Persons (Care & protection) Act 1998* defines *Risk of Significant Harm* as

1. For the purposes of this Part and Part 3, a child or young person is ***at risk of significant harm*** if current concerns exist for the safety, welfare or well-being of the child or young person because of the presence, to a significant extent, of any one or more of the following circumstances:
 1. the child’s or young person’s basic physical or psychological needs are not being met or are at risk of not being met,
 2. the parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive necessary medical care,
 1. in the case of a child or young person who is required to attend school in accordance with the *Education Act 1990*—the parents or other caregivers have not arranged and are unable or unwilling to arrange for the child or young person to receive an education in accordance with that Act,
 3. the child or young person has been, or is at risk of being, physically or sexually abused or ill-treated,
 4. the child or young person is living in a household where there have been incidents of domestic violence and, as a consequence, the child or young person is at risk of serious physical or psychological harm,
 5. a parent or other caregiver has behaved in such a way towards the child or young person that the child or young person has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious psychological harm,
 6. the child was the subject of a pre-natal report under section 25 and the birth mother of the child did not engage successfully with support services to eliminate, or minimise to the lowest level reasonably practical, the risk factors that gave rise to the report.

“Special Care Relationship”

1. In NSW, it is an offence for any person to have sexual intercourse with a young person aged over 16 years but under 18 years if that person is in a “special care relationship” with the young person. S73 of the *Crimes Act 1900* defines “special care relationship” as:
 1. the accused person is any of the following who is not a close family member of the complainant—
 1. the parent or the parent of a parent of the complainant,
 2. the guardian or authorised carer of the complainant,

3. the spouse or de facto partner of a person referred to in subparagraph (i) or (ii), or
2. the accused person is a teacher at, or the principal or a deputy principal of, the school at which the complainant is a student, or
1. the accused person performs work at the school at which the complainant is a student, in which the accused person has students at the school, including the complainant, under the authority of the accused person, or
3. the accused person has an established personal relationship with the complainant in connection with the provision of religious, sporting, musical or other instruction to the complainant, in which relationship the complainant is under the authority of the accused person, or
4. the accused person is a custodial officer of an institution of which the complainant is an inmate, or
5. the accused person is a health professional and the complainant is a patient of the health professional, or
6. the accused person--
 1. performs work for an organisation that provides residential care to young persons placed in out-of-home care (within the meaning of the *Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998* and
 2. has an established personal relationship with the complainant in connection with the provision of that residential care to the complainant, in which relationship the complainant is under the authority of the accused person, or
7. the accused person--
 1. performs work for an organisation that provides refuge or crisis accommodation, and
 2. has an established personal relationship with the complainant in connection with the provision of that accommodation to the complainant, in which relationship the complainant is under the authority of the accused person.

“Staff” / “Staff Member” / “Employee”

The terms “Staff” and “staff member” include all teaching and non-teaching Staff, including the Principal/Headmaster/Headmistress. They include all those employed by the College on a permanent, temporary or casual basis as well as those employed by EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.

Although College Advisory Council members and members of the Council Committees are technically Volunteers, they are considered “Staff” for the purposes of this Policy and EREA NSW Colleges Ltd safeguarding requirements.

“Student”

A “student” is a person who is enrolled at or attends the College. They may be a child or young person, or they may be an adult aged 18 or over.

“Trustees of Edmund Rice Education Australia (TEREA)”

TEREA is the parent company of five governing authorities which operate schools and flexible learning centres governed and conducted in the Edmund Rice Tradition.

“Volunteers” and “Contractors”

A “Volunteer” is a someone who works without payment or financial reward for the College. Volunteers may be family members of students, or from the wider College or local community.

A “Contractor” is someone engaged by the College to perform specific tasks. Contractors are not employees of the College.

The College categorises Volunteers and Contractors as either:

- Direct Contact Volunteers/Contractors: Volunteers and Contractors who have direct physical or face-to-face contact with, or who directly communicate with, students (such as Volunteers and Contractors who are tutors, provide learning support, work in the Canteen, attend or provide excursions/incursions, assist in music/drama productions and coach sports teams). External Education Providers are considered Direct Contact Contractors.
- Regular Volunteers/Contractors: Volunteers and Contractors who assist the College in ways that do not involve direct contact with students (although there could be indirect or incidental contact), and who do this more than five times per year (such as volunteers working in the College’s administration office, contracted consultants, regular maintenance workers or cleaners, and caterers for staff events)
- Casual Volunteers/Contractors: Volunteers and Contractors who assist the College in ways that do not involve direct contact with students (although there could be indirect or incidental contact) or whose services are aimed at the general public, and who do this five times or less per year (such as Volunteers who work on a stall at a College fete or on a barbeque at a sporting event, and one-off emergency maintenance workers).

Clergy and religious personnel who visit, volunteer or otherwise provide services to the College may fall into any of these categories.

“Visitor”

The term “Visitor” refers to any adult who attends a College event or is in a College environment on a one-off or casual basis. Examples of Visitors include, but are not limited to:

- Casual Volunteers/Contractors
- parents, carers and other adult family members of students, when they are attending College events or in a College environment
- people invited by the College or a staff member to attend a College event or to be in a College environment
- people who attend a College environment for commercial purposes, such as for deliveries or sales purposes.

7 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility. All adults in the College community have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of students.

Specific responsibilities include:

Role	Responsibilities
Director and CEO of EREA NSW Colleges Ltd	<p>The Director and CEO of EREA NSW Colleges Ltd implements the strategy and policy approved by The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board and appoints staff to fulfil the leadership, management and operational structures of EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.</p> <p>They ensure that EREA NSW Colleges Ltd governed schools apply sound governance and management practices, and that EREA NSW Colleges Ltd-governed schools meet their child safety and child protection obligations and legislative requirements. They also monitor and ensure appropriate and timely reporting to the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board in relation to child safety and child protection, to enable its</p>

	<p>members to discharge their responsibilities. They provide reports to EREA Ltd on safeguarding matters relevant to risk management.</p> <p>The Director and CEO is the “Head of Relevant Entity” for the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.</p>
Director of Safeguarding	<p>The Director of Safeguarding directs, supports and advises the Principals of all EREA NSW Colleges Ltd governed schools in relation to safeguarding incidents and investigations.</p> <p>They ensure that child safety incidents or concerns that occur at or involve EREA NSW Colleges Ltd governed schools, as well as other safeguarding issues, are promptly managed and reported to The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board through the Director and CEO.</p> <p>For the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme, the Director and CEO has authorised the Director of Safeguarding to undertake responsibility for reporting and investigating allegations of Reportable Conduct involving all School/College Staff, Volunteers and Contractors.</p>
EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board	<p>The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board is the College’s governing body.</p> <p>The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board has responsibility for EREA NSW Colleges Ltd’s strategic directions, operational policy and risk management.</p>

	<p>It ensures that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the College has appropriate processes for receiving and considering information regarding child safety; • the College's safeguarding and child protection policies required for registration/re-registration as a non-government school are reviewed and approved; • the College has and implements processes to comply with its child safety legal and regulatory obligations; and • the College has ongoing monitoring processes to verify and evaluate the use of the resources allocated to manage safeguarding obligations within the School/College. <p>The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board delegates its functions relating to the operational management of the College and implementation of EREA NSW Colleges Ltd safeguarding requirements to the Principal with the collaboration of the Director Safeguarding.</p>
<p>External Education Providers</p>	<p>All External Education Providers engaged by St Edward's College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the College environment.</p> <p>All External Education Providers engaged by St Edward's College are required by the College to be familiar with our Safeguarding Policy and the EREA Code of Conduct.</p>

	<p>St Edward's College will include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.</p>
Principal/ Headmaster/ Headmistress	<p>The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for, the operational management of the College, and the implementation of EREA NSW Colleges Ltd safeguarding requirements at their College.</p> <p>The Principal is responsible for taking all practical measures to ensure that this Safeguarding Policy and EREA NSW Colleges Ltd safeguarding requirements are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within the College.</p>
Safeguarding Committee	<p>EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board is supported by the Safeguarding Committee. The role and operation of the Safeguarding Committee is detailed in its Terms of Reference. The Committee holds no delegated authority, it makes recommendations to the EREA NSW Board for their consideration and approval in relation to safeguarding policies and procedures, whilst monitoring organisational child safety and wellbeing risk within the scope of its Terms of Reference and with the support and input of Management and EREA NSW Board.</p>
Senior Safeguarding Officer	<p>St Edward's College has also appointed Senior SO Name as the College's Senior Safeguarding</p>

	<p>Officer</p> <p>They have additional safeguarding responsibilities, such as being a first point of contact for all child safety concerns or queries for the wider community and coordinating the College's response to child safety incidents in consultation with the Principal and/or the Leadership/Executive Team as well as the Director of Safeguarding.</p>
College Advisory Council	<p>Under the EREA NSW Colleges Ltd governance structure, the College Advisory Council is responsible for supporting and advising the Principal to ensure consistency and faithfulness to the Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition.</p> <p>Responsibility for the day-to-day management and implementation of the College's safeguarding policies and procedures rests with the Principal.</p> <p>The College Advisory Council advises and supports the Principal in maintaining the College's strategies for safeguarding children and young people.</p>
College's Safeguarding Officers (CSO)	<p>One or more senior staff members are nominated as the College's Safeguarding Officers. Our Safeguarding Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child safety and protection issues.</p> <p>They are a point of contact for raising child safety concerns within the College. They are</p>

	<p>also responsible for championing safeguarding within the College and assisting in coordinating responses to child safety incidents.</p> <p>They ensure that the College responds appropriately to students involved in child safety incidents and concerns and provide assistance and advice to other members of the College community who receive or make a disclosure of abuse or other harm of a child or young person.</p> <p>Our Safeguarding Officers are:</p> <p>Director of Pastoral Care Keith Mills</p> <p>Deputy Principal Jodie Connor</p>
Staff Members	<p>All Staff must comply with this Safeguarding Policy and the EREA Code of Conduct, be familiar with our safeguarding policies and procedures and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm, and Working with Children Checks.</p> <p>All Staff must be aware of key indicators of abuse and other harm, be observant, and raise all child safety incidents and concerns with a Safeguarding Officer (SO).</p> <p>All Staff are Mandatory Reporters and must report to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child (aged under 16), or a particular group of children, are at risk of significant harm, and their suspicion arose in</p>

the course of their work at or for the College. All Staff who are adults (aged 18 or over) also have a legal obligation to report to Police when they know or believe that a child abuse offence has been committed against another person, including a student.

To meet these obligations, all Staff must:

- participate in safeguarding induction and ongoing training provided by the College
- always follow the College's safeguarding policies and procedures
- act in accordance with the EREA Code of Conduct
- identify and raise all child safety incidents and concerns with a Safeguarding Officer or the Principal
- identify and respond to concerns about students who are at risk of significant harm or who are or were the victim of a child abuse offence
- ensure that students' views are taken seriously, and their voices are heard when making decisions that affect them
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.
- comply with all relevant safeguarding-related human resources policies and procedures.

Volunteers and Contractors

All Volunteers and all Contractors at the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment.

To meet these obligations:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Volunteers and all Contractors must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comply with our Safeguarding Policy and the EREA Code of Conduct • understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm • raise all child safety concerns with a Safeguarding Officer or the Principal • comply with all relevant safeguarding-related human resources policies and procedures. • Direct Contact Volunteers/Contractors must also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in safeguarding induction and ongoing training provided by the College • follow the safeguarding policies and procedures to identify and raise child safety incidents and concerns. • Regular Volunteers/Contractors and Casual Volunteers/Contractors must either: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in modified safeguarding induction training; or • receive and acknowledge information about the Safeguarding Policy and the EREA Code of Conduct. <p>For Contractors, the College may include these requirements in the written agreement between it and the Contractor.</p>
<p>Working with Children Check (WWCC) Responsibilities</p>	<p>The Executive Assistant to the Principal Chanelle Giffin are responsible for:</p>

(Principal's delegate).

- verifying WWCC clearances for all Staff and for relevant Contractors and Volunteers when they first commence their role at the College,
- monitoring the WWCC status of ongoing Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors and
- all subsequent verifications and ensuring all people in child-related work have a current WWCC clearance.
- only employ or engage child-related workers or eligible volunteers who have a valid WWCC clearance
- It is the responsibility of EREA NSW to notify the WWCC Directorate of the OCG when EREA NSW substantiates allegations of reportable conduct – sexual misconduct, sexual offence, serious physical assault and/or a reportable conviction.

All Staff and relevant Contractors and Volunteers must hold and maintain a valid WWCC clearance and report to the Principal or Director and CEO if they are no longer eligible for a WWCC clearance.

The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Director of Safeguarding or their delegate monitors and verifies WWCC status of the Principal, Deputy Principal, Business Manager and senior leaders contracted by EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.

The Executive Assistant to the Principal Chanelle Giffin is responsible for maintaining the College's WWCC records.

8 SAFEGUARDING FRAMEWORK

8.1 Safeguarding Code of Conduct

The EREA Code of Conduct sets boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between Staff, Contractors, Visitors and Volunteers of the College and students, including in physical and online environments. The EREA Code of Conduct includes a specific section on Safeguarding – section 3.0 Child Safe Code of Conduct.

We also have a Student Code of Conduct^{**,**} which includes standards of behaviour for students relevant to safeguarding.

We also provide additional information to students and families about behaviours that are acceptable and unacceptable and how to report inappropriate behaviour and raise concerns.

8.1.1 Children and Young People's Rights to Safety, Information and Participation

St Edward's College is a child safe and child-centred organisation, and we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We ensure that our physical and online environment is friendly and welcoming to all children and young people by:

ensuring adequate active supervision, establishing designated areas for different cohorts, monitoring of online environments and platforms. The Pastoral team also establish meaningful relationships with all students based on respect and compassion.

We actively seek to include students in decisions that affect them. This includes decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and learning and assessment environments. This is achieved through:

student leaderships workshops, the portfolio programs, as well as the Tell Them From Me surveys.

We ensure that students know about their rights to safety, information, and participation by the Pastoral team clearly outlining what their rights and responsibilities are. Each classroom has a copy of the Code for Learning and the website contains our aspiration statement which guides our college..

We recognise the importance of friendships and support from peers hence we actively encourage these relationships through vertical Homeroom groups, Friday Afternoon Activities, and whole Year Group camps and retreats designed to foster positive peer relationships..

We actively seek to understand what makes students feel safe in our College and regularly communicate with students about what they can do if they feel unsafe. Students receive training, information, and advice from school counsellors, Pastoral Leaders and classroom teachers..

At St Edward's College, students have the right to:

- reach your full learning potential in a safe and supportive environment
- be safe
- be treated with respect, courtesy and kindness
- be an active part of and contribute positively to the community
- be treated fairly and justly
- have your human rights, and other legal rights respected.

8.1.2 Student Wellbeing Concerns

Student wellbeing concerns are safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns for a child or young person that do not meet the mandatory reporting threshold, risk of significant harm. Circumstances where Staff, Contractors or Volunteers believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but they still hold significant concerns for their wellbeing, they must still act. In the first instance student wellbeing concerns are managed by the College/School with the support of EREA NSW. Management of student wellbeing concerns may include making a referral to or seeking advice from:

- 1800 RESPECT, Lifeline, BeyondBlue (Australia-wide) and Domestic Violence Line and Parent Line (NSW) (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support)
- Catholic Schools New South Wales
- NSW Department of Communities and Justice
- NSW Police.

8.1.3 Students' Responsibilities

The School's students must:

- uphold the school's values in the way you conduct yourself at the school and in the community
- enable others to learn in a safe and supportive environment
- follow school policies, procedures and the directions of teachers at all times

- treat others with respect, courtesy and kindness
- represent the school well in the community
- accept and consider the consequences of your actions
- respect the human rights and legal rights of others

The School's students must NOT:

- engage in conduct that would be considered bullying or harassment.

8.1.4 Parents/Carers, Families and Community Involvement at the College

The College recognises that parents and carers have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their children. We ensure that they have opportunities to participate in decisions affecting their children by.

- Including regular updates regarding child safe practices and the NSW Child Safe Standards in communications to Parents/Carers and Families.
- Up-to-date Safeguarding information on the College website.
- Seeking feedback from Parents/Carers and Families regarding the College's Safeguarding practices and procedures.

We ensure that families and relevant communities (the variety of communities that are relevant to the College, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, and other communities that make up our Staff and student cohorts) know about the College's operations and policies, including the Safeguarding Policy and the Safeguarding Codes of Conduct, record keeping practices, risk management, and complaints and investigation processes.

We actively seek to include families and relevant communities in decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and learning and assessment environments. This is achieved through information and feedback evenings, the Tell Them From Me surveys, as well as parent information meetings..

8.1.5 Cultural Safety and Valuing Diversity in the College Community

Our College values diversity and does not tolerate any discriminatory practices. To achieve this, we:

- identify, confront and do not tolerate racism, and address any instances of racism within the College environment with appropriate consequences.

- promote and support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families.
- promote and support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families.
- promote the safety of all vulnerable children.
- support students with disability and their families and act to promote their participation.
- support students and families of diverse sexuality and act to promote their participation.
- seek to recruit a workforce that reflects a diversity of cultures, abilities and identities.
- ensure that all Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors have training about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, disability, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and those with particular experiences or needs.
- have a physical environment that actively celebrates diverse cultures and recognises cultural difference.
- commit to ensuring that our facilities promote the inclusion of students of all abilities.

8.2 Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

St Edward's College fosters a culture that encourages everyone in the College community to raise concerns and complaints about child safety. We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns set out in the Safeguarding Complaints Management Policy and Procedures.

We also have clear procedures that all Staff, Volunteers and Contractors must follow whenever they witness, suspect, or receive a complaint about a child safety incident or concern involving a student, a staff member, a Volunteer, a Contractor or the College.

The College will take appropriate, prompt action in response to all child safety incidents or concerns, including:

- allegations, complaints or disclosures of child abuse or other harm
- breaches of our Safeguarding Codes of Conduct
- inappropriate behaviour by Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, students, parents/carers, Visitors and other members of the College community

when these are reported to the College, whether by Staff, Volunteers, Contractors of the College, students, parents/carers or anyone else.

The safety and wellbeing of the student/s involved in the matter will be the paramount consideration when responding to child safety incidents and concerns. The College follows the National Office of

Child Safety's Complaints Handling Guide: Upholding the rights of children and young people when investigating and responding to child safety incidents and concerns.

The College's response will include:

- reporting all matters that meet the required relevant thresholds externally to DCJ (Mandatory Reports), the Police (Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Offences), and/or advising EREA NSW, as the relevant entity for the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme of all safeguarding allegations so that EREA NSW can assess the matter and advise the Office of the Children's Guardian (Reportable Conduct), depending on the issues raised.
- reporting internally to EREA NSW Colleges Ltd:
 - all matters that required reporting to an external agency
 - Problematic and harmful sexual behaviour by students that does not otherwise require external reporting
 - other matters as directed by EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.
- fully cooperating with any resulting investigation by an external agency and/or EREA NSW Colleges Ltd.
- protecting any student connected to the child safety incident or concern until it is resolved and providing ongoing support to those affected.
- taking particular measures in response to child safety incidents or concerns about an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student, a student from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, a student with disability, and other vulnerable students (such as a student who is unable to live at home or a student who identifies as lesbian gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex).
- sharing information with, or requesting information from, external people or agencies as permitted or required under the law.
- securing and retaining records of the child safety incident or concern and the College's response to it.
- taking broader actions to improve child safety at the College (including systemic reviews and resulting improvements).

Parents, carer and community members are encouraged to report any conduct that is in their view inappropriate, reportable or criminal conduct to the Principal or their delegate. All such reports will be dealt with in accordance with the College/School's complaint handling procedures.

Whenever there are concerns that a child or young person is in immediate danger, call the Police on 000.

Any person, including all Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, parents/carers and students, can at any time contact the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) if they have reasonable grounds to suspect that a child or young person (aged under 18), or a class of children or young persons, is at risk of significant harm.

Voluntary reports to DCJ can be made by calling the Child Protection Helpline on 132 111 or 1800 212 936 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

8.2.1 Staff Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

All Staff of the College must report all child safety incidents or concerns internally to a Safeguarding Officer or the Principal.

Where the incident or concern involves the Principal, internal reports should instead be made directly to Director of Safeguarding by calling (02) 8705 8611.

We recognise that some children and young people face additional vulnerabilities to abuse and other harm, as well as additional barriers to disclosing child safety incidents or concerns.

8.2.2 Students Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

If a student has concerns about their safety or the behaviour of others, it's important that they tell a trusted adult. This could be a parent or carer, a trusted teacher or a College Safeguarding Officer.

Our Staff are committed to ensuring that all students feel empowered to speak up and be heard and will take all concerns raised by students seriously and ensure that the student receives ongoing support.

The College provides students with information about, and encourages them to use, the multiple pathways available at the College to raise child safety concerns, including concerns about the behaviour of other students. These include informal and formal ways, an 'anonymous' way, and through external child advocacy or child safety organisations.

Students who have child safety concerns about themselves, or about any other child, young person or student aged 18 or over, can:

- disclose the incident or concern to a Safeguarding Officer, a staff member, Volunteer or Contractor. This might be done:
 - verbally
 - in writing

- through electronic means (such as email)
- indirectly (such as in written assignments, in artworks or in any other way)
- disclose the incident or concern anonymously by using the College's anonymous Child and Adolescent Health Services - Gosford, HeadSpace, Beyond Blue, Kids Helpline, etc, which is located bullying@stedwards.nsw.edu.au
- contact Child and Mental Health Services, Head Space, Kids Helpline, Beyond Blue, etc

For more information, students can refer to the child-friendly version of our Safeguarding Complaints Management Policy and Procedures, available bullying@stedwards.nsw.edu.au.

8.2.3 Anyone, including Parents/carers, family members and other community members Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

Anyone can raise a concern or make a safeguarding-related complaint related to either a child or young person associated with the School/College that may be subject to abuse or other harm, or concerns regarding the School/College's leadership in relation to child safety, at any time, to:

- the Principal (by phoning the school or emailing mbonnici@stedwards.nsw.edu.au),
- a Safeguarding Officer (Keith Mills, by phoning 02 4321 6400 or emailing kmills@stedwards.nsw.edu.au), or
- a trusted staff member

in person, in writing or over the phone.

If the concern relates to the Principal, contact the Director of Safeguarding by calling (02) 8705 8611.

Non-safeguarding related complaints should be made to the Complaints Officer.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know' basis.

8.2.4 Support for Students, Families and Staff Following a Child Safety Incident or Disclosure

The College will work closely with the student, parents and carers and our wellbeing team to provide all available support services. The College employs a range of measures to support students affected by a child safety incident or concern, depending on the particular circumstances of the matter and of the student and their family:

- a Safeguarding Officer may work with the student, and their family if appropriate, to develop a Student Support Plan.

- support strategies that could be considered for students and/or their families might include referrals to internal or external support, such as the College Counsellor, bi-cultural workers and/or translators, or an external support agency and/or child advocacy organisation which specialises in supporting children and young people impacted by abuse or other harm.

Pastoral Leaders, liaise with counsellors and Director of Pastoral Care, and Principal if required

The College also offers similar support to former students who disclose historical child safety incidents or concerns from their time at the College.

Witnessing a child safety incident or receiving a disclosure of abuse or other harm can be a distressing experience for the Staff, Volunteers and Contractors involved. The College assists impacted Staff, Volunteers and Contractors to access necessary support.

8.3 Safeguarding Human Resources Management

8.3.1 Recruitment and Screening

At St Edward's College we are committed to ensuring that our recruitment practices create a safe and supportive environment for all students. To this end, in addition to our general Recruitment and Selection Procedures, we have established safeguarding policies and procedures for recruiting Staff, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors, and for assessing their suitability to work with children and young people. Our practices include:

- making our commitment to child safety and wellbeing clear in recruitment advertising and documentation.
- requiring all Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors to maintain a valid Working with Children Check clearance.
- using additional selection, background checking and screening processes that take into account safeguarding considerations.

8.3.2 Training On and Information About Safeguarding

As a part of St Edward's College's induction process, all Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors, must complete our safeguarding induction program, which includes information about our safeguarding policies, practices and procedures. All Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors also receive refresher and ongoing safeguarding training at least annually with this typically being completed in January of each school year.

Our safeguarding induction and ongoing training program includes information about:

- this Safeguarding Policy
- the Safeguarding Code of Conduct
- their legal obligations for child protection and other relevant school expectations
- recognising child abuse and other harm and identifying key indicators, including harm caused by other children and young people
- our practices for responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns (such as mandatory reporting, reporting to police and reportable conduct obligations)
- our policies and practices to prevent, identify and report allegations of employee reportable conduct in compliance with the Children's Guardian Act
- our policies and procedures for information sharing and record keeping about child safety incidents and concerns
- Working with Children Check clearances, and other child safety and wellbeing human resources practices.

Staff who are mandatory reporters under the Care and Protection Act are informed of their obligations and the school's procedure for making reports for students who are at risk of significant harm.

The College provides all Visitors to the College, including Casual Volunteers and Casual Contractors, with information about the EREA Code of Conduct and how to report child safety incidents or concerns to the College and to relevant external authorities.

8.3.3 Ongoing Supervision, Management and Support

The College's Safeguarding Officers and Executive/Leadership Team provide supervision and support to all Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child safety.

Our safeguarding supervision and support program includes:

- probationary periods for new staff members, where these are permitted by law or under an enterprise agreement
- annual performance reviews for all staff members
- appointing a supervising staff member to Direct Contact Volunteers/Contractors and to those Regular Volunteers/Contractors who are engaged in "child-connected work"
- professional development programs for Staff that include safeguarding education.

The College swiftly manages any inappropriate behaviour towards students, in accordance with our policies and legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing is the paramount consideration when managing inappropriate behaviour.

8.4 Safeguarding Risk Management

The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board and St Edward's College recognise the importance of a risk management approach to safeguarding and to minimising the risk of harm to children and young people in all College environments, without compromising their rights to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

We identify, assess and manage child safety risks in all College environments, based on a range of factors including the nature of our College's activities, physical and online environments, and the characteristics of the student body, through our Risk Management Program.

The College conducts an annual self-assessment in regard to the NSW Child Safe Standards, which identifies gaps and areas of improvement. The self- assessment is conducted through the Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) online portal. College implements the required actions and identified risks collated from the self-assessment.

The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board, the Principal and the Executive/Leadership Team monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these actions at least annually.

8.4.1 Safeguarding Record Keeping and Privacy

The College is committed to best practice record keeping about child safety incidents and concerns.

We record all internal and external reports of child safety incidents and concerns, as well as any other responses by the College.

St Edward's College collects, uses, and discloses information about children, young people and their families, including information in safeguarding records, in accordance with NSW and federal privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our College collects, uses and discloses information, refer to our Privacy Policy.

8.4.2 Communications

St Edward's College is committed to communicating our child safety and protection strategies, policies and procedures to our College community through the measures set out in the

Implementation section below. In addition, we:

communicate through:

- the school website
- newsletters
- emails
- social media

9 SAFEGUARDING POLICIES AND PRACTICES REVIEW AND IMPROVEMENT

St Edward's College is committed to the continuous improvement of our safeguarding policies and procedures and of our child safety and protection practices. The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board reviews these policies and procedures every three years or earlier if required, for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with child protection legislation, regulations and standards.

When undertaking these reviews, The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board/EREA NSW Colleges Ltd:

- actively seeks, actions, and incorporates feedback from students, families, the wider College community, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- analyses any complaints, concerns and child safety incidents that may have occurred
- communicates any learnings, adjustments or amendments to policy and practice widely throughout the College community.

10 IMPLEMENTATION

The Safeguarding Policy is published on our College's public website.

It is provided to new Staff, to Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers and to Direct Contact and Regular Contractors at their induction. Training about the Safeguarding Policy is also included in annual refresher training for Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors.

All Visitors to the College, including Casual Volunteers and Casual Contractors, are provided with information about the Safeguarding Policy and the EREA Code of Conduct, and how to report child safety incidents or concerns to the College and to relevant external authorities, through the website.

Safeguarding related policies and procedures are also communicated to Staff, Volunteers, Contractors and other members of the College community through other mediums such as Newsletters, annual reports and student packages.

The College makes these documents accessible to students by providing all students with a child-friendly version of it and the Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, found on the Student Portal or bullying@stedwards.nsw.edu.au, and by communicating them through the Student Portal and website.

11 BREACH OF THIS POLICY

St Edward's College enforces the Safeguarding Policy and the Safeguarding Codes of Conduct.

In the event of any non-compliance, we will instigate a review, in a timely and fair manner, that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- the restriction of duties
- suspension
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement.

The OCG monitors and enforces compliance with the NSW Child Safe Standards for all child safe organisations in NSW, including schools.

Where any Staff, Contractor or Volunteer refuse to comply with this policy or demonstrate behaviours that are not safe, they will be immediately suspended from their role while the matter is being investigated.

12 POLICY REVIEW

A review of this Safeguarding Policy is conducted every three years or earlier if required, such as due to changes in legislation or practices and/or where a critical incident occurs.

The EREA NSW Colleges Ltd Board is responsible for ensuring that this Policy and its Procedures are reviewed and updated as needed and for approving this Policy and its Procedures.

13 RELATED DOCUMENTS AND LEGISLATIVE INSTRUMENTS

- [Attachment 1- Definitions and Key Indicators of Abuse and Other Harm](#)
- EREA Code of Conduct, including section 3.0 Child Safe Code of Conduct
- [Safeguarding Complaints Management Policy and Procedures](#)

- [Safeguarding Recruitment Procedures](#)
- [WWCC Policy and Procedure](#)
- [NSW Child Safe Standards](#)
- [National Catholic Safeguarding Standards](#)
- Department of Communities and Justice, [Reporting a Child at Risk](#)
- Department of Communities and Justice, [Mandatory Reporters](#)

14 POLICY ADMINISTRATION

Action	Detail
Responsible Director	Director Safeguarding
Approved by	EREA NSW Colleges Lt Board
Approval date	13 June 2024
Effective date	13 June 2024
Review date	June 2027
Policy ID	2024-03