

# child safety framework policy

## introduction

Ballarat Clarendon College has developed the following Child Safety Framework Policy (**Policy**). This is an overarching document that outlines key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse.

The Policy forms the foundation of Clarendon's procedures, practices, decision-making processes and ultimately Clarendon's culture with respect to child safety. It outlines the school's ongoing commitment to ensuring the safety of the students in its care and maintaining a culture of Child Safety in all aspects of its operations.

It is designed to be published on our public website as well as communicated through other mediums such as our enrolment process, newsletters, our annual report and in induction and welcome packs for Board members, staff and volunteers.

Ballarat Clarendon College's Child Safety Framework has been approved, endorsed and is reviewed from time-to-time by the Ballarat Clarendon College Board.

Ballarat Clarendon College may vary the Child Safety Framework, in its absolute discretion, from time-to-time.

## our child safety framework

### Objectives

This Policy provides the framework for:

- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child safety within the school by applying the Child Safe Standards at every level of governance;
- the creation of a positive and robust child safety culture;
- the promotion and open discussion of child safety issues within the school; and
- compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child safety in Victoria, in particular, Ministerial Order 870 (Child Safe Standards).

### Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence. Ballarat Clarendon College is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Safety Program designed to keep children safe.

At Ballarat Clarendon College we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in the children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. Clarendon regards its child protection responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture.

### Child Safe Values and Principles

Clarendon's commitment to child safety is based on the following overarching principles that guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.

The principles include:

- All children have the right to be safe.
- The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
- Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility and the safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture that permeates all aspects of the school's operation.
- Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within our College community.
- The views of the child and a child's privacy must be respected.
- Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children are established in our Child Safety Code of Conduct and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.
- Ballarat Clarendon College owes all students a duty of care to take reasonable measures to protect them from reasonably foreseeable risks of harm.
- Procedures are in place to screen all staff, volunteers, third party contractors and external education providers who have direct contact with children.
- Child safety training is mandatory for all Board members, staff and volunteers.
- Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible for all members of the College community.
- Children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have the right to special care and support

including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and the school strives to be sensitive to these needs in its Child Safety processes and training.

- That different and sometimes greater measures may need to be taken for younger students or students with disabilities to discharge this duty of care

### **In Practice**

Ballarat Clarendon College is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Safety Framework and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. This relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse. It includes:

- clear information as to what constitutes child abuse and associated key risk indicators;
- clear procedures for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse;
- strategies to support, encourage and enable staff, volunteers, third party contractors, external education providers, parents and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters;
- procedures for recruiting and screening Board members, staff and volunteers; procedures for reporting reportable conduct and/or misconduct;
- strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe;
- policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities;
- a child safety training program;
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist children;
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality;
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards); and
- a system for continuous review and improvement.

As a part of Ballarat Clarendon College's induction process, all staff and volunteers are required to be involved in child safety training.

All staff, volunteers and Board members are provided with additional, ongoing child protection training at least annually.

Mechanisms are in place to ensure that staff, volunteers, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers are compliant with the College's approach to child safety.

### **Responsibilities**

Child Safety is everyone's responsibility. At Ballarat Clarendon College all Board and staff, as well as volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities for specific roles are outlined below.

#### **Ballarat Clarendon College Board**

Each Board member is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to allow Clarendon's Safety framework and related policies and procedures to be effectively implemented within the school and are responsible for holding the Principal and executive team accountable for effective implementation.

#### **The Principal**

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Safety Framework and related policies and procedures are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the College.

#### **The College's Child Safety Officers**

A number of senior staff members are nominated as the Clarendon's Child Safety Officers. Our Child Safety Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child safety issues. They are the first point of contact for raising child safety concerns within the school. They are also responsible for championing child safety within the school and assisting in coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

#### **Staff Members**

All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safety Policies and to understand and exercise their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of Clarendon's Child Safety Officers.

#### **Volunteers**

All volunteers are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Safety Policies, and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the Clarendon's Child Safety Officers.

### **Third Party Contractors**

All Third Party Contractors (service providers) engaged by Ballarat Clarendon College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the school environment. Third Party Contractors include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches, cleaners and catering staff.

This also includes music teachers and other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the school, but have an agreement with the school to use Clarendon's facilities.

All service providers engaged by Clarendon are required by the school to be familiar with our Child Safety Policies. Clarendon may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the service provider.

### **External Education Providers**

An External Education Provider is any organisation that Clarendon has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the school. The delivery of such a course may take place on Clarendon premises or elsewhere.

All External Education Providers engaged by Clarendon are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the school environment. All External Education Providers engaged by Clarendon are required by the school to be familiar with our Child Safety Policies. Ballarat Clarendon College may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

### **Reporting Child Protection Concerns**

Our Child Safety Framework provides detailed guidance for Board members, staff and volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our school's nominated Child Safety Officers or any other person in a position of responsibility if this is required. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities. (See Child Safety Reporting Policy and Procedure)

Staff, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, volunteers, students, parents/guardians and other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse or there is a belief that abuse will occur should follow the procedure, outlined in the schools Child Safety Reporting Policy.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.

### **Related Policies and Procedures**

Child Safety Reporting Policy and Procedure  
Child Safety Code of Conduct  
Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy  
Student Counselling and Support Policy

### **Policy and Program Review**

Ballarat Clarendon College is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Safety Framework. The Framework is regularly reviewed for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection related laws, regulations and standards.



Owner: Students Welfare	Approved: Board	Child Safety Framework Policy
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