Child Link – a tool for professionals to support child wellbeing and safety

CHILD INFORMATION SHARING SCHEME

CHILD LINK

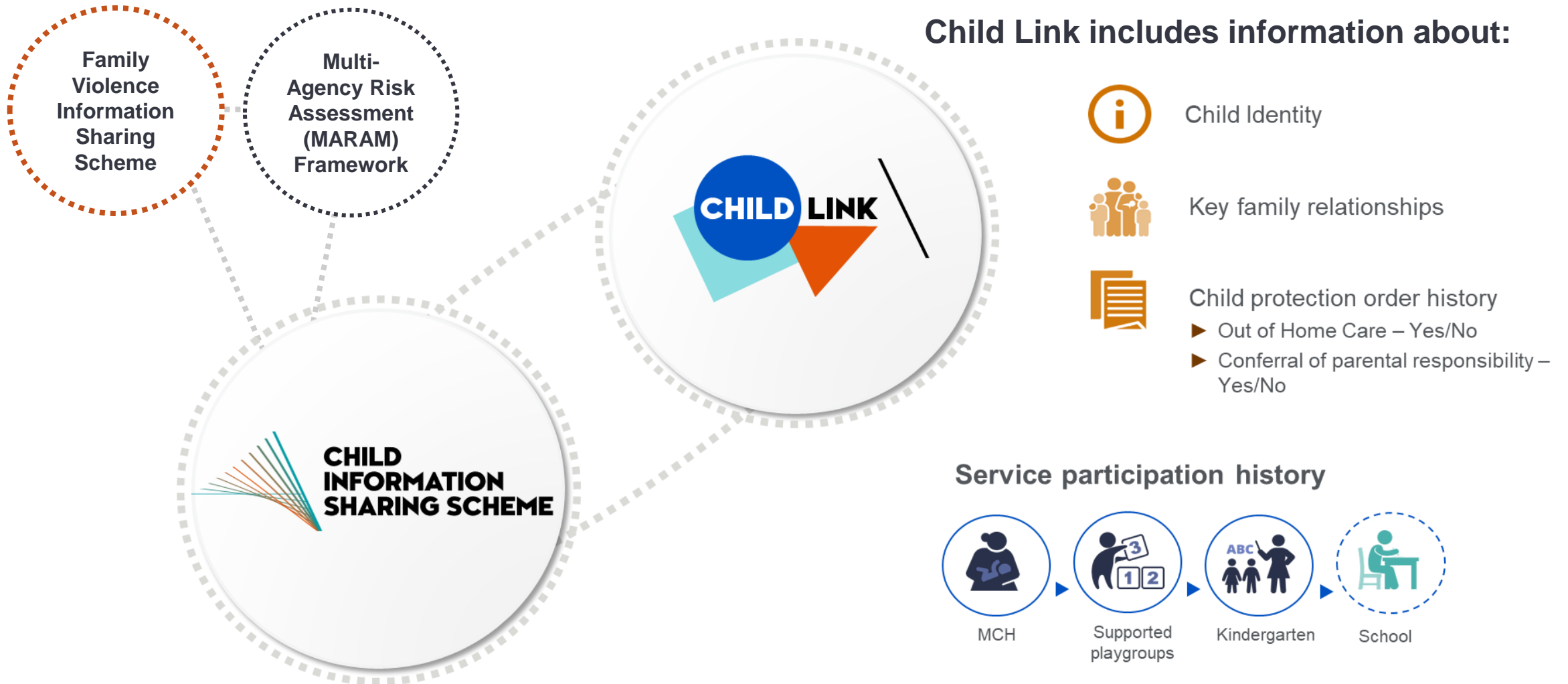## Victorian Catholic Education Authority (VCEA)

The Victorian Government acknowledges Aboriginal Traditional Owners of Country throughout Victoria and pays respect to their cultures and Elders past, present and emerging

VICTORIA State Government | Department of Education

What is Child Link?

Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme

Multi-Agency Risk Assessment (MARAM) Framework

CHILD LINK

CHILD INFORMATION SHARING SCHEME

Child Link includes information about:

Child Identity

Key family relationships

Child protection order history
► Out of Home Care – Yes/No
► Conferral of parental responsibility – Yes/No

Service participation history

MCH → Supported playgroups → Kindergarten → School

Who can be a Child Link User?

Education

► early childhood teachers

► **school principals**

► **school teachers and/or student wellbeing professionals**

► roles within DE regional services and programs, such as Student Support Services and school nurses

Maternal and Child Health

► roles within Maternal and Child Health services in councils

► roles within Aboriginal Maternal and Child Health services and Aboriginal-led Maternal and Child Health services

► roles within the Maternal Child Health Line

► roles within community health organisations

Child Protection Services

► roles within Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH)

► roles within Aboriginal Children in Aboriginal Care (ACAC) providers

► roles within community service organisations and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisation

Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP)

► persons employed by the Commission for Children and Young People or otherwise engaged by the Commission

What information is <u>not</u> on Child Link?
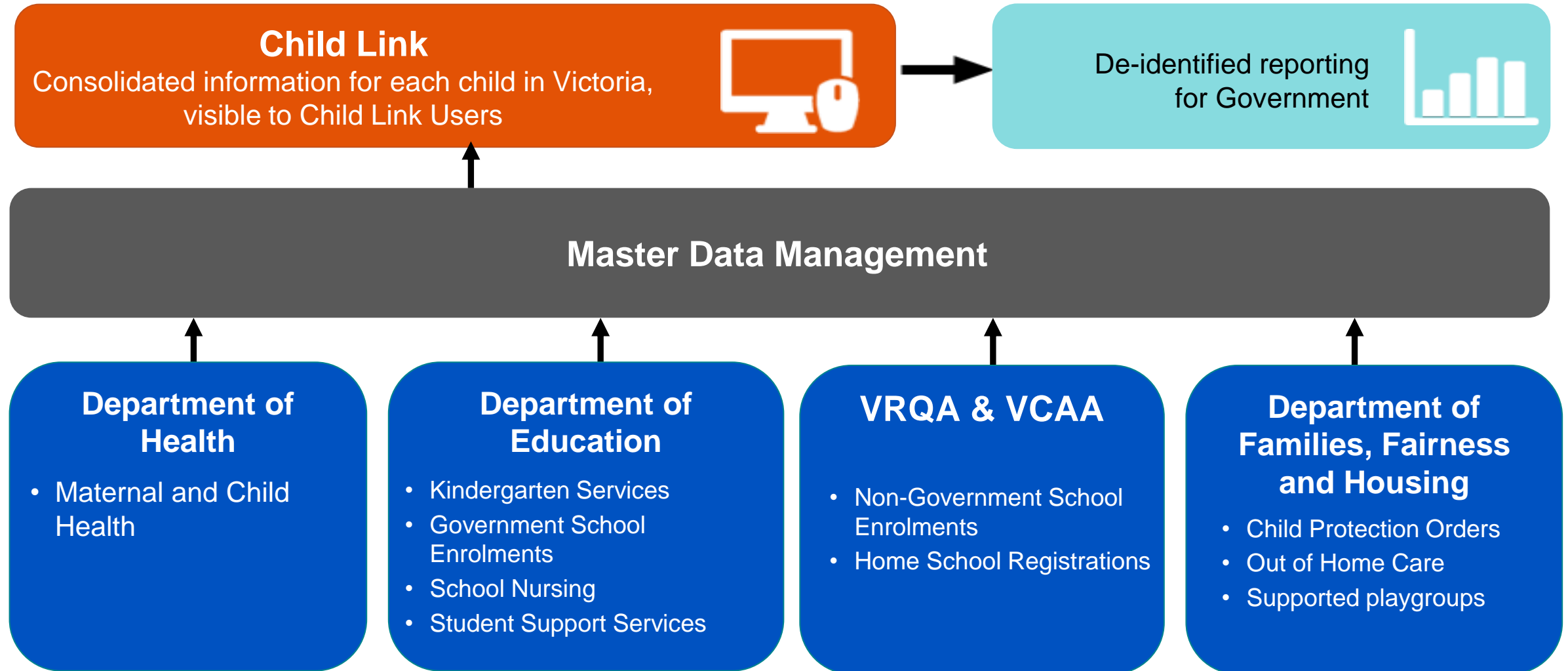
The information displayed on Child Link is limited to data sourced from Victorian Government information systems.

Child Link will not include:

► Family violence intervention orders

► Commonwealth information, such as Medicare or the Australian Immunisation Register information.

► Case management records such as case notes, professional opinions or health records

► Criminal record information

Where Child Link information comes from – source systems

Child Link
Consolidated information for each child in Victoria, visible to Child Link Users

De-identified reporting for Government

Master Data Management

Department of Health
- Maternal and Child Health

Department of Education
- Kindergarten Services
- Government School Enrolments
- School Nursing
- Student Support Services

VRQA & VCAA
- Non-Government School Enrolments
- Home School Registrations

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing
- Child Protection Orders
- Out of Home Care
- Supported playgroups

Child Link: security and privacy

Child Link has been designed with security and privacy as core principles

Access, transmission, and storage of information for Child Link aligns to strict security protocols

System usage is monitored and auditable. There are offences and penalties under the CWS Act for unauthorised access, use and disclosure of information from Child Link.
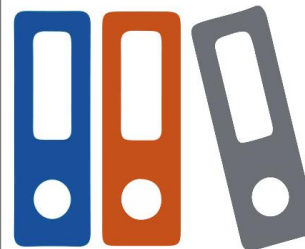
Sharing information for children's safety is permitted under laws, such as the *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*, the *Health Records Act 2001* and the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*

Key roles in Child Link

Child Link Authorisers

► authorise Child Link Users to gain access to Child Link

► are responsible for the ongoing management and removal of Child Link Users

► **do not have access to child information on Child Link unless they are also a User**

Child Link Users

► have access to critical information about children on Child Link to support wellbeing and safety

► most Users will only have access to information about children enrolled or attending their school or service

► can use Child Link as an additional tool alongside their existing frameworks

Who can be a Child Link User in a Catholic school?
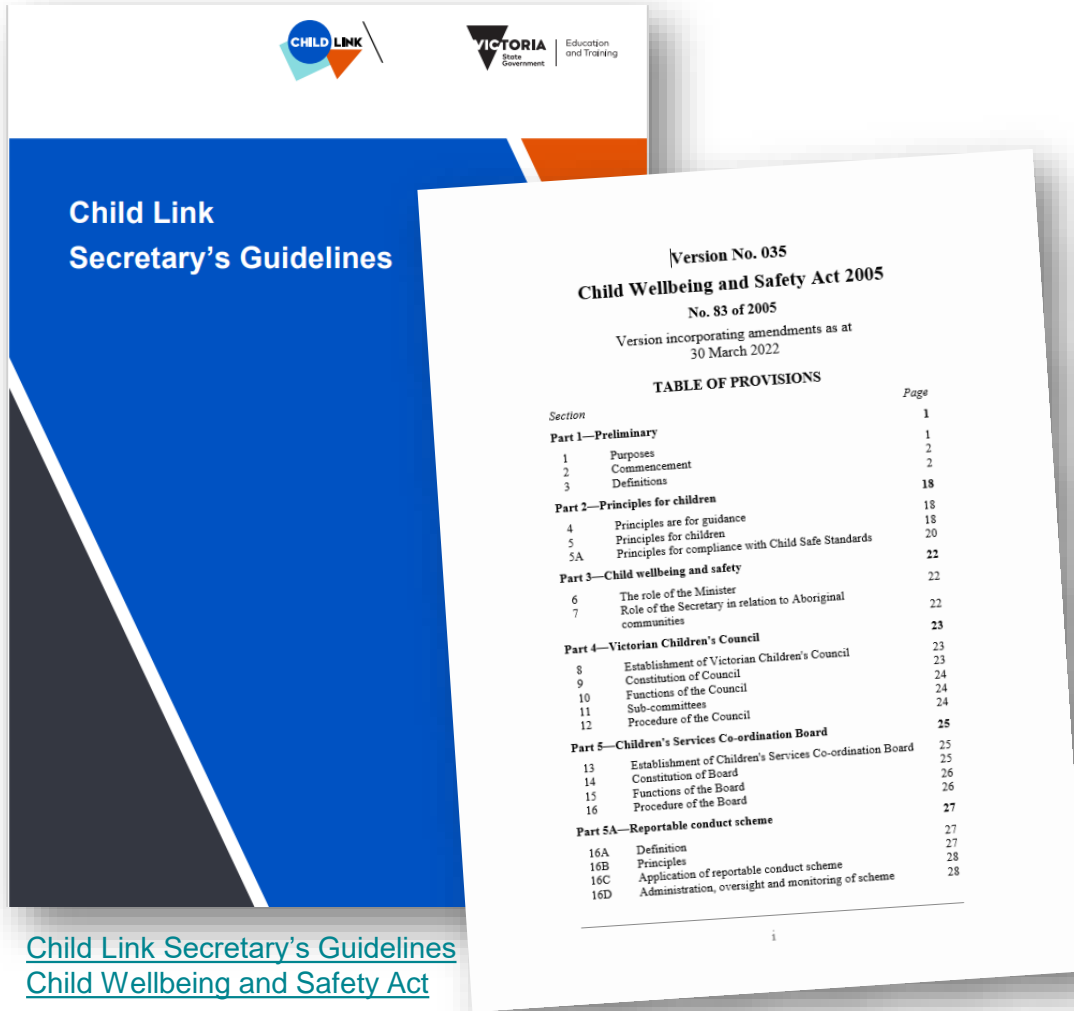
Authoriser for schools

- Only principals, acting principals or co-principals can authorise school staff as Child Link Users

Child Link Users in schools

Principals can nominate up to 7 Users, such as:

- Assistant/Deputy principals
- School teachers
- Student wellbeing professionals (e.g. school counsellor, wellbeing coordinator)

Principals as Child Link Users

- A person or body responsible for the governance, conduct or management of non-government schools will authorise school principals as users
- **Each Diocese/body will nominate their Authoriser/s and set up their process**

Publication of the Child Link Authoriser Induction Guide

New Child Link PAL policy for government schools

How Child Link is being used by schools

We have implemented a new process at our school so that when a child enrols with us, a staff member checks Child Link for any relevant information. In new enrolments for 2023 we picked up additional information for 2 children and have been able to put supports in place proactively. This has been brilliant and would not have happened without Child Link.

It helps us as teachers know how to deal with students when they face any problems with us and at home. It also helps us know **how** to take further action solving these problems.

Access to Child Link is minimising the amount of time, emails, phone calls required to put supports in place for a student and the school.

Child Link helps support students transition with information to support schools to plan for Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Behaviour Support Plans supporting access to current and past assessments.

Positive momentum building across Catholic schools

Diocese	School engagement			Percentages	
	#Achieved	#Pending	Grand Total	% Achieved	% Pending
DOBCEL	28	33	61	46%	54%
DOSCEL		44	44	In Progress	In Progress
CES Ltd	38	17	55	69%	31%
MACS	57	242	299	19%	81%
Independent	14	25	39	36%	64%
Grand Total	137	361	498	27%	73%

Using Child Link to support child wellbeing and safety

Let's hear from each diocese on your experiences to date…

Are there further opportunities to increase awareness of and support embedding Child Link into practice for Catholic schools?

Support and resources for education workforces

Child Link:

Online Resources:

- https://www.vic.gov.au/child-link-resources
- https://www.vic.gov.au/child-link-authoriser-induction-guide
- https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/child-link/policy

Enquiry line:

- 1800 549 646
- childlink@education.vic.gov.au

Information Sharing:

Online Resources:

- infosharing.vic.gov.au
- https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/information-sharing-schemes/policy

Enquiry line:

- 1800 549 646
- CISandFVIS@education.vic.gov.au

For questions or further support, please contact:

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