



Bellarine Secondary College

CHILD SAFE STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Policy Number 2.1.10

Bellarine Secondary College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This is the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

Bellarine Secondary College has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Bellarine Secondary College is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention is paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in Bellarine Secondary College has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision-making and operations Bellarine Secondary College will

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

DUTY OF CARE OBLIGATIONS

All staff of Bellarine Secondary College have a duty to take reasonable steps to protect students under our care and supervision, from harm that is reasonably foreseeable.

When there child abuse is reported College staff will:

- Act on concerns and suspicions quickly or as soon as practicable



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- Seek appropriate advice or consult with other professionals or agencies when the school staff member is unsure of what steps to take,
- Report the suspected behaviour to appropriate authorities such as the Victoria Police and DHHS Child Protection,
- Arrange counselling and/or other appropriate welfare support for impacted students, including the alleged victim and student who has allegedly engaged in student sexual offending,
- Provide ongoing support to the alleged victim and the student who has allegedly engaged in student sexual offending – this may include attending DHHS Child Protection Case Planning meetings, and convening regular Student Support Group meetings,
- Sharing information with other school based staff, including Wellbeing staff, House Leaders and Executive Team members who will also be responsible for monitoring and providing ongoing support to students

When responding to student sexual offending, staff at Bellarine Secondary College will follow the *'Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending'*

https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/FourCriticalActions_ChildAbuse.pdf

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

EVALUATION

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

Policy Number	2.1.10
Approval Date	
Review date	November 2019
DET/VRQA required?	Yes