

Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Addendum to:

A Guide to Support Victorian Schools to Meet Child Safe Standard 7

Strategies to Promote Child Empowerment and Participation

Catholic schools hold the care, wellbeing and safety of children as a fundamental responsibility, drawn from the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ.

PURPOSE

This addendum should be read in conjunction with *A Guide to Support Victorian Schools to Meet Child Safe Standard 7: Strategies to Promote Child Empowerment and Participation* (the Guide).

[Ministerial Order 870](#), Child Safe Standards, has been implemented to ensure that all Victorian schools are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect. All schools MUST meet the requirements under Child Safe Standard 7, as set out within the corresponding Legislation and this Guide.



MEETING CHILD SAFE STANDARD 7 IN CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

There are four elements under Child Safe Standard 7. In meeting each of these elements it is important to consider the implications for Catholic schools.

The teaching of Christian sexuality and respectful relationships in Catholic schools seeks to assist children and young people to grow and develop into healthy, mature adults, capable of realising their full potential as human beings created in the image and likeness of God. Grounded in the Christian understanding of the dignity of the person and sacredness of life, sexuality and respectful relationships education in Catholic schools should be:

- imparted in the context of Catholic moral teachings leading to the formation of a Christian conscience;
- enshrined in core pedagogical practices that are age-appropriate, respectful, sensitive of culture and family background and differentiated to support the learning and developmental needs of the child;
- endorsed by the Principal and consistent with Diocesan policies;
- reflective of the accountabilities documented in the Victorian Curriculum and *Ministerial Order 870*: Child Safe Standards (Standard 7).

CONSIDERATION OF CATHOLIC CONTEXT

Under CSS-7 schools are required to deliver appropriate education about:

Element 1: Standards of behaviour for students attending the school

Each Diocesan education office requires schools to develop their own pastoral care policy. This policy should set out standards of behaviour for students (or a “behavioural code”). The Guide directs schools to the appropriate policies for each diocese and sets out recommended practice.

See your Diocesan education office for further advice.

Elements 2 & 3: Healthy and Respectful Relationships (including sexuality), Resilience

The Guide establishes that the learning standards under Personal and Social Capability and Health and Physical Education of the Victorian Curriculum support schools in meeting this requirement.

Within Catholic schools it is important to consider that respectful relationships and human sexuality should always be imparted in the context of faith and Catholic moral teachings leading to the formation of a Christian conscience.

Schools have a choice in how they address healthy and respectful relationships including sexuality and resilience. The Guide suggests a range of teaching and learning materials that schools can draw on.

The Victorian Department of Education and Training has developed *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships* teaching and learning materials. This is a recommended resource in government schools. Catholic schools are encouraged to utilise Topics 1-6 which focus on social emotional learning and resilience. Topics 7 and 8 require appropriate discernment. Not all material in Topics 7 and 8 are appropriate for use in the context of Catholic teachings. However, some key content on child abuse awareness and prevention is contained within these Topics 7 and 8.

See your Diocesan education office for further advice on respectful relationships and sexuality education.

Element 4: Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention

The guide details a range of existing materials schools can draw from, including *Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships*. Please note that Topics 7 and 8:

- include key content to build students’ capacity to respond to abuse (“no-go-tell” model)
- require appropriate discernment in context of Catholic teachings.

See your Diocesan education office for further advice.

For further information and support on meeting the Child Safe Standards please visit www.education.vic.gov.au/protect and/or contact your Diocesan education office.