

	<p>BORONIA K-12 COLLEGE</p> <p>CHILD SAFETY POLICY</p>	<p>August 2016</p>
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Purpose

Boronia K-12 College's child safe environments policy sets out the school's approach to creating a child safe organisation where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the school's approach to the Child Safe Standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Boronia K-12 College, all students of the School and their parents or carers, and to other interested persons whether or not they work in direct contact with children and young people. This policy applies across a range of school forums (e.g. camps, online) and outside of school hours.

Any partner organisations (sister schools etc) will be made aware of the policy and the school's underlying philosophy towards the care of children.

Commitment and Principles

Boronia K-12 College is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Boronia K-12 College has zero tolerance for child abuse. Boronia K-12 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 will be 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 Boronia K-12 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.

A Child Safe Culture

The school's culture encourages staff to raise, discuss and scrutinise concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.

Policy

The Child Safe Policy of Boronia K-12 College is to maintain a fair, safe and productive educational environment, where Child Safety is of paramount importance and where all members of the community understand their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will comply with the school's Code of Conduct. Boronia K-12 College applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, and will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages

the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children. We will ensure that staff induction, education and training programs are a vital part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from abuse and neglect. All prospective staff and volunteers are required to undergo National Criminal History Records check and maintain a valid Working with Children Check.

The school's Code of Conduct sets out clear awareness of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. Boronia K-12 College has clear expectations for staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. Immediate action should include reporting their concerns to the DHHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The school will take action to respond to a complaint. All staff are expected to undertake the Mandated Reporting eModule. Boronia K-12 College believes the wellbeing of children and young people is paramount, and is vigilant in ensuring proper risk management processes. The school recognises there are potential risks to children and young people and will take a risk management approach by undertaking preventative measures. Boronia K-12 College has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with, or abuse of, a child the school will listen to the complainant's account of things and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (or their parents/carers) informed about progress. Boronia K-12 College collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the School Privacy Policy.

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

Ministerial Order 870 provides definitions, including:

Child abuse includes—

- any act committed against a child involving:
 - a sexual offence or
 - an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming)
- the infliction, on a child, of:
 - physical violence or
 - serious emotional or psychological harm
 - serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work means work authorised by the school governing authority and

performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

School staff being: an individual working in a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority;
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary); or
- a minister of religion.

All staff must understand their **mandatory reporting obligations**, the **failure to disclose offence** (it is a criminal offence not to inform police if an adult forms a reasonable belief that sexual abuse has been committed against a minor) and the **failure to protect offence** (if a person in authority negligently fails to reduce or remove the potential risk of a sexual offence against a child by an adult associated with the school).

Other sources of information

- School Policy & Advisory Guide – Duty of Care
- School Policy & Advisory Guide – Child Protection Reporting Obligations
- DET Child Wellbeing and Safety Framework
- School Privacy Policy