

Child Safety Policy 2016



Eaglehawk Secondary College values *Community*, provides *Opportunities*, builds *Relationships* and has high expectations of *Effort and Achievement*. We are committed to keeping children safe from harm and have a zero tolerance of child abuse. Every student has the right to be safe and protected from harm including students with disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students who identify LGBT or are from same sex families and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. This is the responsibility of all teaching and non-teaching staff, school administration and principal class, volunteers and visitors to the school. This applies to all the school learning environments whether students are in community spaces, outdoor or off site learning environments or engaging in learning online. The school undertakes appropriate risk assessment, implementation of controls, and a monitoring and review process to ensure the currency of the risk management approach. The school's policies and procedures comply with the Child Safety Standards and the school's obligations to report incidences of child abuse are reviewed every three years or as required.

The school Code of Conduct is aligned to the VIT Code of Conduct for all employees. Any adult; Teacher, Education Support Staff, school counsellor, school nurse, chaplain, volunteer support staff, visiting agency support staff, volunteers or visitors under the direction of teaching staff, will provide the school with evidence of Working with Children's checks and police record checks as part of internal HR processes and induction. Child safety is part of the selection process and induction of staff into the College.

Child safety concerns are identified through:

- Teacher Advisory Program where staff interact with their TA students daily and form trustful relationships with them.
- Referral to the Executive Wellbeing Referral Team through the College referral process.
- Direct referral to a wellbeing staff member.
- Direct reporting to principal class and mandatory reporting to child protection and police.

Responding to a disclosure of child abuse:

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.

If a child discloses an incident of child abuse including sexual abuse or sexual assault staff and other adults working in the school are expected to follow the procedures below:

1. Report the incident to a wellbeing team member or principal class immediately.
2. Wellbeing will work with principal class to ensure the child's safety and reporting the disclosure to authorities.
3. Provide the child with wellbeing support and keep them supervised and supported by a member of the wellbeing team in a private space.
4. If the disclosure is an incident involving another student at school a wellbeing team member will supervise the student and provide support until police and parents are contacted.
5. A member of the wellbeing team or principal class will talk with the victim with a school appointed support person present.
6. Police will be notified by the principal class.
7. Staff member who the student disclosed to will be supported to make a mandatory report to child protection with principal class or wellbeing team member.
8. Depending on the disclosure the child's parents/carers will be contacted.

9. Emergency management will be contacted and appropriate school supports provided including SSSO support.
10. External referrals and supports will be made by police and child protection and communicated with the school.
11. A student support group will meet to support the child at school if required.
12. A school Individual Student Safety Plan will be put in place if required to support the child.
13. The disclosure is to be documented on Xuno under "Confidential Notes" including actions taken to report the incident and support the student.

We provide ongoing professional development for all staff to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters.

Child Safe Organisation

To create and maintain a child safe organisation, our school complies with the following standards:

- Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements
- Standard 2: A child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety
- Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children
- Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel
- Standard 5: Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
- Standard 7: Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

'A child safe organisation respects cultural differences and variations in child rearing practices due to a family's personal, cultural or religious beliefs. However a child safe organisation recognises that these differences do not reduce a child's right to be safe or the organisations responsibility to protect the child from harm.'

The following principles guide an adult's behaviour when undertaking child-connected work at ESC:

- the adult/child relationship should be professional at all times
- an adult's response to a child's behaviour or circumstance should be commensurate with the child's age and vulnerability and the adult's responsibility for the care, safety and welfare of the child
- an adult should not be alone with a child unless there is line of sight to other adults
- an adult should not initiate or seek physical contact or contact with children outside school.

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers and board/school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's child safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone in the school community 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 or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership (or child safety officer if the school has appointed someone to this role)
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958
- reporting any child safety concerns to the school's leadership (or child safety officer if the school has appointed someone to this role)
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

Unacceptable behaviours

Staff and volunteers must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- 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 (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact which children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, 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 age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school's leadership or child safety officer's (if the school has appointed someone to this role) knowledge and/or consent or the school governing authority's approval (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.
- have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary eg by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work)

- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.

Roles and Responsibilities of personnel involved in protecting children

Principal Class

- Responsible for whole of College engagement and wellbeing
- Chairs the Wellbeing Executive Referral Team meeting and the Student Attendance / Engagement Team meeting

Student Support Services Coordinator

- Oversees the internal student support programs and resources provided by the Wellbeing Team
- Coordinates the Colleges working relationship with external support services and agencies. (St Luke's, DOXA, Ampersand)
- Chairs the Wellbeing Team meetings) and is a member of the Wellbeing Executive Team and the Student Attendance / Engagement Team.
- Is the first point of contact for staff seeking consultation about services / supports for students.
- Provides individual wellbeing support to students (and their families)

School Chaplain

- Provides support and assistance to students and their families who may be experiencing financial hardship.
- Develops and delivers small group activities and programs that encourage students to more fully engage in their learning (both at school and in the wider community).
- Oversees the horticulture area and works with students in the garden.
- Develops working community partnerships that value-add to the existing supports / resources within our College.
- Works with a small caseload of students and their families
- Coordinates The Breakfast Program and supports student scholarship applications

Student Attendance Officer

- Manages the school attendance data and provides information to the Wellbeing Executive Team, Student Attendance / Engagement Team and the Wellbeing Team.
- Is responsible for submitting all Wellbeing Referrals to both the Wellbeing Executive Meeting and the Wellbeing Team Meeting.
- Uploads SOCS (Student Online Case System). SOCS is the referral system we use to formally access DEECD SSSO staff (Psychologist, Social Worker and Speech Therapist).

School Nurse

- Is responsible for the whole of College health promotion.
- Offers classroom delivery and support on a range of health related topics
- Supports management of students with chronic medical conditions
- Develops and supports small group work to enhance student health and wellbeing
- Manages Righteous Pups
- Manages a small caseload of students (requiring physical and / or mental health intervention)

PSD Coordinator

- Coordinates assessments and writes funding applications to support existing and potential PSD students.
- Coordinates and supports PSD tutors.
- Is a member of the Wellbeing Executive Team.

Transition Support Worker

- Supports Referred Grade 6 / Year 7 students (and their families) to make a successful transition from Primary school to secondary school.
- Please Note: Referrals for this program come directly from Primary Schools.

DET Psychologist

- Conducts a range of assessments for students with cognitive development concerns and behaviour difficulties.
- Conducts risk assessments (for high level mental health concerns).
- Provides individual counselling and support to a small number of students
- Offers classroom behaviour management advice and support to teachers
- .Is available for consultation and professional development workshops for staff.
- Is a member of the Wellbeing Executive Team.

DET Social Worker

Conducts Psycho-social assessments (including risk assessment of serious mental illness), classroom and behaviour management support and guidance,

- Provides individual student counselling (up to 3 students)
- Can deliver Professional Development for school staff.

DET Speech Pathologist

- Offers speech and language assessments, speech therapy interventions for individuals and groups of students.
- Is available for consultations and advice to teaching and wellbeing staff

Ampersand Counselling

- ESC and Ampersand Australia have a partnership whereby Ampersand workers provide an ongoing counselling service to students at our College. Our Ampersand counsellors are all volunteers. Referrals for Ampersand Counselling must come through the Wellbeing Referral Process to ensure this is the most appropriate level of counselling for the student concerned. Please do not give Referral Forms to students / parents until the referral has been approved

Mental Health Social Worker

- Private Practitioner who visits our College on Friday mornings to support students who have been referred to her.

Teaching Staff

- Direct classroom teaching responsibilities, camps and excursions supervision
- Teacher Advisory role to support holistic needs of students at school
- Yard duty responsibilities

Education Support Staff

- Work with students in classrooms as well as programs across the College under the direct supervision of teaching staff.

School Council

- Approve College policies camps and work with the Principal to ensure school programs meet the diverse needs of students

Volunteers, parents, carers and visiting services

- Sign in at the general office upon arrival and sign out upon leaving
- Work under the supervision of staff in programs or classes to support students
- Report any safety concerns direct to the staff member they are working with, a member of the Wellbeing Team or direct to Principal class