



Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

1. Introduction

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (MACS) is a company limited by guarantee, established in 2021 by the Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne to assume responsibility for the governance and operation of MACS schools across the Archdiocese of Melbourne. MACS subsequently established Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Specialist Schools Ltd (MACSS) to deliver educational services to children with diverse needs, and Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Early Years Education (MACSEYE) to provide early years care and education services.

The [Statement of Mission](#) set out in the MACS Constitution, and in the constitutions of its subsidiaries, MACSS and MACSEYE, articulates the Archbishop's expectations of Catholic education within the Archdiocese. It provides an essential context and foundation for the organisation, and for the direction that the MACS Board must observe in pursuing the company's objects.

The Board is responsible for ensuring that all policies and procedures relating to the operations of MACS and its subsidiaries are consistent with the Statement of Mission, the company's objects, and any directions issued by the Archbishop from time to time.

2. Purpose

This policy sets out MACS' commitment to providing safe, healthy and supportive environments where our community can learn, work and flourish. It prioritises the Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW) of students, staff and others we interact with, recognising that safety is fundamental to quality Catholic education and is delivered in accordance with Victorian health and safety laws, Catholic teaching and respect for human dignity.

3. Scope

This policy applies to MACS and MACS schools, including specialist schools operated by the MACS subsidiary, MACSS, and school boarding premises operated by MACS schools. It applies to all MACS-employed staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors, students and school communities engaged in MACS and MACSS workplaces, programs and operations.

4. Principles

Guided by *MACS 2030: Forming Lives to Enrich the World*, this policy prioritises the health safety and wellbeing of every individual across our system, ensuring that our learning and working environments enable all to flourish. MACS is guided by the following principles:

- 1 Human dignity is at the heart of health, safety and wellbeing.** Created in the image and likeness of God, every person has inherent dignity. We are therefore called to protect and promote health, safety and wellbeing and to create the conditions in which all may flourish.
- 2 Health, safety and wellbeing are foundational to MACS' mission,** enabling safe inclusive and supportive environments where all staff, students and communities can learn, work, contribute and grow.
- 3 Every person has the right to a safe, inclusive and supportive workplace and learning environment,** where risks to physical and psychological wellbeing are eliminated or minimised so far as reasonably practicable.
- 4 Safety is a shared responsibility and an expression of care for one another,** supported through consultation, informed decision-making and consideration of how our actions may affect others.
- 5 MACS operates in accordance with its legislative and regulatory obligations** under Victorian health and safety legislation and other applicable laws.

- 6 **Health, safety and wellbeing are integrated into all aspects of MACS' mission, governance and operations**, with core organisational functions working together to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach to safety and wellbeing.
- 7 **Leaders at all levels model and enable a strong culture of safety, care and accountability**, recognising that leadership capability and behaviour are central to excellence in teaching, learning, work and community life.
- 8 **Continuous learning, reflection and improvement strengthen our systems and culture**, using evidence, consultation, feedback and shared experience to improve health, safety and wellbeing outcomes over time.

5. Responsibilities

MACS Board is responsible for:

- providing governance oversight of health, safety and wellbeing across MACS
- setting the strategic direction and expectations for health, safety and wellbeing, consistent with MACS' mission, values and organisational objectives
- approving this policy and receiving assurance that appropriate governance, resources, systems and controls are in place to support its implementation
- monitoring organisational health, safety and wellbeing performance, significant risks, emerging issues and compliance with relevant legislative and regulatory obligations
- overseeing the effectiveness of the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System (HSWMS)
- promoting a culture of safety, care, accountability and continuous improvement through effective governance and stewardship.

MACS, as the employer, and its schools are responsible for:

- providing and maintaining, so far as is reasonably practicable, workplaces and learning environments that are safe and without risks to physical and psychological health
- establishing clear expectations, processes and guidance to support implementation of the **HSWMS**
- providing appropriate facilities, resources and systems are available to support safe work and learning
- engaging with staff, students, families, contractors and the wider community, listening to their perspective and understanding needs that are important to them
- providing information, induction, training, mentoring and coaching to enable safe work practices
- monitoring HSW performance using insights and learnings to support continuous improvement.

Leaders (executives, management and principals) are responsible for:

- modelling respectful and inclusive behaviours and creating psychologically safe environments
- implementing MACS' HSW expectations and enabling others to do the same
- identifying, monitoring and managing HSW risks in their workplaces
- consulting with staff, students (where appropriate) and Health and Safety Representatives (**HSRs**) and reflecting their insights in HSW decisions
- ensuring workers have the information, capability and support to work safely
- responding to concerns, incidents and hazards in a timely and constructive manner
- monitoring implementation of health, safety and wellbeing requirements and addressing gaps
- supporting early intervention and recovery following physical and mental injury or illness.

MACS workers (staff, contractors and volunteers) are responsible for:

- acting safely and supporting MACS' approach to HSW
- taking reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their actions
- following MACS procedures, guidance and training, including using equipment, material and systems

- cooperating with MACS to support HSW initiatives, improvements and risk controls
- reporting incidents, concerns, hazards and near misses as soon as practicable
- participating in injury management and rehabilitation process, where applicable.

MACS students are encouraged and supported to:

- follow safety instructions and behave in a way that keeps themselves and others safe
- report hazards and concerns to a trusted adult
- contribute positively to safe and respectful learning environment.

Wider MACS community (parents, carers, visitors) are expected and encouraged to:

- act safely and respectfully while on MACS premises or participating in MACS activities
- follow reasonable instructions provided by MACS staff to support safety and wellbeing
- raise concerns or hazards with MACS staff if they observe anything unsafe.

6. Hazard and risk management

MACS aims to identify and manage hazards and risks that may affect the physical and psychological health and wellbeing of our community. Consistent with the MACS Risk Management Framework, our approach focuses on proactive identification, proportionate controls and continuous learning. To support this, MACS will:

- identify and assess hazards and risks, including psychosocial hazards, and evaluate potential consequences and likelihood
- apply the **hierarchy of control** to eliminate risks where reasonably practicable, or otherwise reduce them as low as **reasonably practicable**
- develop, implement, maintain and monitor appropriate management responses and controls to ensure they remain effective
- build capability by providing information and training that support leaders and staff recognise hazards, assess risks, and verify control effectiveness
- monitor actions to completion, using available systems and insights to track risk reduction activities and learn from experience.

7. Consultation, communication and support

MACS is committed to engaging with staff, students, contractors and external stakeholders on HSW matters and encourages their participation in and contribution to HSW initiatives and safe practices. We elect, establish, train and support Health and Safety Representatives (**HSR**) and health and safety committees across all schools and offices, consistent with relevant health and safety legislation.

MACS provides access to an employee assistance program (**EAP**) and promotes the service through proactive and ongoing communication and encouragement to participate in wellbeing programs. Additional wellbeing supports may be communicated to staff as they become available.

8. HSW management system and requirements

MACS is committed to implementing systems and practices that best serve our schools, staff and students. Our HSWMS is simple and robust, establishing consistent expectations across all schools and offices while allowing flexible implementation that meets the varied needs of our diverse school communities.

Procedures and systems that support the implementation of this policy are documented in the MACS HSWMS. The HSWMS is tailored to MACS and forms an integral part of management practices, culture and day-to-day operations across our schools and offices. HSWMS align with and are supported by a range of MACS functions to ensure a coordinated and consistent approach to HSW across all schools and offices. The HSWMS is accessible to all relevant staff, students, contractors and visitors and includes:

- Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- common management system standards and procedures
- risk-specific standards and procedures
- guidelines, tools, training and supporting materials to assist schools and offices meet HSW requirements
- HSW systems and platforms (such as incident management, risk management, training, etc).

9. Training and competency

MACS provide induction, information and training to support our staff and contractors in understanding their HSW responsibilities and conducting their roles in a safe and responsible manner. All staff are required to complete MACS' mandatory HSW training. As the HSWMS continues to develop, additional training and capability-building resources will be introduced to support safe practices and consistent implementation across schools and offices.

10. Incident and injury management

MACS encourages the prompt reporting of all HSW-related incidents, hazards and near misses so risks can be understood and addressed in a timely and supportive way. Where appropriate and as required by legislation, MACS will notify relevant regulatory authorities, using the localised processes and guidance outlined in the HSWMS.

MACS is committed to supporting staff who experience a work-related injury or illness. We promote safe recovery and return-to-work processes and provide assistance to help staff feel supported and recover well. Where appropriate, HSW incident learnings may be shared across schools and offices to help strengthen a culture of continuous improvement.

11. Monitoring, audit and continuous improvement

MACS is committed to continually strengthening our approach to HSW as our systems, tool and capability matures. We will monitor how effectively HSW risks are being managed and make use of available information, feedback, experience, reporting and insights to understand emerging trends, areas of strength and opportunities for improvement subject to privacy and health records legislation. Over time, we will continue to build and refine our approaches for reviewing performance, supporting leaders and improving the consistency and effectiveness of our HSWMS.

The MACS Executive Leadership Team, Board and relevant committees provide oversight on HSW performance and receive regular high-level reporting to support decision-making and organisational stewardship. The HSW Team contributes analysis and insights to assist the process, and as our system develops, MACS schools and offices will be supported to monitor their own progress.

12. Definitions

Definitions of standard terms used in this Policy can be found in the [Glossary of Terms](#).

Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HSW)

A broad term used to describe the overall health, safety and wellbeing of a group of people engaged in work or employment, also involving the management of risk in a workplace.

Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System (HSWMS)

The policies, procedures, processes, electronic platforms, tools, reports and responsibilities that combine to form the system for managing health, safety and wellbeing across the workplace.

Health and Safety Representative (HSR)

An elected employee responsible for representing employees within a designated work group on matters relating to occupational health and safety.

Hierarchy of control

A system for controlling risks ranked from most to least effective: elimination, substitution, engineering controls, administrative controls, and personal protective equipment (PPE).

Reasonably practicable

A measure is reasonably practicable if it is, or was at a particular time, reasonably able to be done to ensure health and safety, taking into account: the likelihood of the hazard or risk occurring, the degree of harm, what the person concerned knows or ought to know, ways to eliminate or reduce the risk, and the cost of those ways.

13. Related policies and documents

Supporting documents

Procedures, guidelines, tools and templates forming the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management System

Related MACS policies and documents

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Code of Conduct for MACS Staff
Complaints Handling Policy for MACS Schools
Emergency and Critical Incident Management Policy
Risk Management Framework
Travel Policy

Resources

Victorian Catholic Education Multi-Enterprise Agreement (current)

WorkSafe Victoria - a statutory body set up to, among other things, enforce Victoria's occupational health and safety laws and assist workers who experience a work-related injury or illness back into the workforce.

14. Legislation and standards

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)
Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2017 (Vic)
Occupational Health and Safety Amendment (Psychological Health) Regulations 2025 (Vic)
Workplace Injury Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2013 (Vic)
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
Victorian Child Safe Standards (Ministerial Order 1359)
Applicable Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination legislation
Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
Fair Work Regulations 2009 (Cth)

15. Policy information

Sponsoring executive	Director, People and Culture
Policy owner	General Manager, Health Safety and Wellbeing
Approving authority	MACS Board
Assigned board committee	People and Culture
Approval date	14 September 2026
Risk rating	Extreme
Date of next review	September 2027
Publication	Gabriel, CEVN

POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION	
Assigned framework	Employment
Supporting documents	See list of supporting documents and related policies above
Superseded documents	Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy – v2.0 – 2025 Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy – v1.0 – 2024 Occupational Health and Safety Policy – MACS Office – v1.0 – 2022 Occupational Health and Safety Policy – Schools – v1.0 – 2021