

## CHILD SAFETY POLICY

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### Rationale

East Doncaster Secondary College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students whilst participating in school activities both during and outside of school hours and has zero tolerance of child abuse. This includes activities conducted outside of the school environment such as excursions, camps and sporting events, as well as within online school environments including email and intranet systems. East Doncaster Secondary College recognises that the wellbeing of students is the responsibility of all staff and that staff must report and respond to any concerns regarding possible sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect of a child in accordance with the relevant policies and procedures.

*For the purpose of this document child abuse includes-*

- (a) any act committed against a child involving-*
  - (i) a sexual offence; or*
  - (ii) an offence under section 498(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming);*
- (b) the infliction, on a child, of-*
  - (i) physical violence; or*
  - (ii) serious emotional or psychological harm;*
- (c) serious neglect of a child*

*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, as outlined in **Ministerial Order No. 870***

### Our commitment to Child Safety

Our College is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Our College is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Our College has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Our College is committed to regularly training and educating our staff on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

### **Aims**

- To embed a culture of child safety within the College community that supports all students and takes into account the diversity of all students, including the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities, and students who are vulnerable
- To support, encourage and enable school staff, parents and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
- To define the roles and responsibilities of the College and staff and volunteers in protecting the safety and wellbeing of students
- To support and assist students and staff in the process of reporting suspected abuse

### **Implementation**

The school will handle child safety concerns in a sensitive, confidential and timely fashion and will comply with all requirements set out in **Ministerial Order No. 870** and the included child safe standards.

Our College will take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. We understand that when recruiting staff we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

East Doncaster Secondary College will:

- Ensure all teaching staff have the appropriate qualifications and registrations to work within the College in accordance with VIT registration
- Ensure all non-teaching staff, including casual employees and volunteers have the appropriate registrations (Working with Children Check) to work within the College
- Seek two forms of proof of identity and history and references indicating the suitability of staff to work with children (*Office administration staff*)
- Provide new staff with a copy of this policy and have the key aspects of this policy explained to them as part of their induction into the College (*Assistant Principal responsible for Staff Induction*)
- Brief staff on their responsibilities in relation to promoting child safety within the College and reporting suspected child abuse, on an annual basis.
- Support staff who make a mandatory report regarding suspected child abuse (*Principal and Student Wellbeing & Engagement team*)
- Ensure all advertised jobs include a statement indicating that staff are to abide by the Child Safety Standards and the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Identify and document any situations or environments where there is a risk of child abuse occurring and take actions to minimise this risk

## Staff

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our College

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our Code of Conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

All staff are expected to;

- adhere to the acceptable behaviours when interacting with students, as outlined in the *Child Safety Code of Conduct*
- be aware of and act upon the processes outlined in the *Bullying and Harassment Policy* and *Behaviour Management Policy* documents
- follow the procedures outlined in the *Mandatory Reporting Policy* if they form a belief, on reasonable grounds, that a students' health, safety or wellbeing is at risk.
- abide by *The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct*, and adhere to the expectations described in the College's Code of Conduct
- treat students with respect and foster an environment that is safe, pleasant and supportive, free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or intimidation as described in the *Student Engagement policy*.

## Students

This policy is intended to empower children to be vital and active participants in our College. We involve them in making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance at our College, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome.

In particular our students;

- have the right to be treated with respect and to be protected from any form of child abuse
- have the right to feel and be safe in their interactions with staff, contractors, volunteers and/or visitors
- are required to adhere to the *Code of Conduct* and *Student Engagement Policies* and abide by the conditions included in the *1 to 1 Digital Learning Policy*, as they relate to the relevant areas of the child safe standards.

## Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the policy review cycle or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstance.

### Evaluation

*Reviewed:* August 2016

*Date of next review:* August 2017 or as directed by DET.