

Muhammadiyah Australia College

CHILD SAFETY RECORDKEEPING POLICY



Endorsed on:	April 2026
Endorsed by:	Board of Directors
Next Review:	April 2027

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that:

- ensure that all Muhammadiyah Australia College records relating to child safety and wellbeing are created, maintained and disposed of in accordance with the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards, including minimum retention periods; and
- College staff, volunteers and contractors understand and meet the requirements for creating, managing, storing and disposing of the College records.

This policy considers the specific requirements of the Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 1359 and the Public Record Office of Victoria Recordkeeping Standards.

Scope

This policy applies to the College staff, volunteers and contractors when creating, managing, and disposing of the College's administration and student records. All such records need to be properly managed.

Definitions

Child safety record

Any record that involves or relates to matters concerning child safety or which involves or relates to matters involving the safety or wellbeing of a Child, which may include Records relating to:

- mandatory reporting
- concerns or complaints relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child
- safety incidents involving a child
- reportable allegations
- reportable conduct
- other matters relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child.

Records

Information that the school creates, sends or receives that provides evidence of decisions, directions and school activities. Records may be in any format or media made or received by staff or volunteers including digital or physical formats, emails, text messages, meeting notes, observational notes, audiovisual recordings, photographs, social media posts and website pages. Such records are required to be kept for a specific period of time for legislative or other requirements before they can be destroyed.

Normal administrative practice

Working papers, drafts, duplicate copies of records stored elsewhere, CCTV footage, short-term facilitative records (such as phone messages), and unimportant records such as unsolicited 'junk mail' which may be destroyed without approval once administrative use has ended.

Policy

The College will ensure that:

- Full and accurate records of school activities and decisions relating to Child Safety are created and kept to meet legislative requirements and community needs.
- Staff and volunteers receive ongoing training about their recordkeeping and information sharing obligations in accordance with Clause 6.2 of Ministerial Order No. 1359.
- Child Safety records are organised so they can be readily accessed and used for authorised purposes.
- Systems and processes are developed to ensure Child Safety records are kept secure from unauthorised access, amendment, use, release and disposal.
- Child Safety records are stored in a secure physical location to protect them from misuse, damage, deterioration or loss and are preserved in a readable and accessible format for their minimum required retention period.
- Staff and volunteers do not dispose of any Child Safety records that are likely to be required in a legal proceeding.
- Staff and volunteers must obtain written authorisation from the Principal prior to disposing of any Child Safety records.
- The method used to dispose of Child Safety records is secure and permanent and is managed by the Business Manager.
- A register of Child Safety records disposal is maintained.

Child Safety Recordkeeping Procedures

Staff, volunteer and contractor responsibility

All school staff, volunteers and contractors who engage in child-connected work must follow these recordkeeping process, which includes:

- recording any concerns or complaints relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child
- recording any safety incidents involving a child
- recording any reportable allegations or reportable conduct
- keeping records of any other matters relating to child safety or the safety or wellbeing of a child.

Retention of records

Records concerning allegations and incidents of child sexual abuse cannot be destroyed for specific periods, depending on the type of record. Records of child sexual abuse incidents, allegations, or disclosures must be retained for a minimum of 99 years. All other student health and wellbeing records must be kept for a minimum of 75 years. Records should never be destroyed if they are needed for current or future legal proceedings. "Records" in this context includes both hardcopy and electronic records. Examples include:

- Receipts of disclosures, allegations and complaints (e.g. incident reports or file notes of conversations)
- Records about conducting investigations and inquiries (e.g. minutes of meetings or emails)
- Records about collecting evidence (e.g. photographs or audio-visual records)
- Records of interviews with witnesses (e.g. transcripts of interviews, witness statements, notes of meetings or discussions)
- Referrals to Government agencies or law enforcement (e.g. referral to DFFH Child Protection)
- Reports received from medical practitioners, psychologists, teachers, social workers or legal officers
- Records imposing any disciplinary action
- Records of any legal proceedings
- Records of any appeals

Creating records

Staff, volunteers or contractors should follow these practices:

- If a verbal disclosure of abuse is made, a record should be created to document that conversation and any follow-up action taken by the College.
- Records must be detailed, objective, dated and include details of any participants or witnesses to the alleged abuse.
- Records should be created at, or as close as possible, to the time that the incident occurred.
- Staff, volunteers or contractors should identify and collate relevant records relating to a particular disclosure of abuse. If copies (rather than original documents) are included, ensure that the copies are of high quality and complete (e.g. text is legible and no pages are missing).
- Staff, volunteers or contractors must ensure that records they create are complete, accurate, and reliable and contain all the information necessary to document the school's activities and decisions related to Child Safety.
- All records must be labelled with a title, date, and any other relevant information, such as the creator's name, to facilitate their management and preservation.

Organising records

Child Safety records must be organised so that they can be readily accessed and used for authorised purposes. Staff, volunteers or contractors must ensure that records are indexed and classified in a logical and consistent manner to facilitate easy retrieval.

Securing records

The Principal must ensure that systems and processes are in place to keep Child Safety records secure from unauthorised access, amendment, use, release, and disposal. The

Principal must ensure that all records are stored in secure physical locations and systems that will protect them from misuse, damage, deterioration or loss.

Staff, volunteers or contractors must only access, amend, use, release, and dispose of records in accordance with the College's Child Safety Recordkeeping policy.

Preserving records

All records concerning allegations and incidents of child sexual abuse should be retained and never destroyed. "Records" in this context includes both hardcopy and electronic records.

Staff, volunteers or contractors must:

- store records securely so that they cannot be lost, damage, altered or tampered with
- retain any records that are reasonably likely to be required in a legal proceeding
- records that are of historic value
- records relevant to child safety and wellbeing (including incidents or allegations of incidents, investigation of child sexual abuse incidents or staff induction training about child safety standards).

The Principal must ensure that records are:

- preserved in a readable and accessible format for their minimum required retention period.
- properly backed up and that the school's records management system has the capability to preserve records in a format that will be accessible for the foreseeable future.
- properly migrated to new systems or formats as necessary to ensure their preservation.

Disposal of records

Staff, volunteers or contractors must:

- seek written authorisation from the Principal prior to disposing of any Child Safety records (on rare occasions can such documents be disposed).
- not dispose of any Child Safety records that are likely to be required in a legal proceeding.
- ensure that the method used to dispose of Child Safety records is secure and permanent, and
- ensure that the register of Child Safety records disposal is updated with relevant information.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our College community in either the following ways:

- Provided to staff at induction and included in staff handbook/manual.
- Discussed at staff meetings/briefings as required.

- Made available publicly on our College website.
- Made available in hard copy from College administration upon request.

Related Policies

- Child Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaints Management Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Child Safety Mandatory and Other Obligations Reporting Policy