

## Child Safe Policy

This Child Safe Policy has been developed in accordance with and implements Principle 1 of the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) (National Principles).

The Child Safe Policy is published on our Kindergarten's public website and provided to new Staff, and to Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors at induction. It is also communicated through other mediums such as our welcome/induction packs.

## Purpose

Our Child Safe Policy, which includes our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, was written to demonstrate the strong commitment of St Martin's Kindergarten to promoting children's wellbeing and safeguarding children from harm, and to provide an outline of the policies and practices that we have developed to keep our children safe, including from abuse or other harm.

It is an overarching policy that provides the key elements of our approach to St Martin's Kindergarten as a child safe organisation and sets the tone for St Martin's Kindergarten's entire Child Safe Program.

The Child Safe Policy provides the framework for:

- implementing the National Principles
- developing systems, practices, policies, and procedures that promote child protection within St Martin's Kindergarten
- creating a safe and supportive Kindergarten environment and a positive and robust child protection culture
- promoting and openly discussing child safety issues within St Martin's Kindergarten
- complying with all laws, regulations, and standards relevant to child protection in South Australia.

## Scope

St Martin's Kindergarten's Child Safe Policy applies to all adults in St Martin's Kindergarten, including Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, External Education Providers, parents/carers, and other family members. This Policy applies in all St Martin's Kindergarten environments, both physical and online, and on-site and off-site St Martin's Kindergarten grounds (e.g., camps and excursions).

## Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

All children and young people who come to St Martin's Kindergarten have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe and are able to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We have a zero tolerance for harm to children and young people and are committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm.

St Martin's Kindergarten regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintaining a child safe culture.

Each member of St Martin's Kindergarten has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role that they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children is at the forefront of all that they do and every decision that they make.

## Child Safe Standards

### The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

The National Principles were developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission in response to recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The National Principles are comprised of 10 Principles that were informed by, but go further than, the 10 Child Safe Standards recommended by the Royal Commission. They are:



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

St Martin's Kindergarten is a child safe and child-centred organisation. Our environment is friendly and welcoming to all children and young people.

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

We ensure children know about their rights to safety, information, and participation. We recognise the importance of friendships and support from peers. We actively seek to understand what makes children feel safe in our Kindergarten and regularly communicate with children about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

## **Parents/Carers, Families and Community Involvement at St Martin's Kindergarten**

St Martin's Kindergarten recognises that parents and carers have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their children. We ensure they participate in decisions affecting their children.

We ensure that families and relevant communities (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, other communities that make up our Staff and children cohort, and the local community in which our Kindergarten operates) know about St Martin's Kindergarten's operations and policies, including the Child Safe Policy and Child Safe 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.

We build cultural safety at St Martin's Kindergarten through partnerships with relevant communities.

## **Valuing Diversity in St Martin's Kindergarten**

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

- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families
- support the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
- support children with a disability and their families and act to promote their participation
- welcome children 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 communities 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 children of all abilities.

## **Our Child Safe Program**

St Martin's Kindergarten is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Safe Program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. We adopt a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors including the nature of our Kindergarten's activities, physical and online environments, and the characteristics of the children in our care.

Our Child Safe Program relates to all aspects of child safety and protecting children from harm, and establishes work systems, practices, policies, and procedures to create and maintain a child safe environment and culture at St Martin's Kindergarten. It includes:

- Child Safe Codes of Conduct
- clear information as to what constitutes harm and associated key indicators of different forms of harm to children and young people
- procedures for reporting to external agencies, including Mandatory Notifications to the Department for Child Protection (DCP), and Reporting to Police, which make clear that all Staff, Volunteers and Contractors must, as their first priority, fulfill their legal obligations to report harm or risk of harm to a child to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) and to Police

- clear procedures for reporting child safety incidents or concerns internally, and for responding to incidents or allegations of harm to a child or young person
- strategies to support, encourage and enable Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, parents/carers, and children to understand, identify, discuss, and report child safety matters
- procedures for recruiting and screening members of the Management Team, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower children and keep them safe
- strategies to support and encourage the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with disability
- child protection training
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of harm to protect, support and assist children
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations, and standards (including the National Principles)
- a system for continuous review and improvement.

As a part of St Martins Kindergarten's induction process, all Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors are required to complete induction in our child protection policies, practices, and procedures. All Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors also receive refresher and ongoing child protection training.

Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors are supported and supervised by St Martin's Kindergarten's Child Safety Officers and Management Team to ensure that they are compliant with St Martin's Kindergarten's approach to child safety.

## **Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns to St Martin's Kindergarten**

**Any person, including a staff member, Volunteer, Contractor, parent/carer or a child, can at any time report a reasonable suspicion about harm to a child or young person directly to CARL on 13 14 78 or online.**

CARL is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.**

If you need guidance on making a report, or have questions regarding child safety, contact one of the Child Safety Officers.

Our Child Safe Program provides detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child safety incidents and concerns to relevant external authorities.

It also contains detailed guidance for Members of the Committee of Management, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors on how to identify key indicators of different forms of harm to children and young people and how to report child safety incidents or concerns:

- to relevant external authorities, including DCP and the Police
- internally to one of our Learning Community's Child Safety Contact Officers.

**Children** at St Martin's Kindergarten are provided with information about and encouraged to use multiple pathways to raise child safety incidents or concerns about or at St Martin's Kindergarten. These include by contacting CARL and/or by reporting internally to St Martin's Kindergarten via informal and formal ways, an 'anonymous' way, and through external child advocacy or child safety organisations.

**Parents/carers, family members and other community members** who have child safety concerns or who suspect that a child or young person associated with St Martin's Kindergarten may be subject to harm should immediately contact CARL. They should then also contact:

- St Martin's Kindergarten's Senior Child Safety Officers, which are the Directors of the Kindergarten (contact details in table below), or
- if the concern relates to the Director, the Chair of the Committee of Management.

Any person can also contact the Senior Child Safety Officer, or LESNW Executive Director if they have concerns regarding St Martin's Kindergarten's leadership in relation to child safety.

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

**Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.**

## **Responsibilities for Child Safe at St Martin's Kindergarten**

Child Safe is everyone's responsibility. All adults in St Martin's Kindergarten have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:

### **St Martin's Kindergarten's Child Safety Officers**

A number of senior staff members are nominated as St Martin's Kindergarten's Child Safety Officers. Our Child Safety Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child safety and protection issues and can support Staff and Volunteers making a report to CARL. They are a point of contact for raising child safety concerns within St Martin's Kindergarten, subsequent to reporting directly to CARL. They are also responsible for championing child protection within St Martin's Kindergarten and assisting in coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

Contact details for our Child Safety Officers are set out below:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Contact No.</b>	<b>Email Address</b>
Chelsea Rodda	Director	08 8725 5702	chelsea.rodde@stmartinskindergarten.sa.edu.au
Alex Walther	Director	08 8725 5702	alex.walther@stmartinskindergarten.sa.edu.au

St Martin's Kindergarten has appointed the Directors of the Kindergarten as the Senior Child Safety Officers.

The Senior Child Safety Officer has additional child protection responsibilities, such as being St Martin's Kindergarten's contact person for child safety concerns or queries by parents/carers and other members of the wider St Martin's Kindergarten and coordinating St Martin's Kindergarten's response to child safety incidents in consultation with the Management Team and the Committee of Management.

### **The Committee of Management**

The Committee of Management is St Martin's Kindergarten's governing body. It is responsible for approving our Child Safe Program and ensuring that St Martin's Kindergarten has appropriate resources to effectively implement the National Principles, and our Child Safe Program.

### **The Committee of Management's Child Safe Champion**

One member of the Committee of Management is appointed or identified as a Child Safe Champion. The Child Safe Champion is responsible for ensuring that a child safe culture is prioritised, modelled, and championed at the Committee of Management level of St Martin's Kindergarten.

### **The Director(s)**

The Directors are responsible, and will be accountable for, the operational management of St Martin's Kindergarten, and the Child Safe Program. The Directors are responsible for taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Safe Policy and St Martin's Kindergarten's Child Safe Program is implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within St Martin's Kindergarten.

### **Staff Members**

All Staff are required to comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct, be familiar with our Child Safe Program and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of harm and risk of harm to children and young people and Working with Children Checks.

Each current and new St Martin's Kindergarten staff member is required to sign a written statement indicating that they have read and acknowledged St Martin's Kindergarten's Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key indicators of harm and risk of harm, to be observant, to meet their legal obligations to report harm and risk of harm directly to CARL and the Police, and subsequently raise all child safety incidents and concerns with one of the Child Safety Officers.

### **Volunteers**

All Volunteers at St Martin's Kindergarten are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in St Martin's Kindergarten environment.

All Volunteers are required to comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct. Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers are required to understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of harm and risk of harm to children and young people.

Relevant Volunteers are required to maintain a valid Working with Children Check as set out in the Child Safe Human Resources Management section, below.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key indicators of harm to children and young people, to be observant, to meet their legal obligations to report harm and risk of harm directly to CARL and the Police, and subsequently raise all child safety incidents and concerns with one of the Child Safety Officers.



## **Contractors**

All Contractors engaged by St Martin's Kindergarten are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in St Martin's Kindergarten environment.

All Contractors engaged by St Martin's Kindergarten are required to comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct. Direct Contact and Regular Contractors are required to understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of harm and risk of harm to children and young people.

Relevant Contractors, as set out in the Child Safe Human Resources Management section below, are required to maintain a valid Working with Children Check.

St Martin's Kindergarten may include these requirements in the written agreement between it and the Contractor. Relevant contractors are required to maintain a valid Working with Children Check as set out in the Child Safe Human Resources Management section, below.

Direct Contact and Regular Contractors include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches, and St Martin's Kindergarten cleaners. This also includes music teachers and other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by children and their families directly, rather than St Martin's Kindergarten, but have an agreement with St Martin's Kindergarten to use St Martin's Kindergarten's facilities.

## **External Education Providers**

An External Education Provider is any organisation that St Martin's Kindergarten has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a child or children enrolled at St Martin's Kindergarten. The delivery of such a course may take place on St Martin's Kindergarten premises or elsewhere.

All External Education Providers engaged by St Martin's Kindergarten are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in all St Martin's Kindergarten environments. They must have lodged a child safe environments statement to the Department of Human Services prior to being engaged by the Learning Community.

All External Education Providers engaged by St Martin's Kindergarten are required by St Martin's Kindergarten to comply with our Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Codes of Conduct.

St Martin's Kindergarten may include these requirements in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

## **Child Safe Human Resources Management**

St Martin's Kindergarten applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of Staff and Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers. Our recruitment procedures ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children and young people. All Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors at St Martin's Kindergarten are required to maintain a valid Working with Children Check.

St Martin's Kindergarten ensures that St Martin's Kindergarten Management Team, Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors undergo child protection induction, and ongoing education and training as part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from harm.

Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors are provided with regular supervision and performance monitoring by their manager/a senior member of Staff. St Martin's Kindergarten ensures that professional development programs for Staff include child protection education and training programs.

## **Child Safe Risk Management**

St Martin's Kindergarten recognises the importance of a risk management approach to minimising the potential for harm to children and young people to occur and we use this information to inform our policies, procedures, and activity planning.

St Martin's Kindergarten has developed a comprehensive Risk Management Program to assist in the identification, assessment, and management of child safety risks in all St Martin's Kindergarten environments.

## **Record Keeping**

St Martin's Kindergarten has a **Child Safe Record Keeping** policy and is committed to best practice record keeping.

In accordance with our policy, and as required by our **Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns**, all internal and external reports of child safety incidents and concerns, as well as any other responses by St Martin's Kindergarten are recorded using the **Responding to an Incident, Disclosure or Suspicion of Harm to a Child or Young Person Template**.

When keeping records of child safety incidents or concerns, St Martin's Kindergarten maintains confidentiality and privacy for children and families in accordance with federal privacy legislation.

## **Program Review**

St Martin's Kindergarten is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Safe Program. The Program as a whole is reviewed annually for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection related laws, regulations and standards.

When undertaking these reviews, St Martin's Kindergarten actively seeks, actions, and incorporates feedback from children, families, the wider St Martin's Kindergarten Community, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors, and will communicate any adjustments or amendments widely throughout St Martin's Kindergarten.

## **Non-Compliance with Our Child Safe Policy**

St Martin's Kindergarten enforces this Child Safe Policy and our Child Safe Codes of Conduct. In the event of any non-compliance, we will instigate a review 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 or
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract, or engagement.

## **Policy Review**

This Child Safe Policy has been approved by the Committee of Management on: 06/09/2022.

Signed: Chelsea Rodda

The Policy is reviewed at least biennially, in light of experience, the effectiveness of procedures and the publication of relevant research.