



Mount Scopus Memorial College

בית הספר הר הצופים

12 September 2022
16 Elul 5782

Dear Old Collegian,

We are writing to you today to share the action we have taken to improve the safety and wellbeing of our students since instances of misconduct came to our attention last year.

Allegations of grooming by a former staff member resulted in an investigation. Relevant authorities were notified immediately and the staff member no longer works at the school.

We unequivocally regret the damage that has been caused by this misconduct and acknowledge the bravery of those who reported it and thank them for coming forward.

During the investigation, we learned that students had not felt safe or comfortable reporting inappropriate conduct at school.

As a result we commissioned Child Wise earlier this year to undertake a child safety assessment at the school. Child Wise has extensive expertise in child safety and provides advice and training on national child safety standards to many schools.

Through this review, we have received some very upsetting feedback about child safeguarding, exclusion and inequity at the school.

As a result of this process there have been significant learnings for the leadership and the College Executive.

Child safety is the school's highest priority and we strive to ensure that all children and young people, regardless of their age, gender, ability, race, or sexual orientation, have the right to be safe and feel safe. We need to increase education for our students in identifying and reporting signs of abuse.

We understand the change that needs to happen and will implement every recommendation from the Child Wise assessment.

Child Wise Review and Recommendations

Child Wise identified eight themes that underpin their recommendations:

1. Response - how we address complaints and disclosures.
2. Bullying - how we identify it and respond to it.
3. Culture - how we foster inclusion, support and care so all students feel valued regardless of their academic achievement.
4. Governance - stronger oversight, data collection, and leadership.
5. Communication - learning from the feedback about how we communicated the allegations of grooming which led to anger, hurt and disappointment.
6. Student wellbeing - ensuring it is at the centre of all our responses and actions.
7. Training and education - so all staff and volunteers have an understanding of the school's policy, procedure and practices concerning safeguarding.
8. Trust - ensuring integrity and effective communication between our students, the Board, school leaders, staff and parents.

Child Wise has provided 49 recommendations and a roadmap for implementation.

We have summarised these recommendations into three categories: [Please click here](#) for the full list.

1. Culture

- Champion and model a child safe culture at all levels of the College, including regular discussion, training and evaluation of child safeguarding
- Develop a rights-respecting approach to student engagement so students can meaningfully contribute, and are consulted about decisions that affect them
- Develop a culture of inclusion, equity, anti-bullying and care

2. Policy and Practice

- Continue to develop and improve a Child Safeguarding Framework including the Child Protection Policy, Child Safe Code of Conduct, Complaints Policy, Conflict of interest policy, Anti-bullying policy
- Establish a group of Child Safety Champions and the development of Child Safe Working Group
- Establish and regularly review risk matrices at every level of the school to identify, mitigate and respond to safeguarding risks
- Review the communication, engagement and process of working with students, families and communities in relation to serious child safety incidents to use a trauma informed practice

3. Informal Jewish Education

- Review the name and structure of the Informal Jewish Education Department
- Develop student voice in the programing and structuring of this department
- Develop a risk register for informal programs

We have developed a Child Safety Working Group to develop a timeline for the work over the next two years, ensure it is implemented, and report regularly to the Board.

A group of Child Safety Champions will work with the school leadership team, teachers, students, volunteers and the school community to create a child safe environment

The Board, Principal and Leadership acknowledge that improvements must occur to ensure that a child safe culture is embedded in every aspect of our school. We are committed to rebuilding and maintaining a zero-tolerance culture of child abuse and harm.

Yours sincerely,



Rabbi James Kennard
Principal



Amy Hershman
College President

Raphael Arndt
Natalie Bassat
Lisa Farber
Shane Goldberg
Anthony Goldman
Errol Katz
Naomi Lenga
Gary Starr
Jonathan Tisher
**Mount Scopus College
Board**

**Scopus
Values**



Excellence in Learning



Holistic Development



Jewish Identity



Community and Service