Child Safety Responsibilities Policy Statement

This *Child Safety Responsibilities Policy Statement* (**Policy Statement**) sets out how Aitken College allocates responsibility for meeting its commitment to providing a safe and supportive environment for students and embedding an organisational culture of student safety.

The Policy Statement forms part of the College's Child Safe Program.

Definitions

Please refer to the *Child Safe Program Definitions* document for definitions of terms used in this document.

Role of the Board

The Board is the governing body for Aitken College Limited, ABN 22 616 193 616, the legal entity that operates the College.

The Board is ultimately responsible for ensuring that student safety (and in particular child safety) is the College's paramount consideration.

The Board is responsible for the following, without limitation:

- Acquiring information and keeping up-to-date on student safety matters through engaging in professional development, and completing the College's online webinars and training.
- Developing strategies to embed a culture of student safety at the College, which comply with the Board's obligations under *Ministerial Order No. 1359 – Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools*.
- Assigning roles and responsibilities for achieving the College's student safety strategies.
- Informing the College community about the College's student safety strategies, and allocation of roles and responsibilities.
- Ensuring that the College, and in particular the Principal, has adequate resources to achieve the College's student safety strategies.
- Keeping the Principal and (through the Principal) all staff accountable for achieving the College's student safety strategies.
- Ensuring that student safety remains an annual board agenda item for review, reflection and discussion.
- Periodically reviewing the effectiveness of the College's student safety strategies in practice (including by, if considered appropriate, revising those strategies).

Individual Board members are required to comply with the College's *Child Safety Policy Statement*, *Child Safety Code of Conduct* and Child Safe Program, as well as their legal and professional obligations with respect to the prevention and reporting of child abuse or reportable conduct.

In the case of a student safety concerns involving the Principal or an individual Board member, the Board's Chair will assume any responsibilities conferred by this document or the College's Child Safe Program.

Role of the Principal

The Board delegates responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the College to the Principal, and in particular the care, safety and welfare of students.

The Principal is therefore responsible at a day-to-day level, and accountable, for taking all practical measures to ensure that:

- The College's student safety strategies are achieved, both in policy and practice.
- Staff (including Child Safety Officers/Champions) are educated, and complying with, their professional and statutory responsibilities regarding student safety.
- The College has a strong student safety culture.

- Staff (including the Principal, Executive Team and Child Safety Officers/Champions) are enabled, prepared and supported when managing student safety complaints, including in their support of the student(s) involved (and, where appropriate, their families).
- Support is organised to assist parties following a disclosure or suspicion of harm or abuse.
- Concerns about student safety are dealt with in accordance with the College's policies and procedures, and any statutory obligations.
- The Board receives timely reports regarding student safety concerns and risks, or any developments regarding the College's student safety obligations.

The Principal is the "head" of the College for the purposes of the Reportable Conduct Scheme.

Role of the Leadership Teams

The College's Executive Team is responsible for modelling a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to student safety issues.

Where appropriate, the Executive Team will assist the Principal with his or her student safety responsibilities, as outlined in this document and otherwise required by legislation and good practice.

Role of the Senior Child Safety Officer/Champion

The College has appointed the Deputy Principal as its Senior Child Safety Officer/Champion.

The Senior Child Safety Officer's/Champion's key responsibilities include:

- Being a first point of contact for all student safety concerns or queries for the wider community.
- Ensuring that other Child Safety Officers/Champions understand and properly fulfil their responsibilities.
- Ensuring that all Child Safety Officers/Champions undergo appropriate annual training in the College's Child Safe Program, their legal and professional responsibilities, and how to appropriately respond to student safety concerns and incidents.
- Coordinating the College's response to student safety incidents, in consultation with the College's Principal and the Leadership Team.
- Designating alternative procedures for responding to reported student safety concerns if a Child Safety Officer/Champion is not able to perform the role, for example if they are absent from work or have a conflict of interest.
- Reviewing and assessing the effectiveness of the College's response to a student safety incident.
- Ensuring that the College's Child Safe Program is effectively implemented and communicated to all relevant stakeholders.
- ensuring that College Leadership, all Staff, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors undertake Child Safe training so that they are able to identify signs of abuse and other harm, understand how to respond and know when to make a referral either internally or to an external agency
- inducting and managing the training of new Staff, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors, in particular aspects of the Child Safe Program, specifically our procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

Role of Child Safety Officers/Champions

The College has appointed the Assistant Principals and the Deputy Heads of Primary/Secondary (Culture and Pastoral) as the Child Safety Officers/Champions.

Key responsibilities of Child Safety Officers/Champions include:

- Having a good working knowledge of the College's Child Safe Policy Statement and Child Safe Program.
- Without replacing any legal reporting obligations any person may have, promptly managing the College's response to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, and ensuring that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously.

- Ensuring that the College's *Child Safe Policy Statement* is clearly communicated to all key stakeholders including students, parents/carers, staff and volunteers.
- Ensuring that the College's *Child Safe Policy Statement* and Child Safe Program are being implemented effectively.
- Ensuring that there are clear procedures for anyone to report student safety concerns and reportable conduct matters within the College.
- Promoting student safety issues within the College community and responding to general queries with respect to the College's *Child Safe Policy Statement* and Child Safe Program.
- Acting as 'Child Safety Champions' and ensuring a strong and sustainable student protection culture is embedded within the College.
- Being a first point of contact for staff, or other members of the College community, raising student safety concerns within the College.
- offering assistance and support when a member of the College community receives or makes a disclosure of abuse or other harm
- where authority is delegated from the Principal or Deputy Principal, promptly managing the **College**'s response to a child safety incident or concern, and ensuring that the incident, allegation, disclosure or suspicion is taken seriously
- Assisting the Principal, Senior Child Safety Officer/Champion and other senior staff members in coordinating appropriate responses to student safety incidents, including liaising with the police and other external agencies and responding to a student who makes, or is affected by, an allegation of child abuse.
- Ensuring the College's *Child Safe Policy Statement* and Child Safe Program are reviewed on a regular basis by an appropriate member of staff.

If a Child Safety Officer/Champion cannot perform their role, for example, due to conflicts of interest or absence, these duties must be performed by either another College Child Safety Officer/Champion, the Senior Child Safety Officer/Champion or the Principal.

Role of Staff (including Volunteers and Contractors)

All staff are required to comply with the College's *Child Safety Policy Statement*, *Child Safety Code of Conduct* and Child Safe Program, as well as their legal and professional obligations with respect to the prevention and reporting of child abuse or reportable conduct.

It is each such staff member's individual responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse or reportable conduct, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have with one of the College's Child Safety Officers/Champions and/or with external agencies where required. In this regard, staff are encouraged to voice their concerns, no matter how minor, trivial or insignificant.

All contractors (including External Education Providers) and volunteers are required to adhere to the College's *Child Safety Policy Statement* and *Child Safety Code of Conduct* and are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment. They too have legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse or reportable conduct allegations.

Each contractor and volunteer involved in child-connected work has a responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse or reportable conduct, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have with one of the College's Child Safety Officers/Champions and/or with external agencies where required.

Communication

This document is available to the College community and public on the College website.

This document is available to staff as part of the Child Safe Program. The Child Safe Program forms part of the College's induction program for incoming staff, and aspects of (and updates to) the Child Safe Program will be addressed in the College's professional development updates, bulletins and newsletters.

Approval and review

The College's Board has endorsed this document.

The Child Safe Program will be reviewed annually.

Related documents

This document forms part of the College's Child Safe Program and should be read in conjunction with its various policies and procedures, including the following:

- Child Safe Policy Statement
- Child Safe Program Definitions
- Child Safety Staff Code of Conduct
- Reporting and Responding to Child Safety Concerns Policy Statement

If you wish to discuss this policy or provide feedback please email admin@aitkencollege.edu.au.

Revision History

Version	Date	Reviewed by (name)	Position/Title	Approved by
1	12/11/2020	Josie Crisara (together with RK Lawyers) College Board	Principal	College Board
	12/07/2021	Endorsed by Aitken College Board		
2	08/04/2022	Amy Schembri	Compliance Manager	College Board
	30/05/2022	Endorsed by Aitken College Board		
2.1	13/04/2023	Josie Crisara	Principal	College Board
	29/05/2023	Endorsed by Aitken College Board		
2.2	04/04/2024	Josie Crisara	Principal	College Board
	27/05/2024	Endorsed by Aitken College Board		
2.3	23/04/2025	Josie Crisara	Principal	College Board
3	31/10/2025	Josie Crisara	Principal	
3.1	22/04/2026	Josie Crisara	Principal	College Board