



Bellarine Secondary College

CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS POLICY Policy Number 4.4

RATIONALE

The *Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools* requires organisations that provide services for children to have a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate conduct of staff and volunteers when working with children. This code of conduct will assist staff in meeting their legislated responsibility by clearly articulating appropriate behaviour of staff and volunteers to help protect children from abuse. Bellarine Secondary College is committed to providing a child safe environment.

PURPOSE

This code of conduct outlines expected standards for appropriate behaviour by Bellarine Secondary College staff members, community members including volunteers working with and in the company of children, including online communication and direct conduct.

POLICY STATEMENT

- Bellarine Secondary College staff (ongoing and casual), volunteers, contractors and guests must conduct themselves in such a way as to ensure the safety of all children they have contact with
- This Child Safe Code of Conduct is to be adhered to in conjunction with;
 - the Victorian Institute of Teaching Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct
 - relevant Ministerial Orders under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Inclusion and empowerment of children are important in ensuring a child safe environment. Staff must act to build both inclusion and empowerment

IMPLEMENTATION

All staff, volunteers and College Council members of Bellarine Secondary College are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of Bellarine Secondary College (staff and volunteers) are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to the Bellarine Secondary College Child Safe Policy Number 2.1.9 at all times and upholding the College statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child



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- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the College Child Safety Team; Alison Murphy, Damian Marra, Natalie Wood, Barbara Luppino, Senem Shamsili, Nathan Brock, Stephanie Rice, Nicole Wirth and Raelene Newton or any member of the College Leadership Team and ensuring any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- reporting any child safety concerns to the College Child Safety Team (as above) and ensuring any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child/ren are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

Staff and volunteers will not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical interaction
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors or blocking doorways or failing to report allegations of abuse)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do independently, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have arranged contact with a student outside of the College's programmes without College knowledge and/or consent from the student's parents or guardian
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

Further to the above expectations all teaching staff must also abide by the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct including Principle 1.5: Teachers are always in a professional relationship with the students in their school, whether at school or not. Teachers hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students. The following examples outline some of those limits.

A professional relationship will be violated if a teacher;

- has a sexual relationship with a student
- uses sexual innuendo or inappropriate language and /or material with students
- touches a student without a valid reason
- holds conversations of a personal nature or has contact with a student via written or electronic means including email, letters, telephone, text messages or chat lines, without valid context



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- accepts gifts, which could be reasonably perceived as being used to influence them, from students or their parents.

A professional relationship may be compromised if a teacher

- attends parties or socialises with students
- invites a student or students back to their home, particularly if no-one else is present.

By observing these standards and expectations you acknowledge your responsibility to abide by Ministerial Order No. 870 and to immediately report any breach, by self or others, of this Code of Conduct to one of the Bellarine Secondary College Child Safety Officers; Damian Marra or Natalie Wood or the College Principal, Alison Murphy.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Child Safe Code of Conduct:

Full Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	
Principal Nominee Name:	
Signature:	
Date:	

REFERENCES

Ministerial Order No. 870 December 2015. Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools. Education and Training reform Act 2006

Victorian Registrations and Qualifications Authority. Guidelines to the minimum standards and other requirements for registration of schools including those offering senior secondary courses

Victorian Institute of Teaching Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct

2.1.2 Bellarine Secondary College Duty of Care Policy Number

2.1.3 Bellarine Secondary College Child Protection Reporting Policy Number

2.1.9 Bellarine Secondary College Child Safe Policy

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more frequently if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances

Policy Number	4.4
Approval date	November 2016
Review date	November 2019
DET/VRQA required?	Yes