

- MEDIA RELEASE -

WA's Servite College – walking the talk on safeguarding its school community

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The safeguarding audit of Servite College in Perth has found strong safeguarding practices in place throughout the College environment. The audit, undertaken by Australian Catholic Safeguarding Ltd (ACSL) assessed the College's implementation of the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards (NCSS), a framework for Catholic entities to promote the safety of children and young people.

Servite College is a co-educational Catholic secondary college with over 1000 students. It operates under the governance of the Order of the Servants of Mary. The audit found that the College has a deep commitment to the National Child Safety Principles which are embedded in the National Catholic Safeguarding Standards, and demonstrate this through a culture of care, right across the school community.

ACSL CEO Dr Ursula Stephens said that the findings of the external safeguarding audit are encouraging for parents and families of students at the College, as they show the degree of care and attention the College has given to create and maintain a safe environment for students and staff.

Servite College also meets all the reporting and safeguarding requirements of Catholic Education WA and are committed to the charisms of the Order of the Servants of Mary.

'Under the NCSS, our audit team considered not only regulatory compliance, but also how students concerns are being heard in safeguarding, how the community is engaged within the school, and how diversity and equity are being upheld across safeguarding practices,' Dr Stephens said.

'We found that across the board, there is a high degree of compliance with the NCSS. Particularly of note are the positive ways that children and families are engaged in providing feedback on safeguarding policies and practices.'

'Many students, staff and families interviewed mentioned Servite Concern, an app available to all associated with the College (student, personnel and families) to report concerns anonymously, and to identify issues or situations where there are real or perceived safety issues. This is considered a very important asset to safeguarding and wellbeing within the College community.'

'We also saw good work around developing resources to provide information to students and parents about safe and respectful peer relationships, including through social media, which is a growing area of concern for many schools,' Dr Stephens said.

Servite College Principal Ms Silvana Vicoli described the audit process as positive and professional.

'We were proud to be able to share our student experience and school community with ACSL,' Ms Vicoli said.

'Our focus on the individualised care, support and learning outcomes of each Servite student drives our progress and we are delighted the audit report recognised our contribution to system-wide knowledge and practice in safeguarding within Catholic Education in Western Australia,' Ms Vicoli said.

ACSL has made 12 recommendations to the College to strengthen their child safeguarding practices and created a continuous improvement plan to guide their efforts.

A safeguarding audit of the Order of the Servants of Mary was also conducted by ACSL. The findings of the College audit are an annexure to the Servite Order report. Both reports are available through the Publications and Reports area of [ACSL's website](#).

ACSL works with Catholic entities to promote and oversee a nationally consistent, comprehensive and sustainable framework for the protection of children and adults at risk within the Church in Australia.