

## 1. Purpose

This document outlines the procedure to follow if you have formed a belief on reasonable grounds that there has been a breach of the College Student Protection Policy or Procedures.

Student Protection complaints covered by this procedure involve incidents or concerns about child abuse, grooming and other harm of a current or former student by:

- current or former staff members
- current or former students
- other people on the College premises or at a College event.

Mazenod College is committed to student protection strategies and procedures to ensure the care, safety and protection of all students.

## 2. Introduction

At Mazenod College, we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of students as a central and fundamental responsibility of our organisation. All students have a right to be safe and feel safe, and we commit to ensure and protect these rights in all aspects of our community and programs.

Mazenod College has a zero tolerance of child abuse and other harm. All allegations and safety concerns will be responded to sensitively, respectfully, actively and in a timely manner, in line with our lawful obligations and complaints handling procedures.

To enable the College to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students, and to comply with its legal obligations, it is critical that the College is informed about all student protection incidents or concerns that occur at, or otherwise involve the College.

Only complaints about student protection or non-compliance with Mazenod College student protection processes may be made under this procedure.

## 3. Definitions

### CHILD ABUSE

The long term and/or short term maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 years of age. It is the result of action or inaction which results in harm or injury to a child. It may involve ongoing, repeated or persistent abuse, or arise from a single incident. Four forms of child abuse are covered by WA law and are defined by the Department of Communities including: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect.

### STAFF MEMBER

For the purpose of this policy, this includes both paid and unpaid staff (including boarding staff, practicum student, trainee, intern, Oblate Brother)

### GROOMING

The use of a variety of manipulative and controlling techniques with a vulnerable subject in order to establish trust or normalise sexually harmful behaviour with the overall aim of facilitating exploitation and / or avoiding trust.

## 4. What type of complaint is covered by this procedure?

Only complaints about student protection incidents or concerns, or non-compliance with Student Protection processes may be made under this procedure. For other complaints refer to the Disputes and Complaints resolution Policy and Pathway documents.

Student Protection complaints covered by this procedure involve child abuse, grooming and other harm of a current or former student by:

- current or former staff members
- current or former students
- other people on the College premises or at a College event (this may include for example tutor, visitor, volunteer, parent / guardian, family member, coach, contractor, College Board member, external provider).

Due to the privacy and confidential nature of these types of complaints, a separate process has been established to manage incidents, complaints, allegations or concerns. This ensures the College can respond in a sensitive, respectful, active and timely manner, in line with our lawful obligations and complaints handling procedures.

## 5. How do I make a student protection related complaint?

Options for making a complaint about student protection incidents or concerns, or non-compliance with the College's Student Protection processes, include face to face meeting or correspondence:

Contact:	<b>Student Protection Officer</b> – Michael Anderson, Dean of Students
Telephone the College:	(08) 9291 1500 and ask to speak with the above contact
Send an email:	<a href="mailto:anderson.michael@mazenod.wa.edu.au">anderson.michael@mazenod.wa.edu.au</a>
Write a letter:	Student Protection Officer - Michael Anderson, Dean of Students Private and Confidential 55 Gladys Road, LESMURDIE WA 6076

Use our online feedback form: College website / Contact us / [Feedback form](#)

### Type of information required?

You will be requested to provide your name and contact details. Insufficient information may mean that further investigation and action by the College may be limited. Additionally, you are requested to provide:

- the name or details of the staff member or other person who you believe may not have complied with the College Student Protection processes
- the details of your concern
- other information that you believe may be relevant.

### Reports made in good faith

The College will take all complaints / reports of student protection issues seriously and therefore it is important that the person making the complaint does so in good faith. A report is made in good faith when it is relevant to the school's standard of conduct and made in the honest belief that the matter should be raised. Good faith may be negated by malice.

## 6. What happens when my student protection complaint is received?

The College is committed to investigating allegations and safety concerns in a sensitive, respectful, active and timely manner, in line with our lawful obligations.

### Immediate action

The safety needs of students will always be our first priority. If on receiving the information the staff member who is also a mandatory reporter forms the belief based on reasonable grounds that a child has been the subject of abuse,

*Learn what you are in the eyes of God.*

mandatory reporting procedures will be followed. As required by law, the Principal or delegate will report the matter to the Department of Communities' Child Protection and Community Services Division (CPFS), the Police and any other relevant agencies.

The College will ensure that support is provided to the student, staff members and any other person impacted by the situation. Information about advocacy and support services which may be able to assist them will be provided.

### Internal Investigation

If CPFS or Police are involved, the College will not proceed with an investigation unless permitted.

In situations where staff that received information have not yet formed a belief on reasonable grounds that a child has been the subject of abuse or that the College Student Protection procedures have not been followed, then the Principal will then conduct an internal investigation of the incident or complaint.

When conducting an investigation, the College follows the National Office of Child Safety's [Complaint Handling Guide: Upholding the Rights of Children and Young People](#).

The Principal or authorised delegate will involve appropriate supports for consultation and may delegate the investigation depending on the circumstance and type of investigation required.

- The type (nature and scope) of investigation will be determined by the Principal and will be identified subject to circumstance to ensure the investigation is prompt and impartial.
- Where appropriate, the investigation may be conducted by a person within and/or outside the College. The investigator may seek assistance with regard to relevant expertise, either internal or external to the College.
- Investigations will be objective, fair and independent, while preserving the confidentiality of the investigation.
- A record of steps taken in the investigation, including correspondence and critical decisions made will be maintained in a confidential and secure manner in line with College Records Management processes.

**Investigations relating to behaviour by a student against another student** will be managed according to the College Behaviour Policy.

**Investigation relating to behaviour by a non-staff member on college premises or college event** will be managed according to our Dispute and Complaints process, Code of Conduct and Student Protection policy and procedures.

### Disclosing information

Once the initial concern is raised, the person making the report will be advised how they will be kept updated through the key stages, including when the investigation has begun, during the process and when the investigation has been finalised. Noting, for sensitivity and confidentiality reasons, no information will be provided regarding the content of the investigation.

The College will only disclose with the wider community where it is warranted and legal to do so. The College will consult with relevant agencies (such as CPFS, Police, CEWA) to determine when, what type, and how information can be shared.

## 7. Reviews of investigation procedures and outcomes

If staff, students, parents /carers who are involved in the matter are not satisfied with the investigation or outcome they can request an internal review. The Internal review can consider the:

- procedures undertaken
- findings made
- disciplinary actions proposed (this will be in line with College Unsatisfactory Performance or Misconduct Policy).
- or indicated outcome.

**Requests for reviews of internal process or outcome** should be made to the Provincial (who will consult with the College Board Chair).

## Complaints about Non-Compliance with the Registration standards

The Director General of the Department of Education is responsible for ensuring that the College observes the Registration Standards, including Standard 6 about its complaints handling system.

Any student, parent or community member is entitled to contact the Director General with concerns about how the school has dealt with a complaint. Information is available on the Department of Education website<sup>1</sup>.

While the Director General may consider whether the school has breached the registration standards, she does not have power to intervene in a complaint or override the school's decision.

## 8. Related documents

Student Protection Policy  
Disputes and Complaints Resolution  
Code of Conduct

## 9. Continuous improvement

Following an investigation, a member of the College Leadership team will review that the procedures were followed. Complaints, concerns and incidents are also analysed to identify causes and any systemic issues to inform continuous improvement.

## 10. Review History

Year	Reviewed by:	Amendments / Review
2020	CLT	Approved for publication

<sup>1</sup> [www.education.wa.gov.au/non-government-school-complaints](http://www.education.wa.gov.au/non-government-school-complaints)