



Ringwood Secondary College Child Safety Policy

Version No: 1

Date: June 2016

Committee: Policy and Education

Rationale:

Ringwood 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. Ringwood 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.

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 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.

For the purpose of this document, child abuse refers to any act committed against a child involving a sexual offence or grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, or serious neglect.

Ringwood Secondary College will:

- Ensure staff have the appropriate qualifications to work within the school and that the procedures outlined in the *Working With Children Policy* are adhered to when new staff, casual employees or volunteers commence working 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. (*Assistant principal – Policy & Ed*)

- Support staff who make a mandatory report regarding suspected child abuse (*Principal & Wellbeing team*)
- Ensure all advertised jobs include a statement indicating that staff are to abide by the child safety standards and staff 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

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 *Anti-Bullying policy* and *Anti-Bullying procedures* 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 *The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct*, and adhere to the expectations described in the school's *Duty of Care Policy and Procedures*
- 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 and Inclusion policy – Rights and responsibilities*

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 *Behaviour Management, Anti-Bullying* and *Student Engagement and Inclusion policies* and abide by the conditions included in the *Cybersafety and Responsible Use Agreement*, as they relate to the relevant areas of the child safe standards.

Ringwood Secondary College will provide students with:

- Cybersafety sessions as part of their ipad training and wellbeing days in Year 7 and in Year 11 and 12 assemblies focussed on using technology appropriately and safely (*Digital Citizenship coordinator*)
- Develop resilience and RADAR – Respect and Diversity at Ringwood within Year 7 transition (*Wellbeing program*) and within Year 9 Bounce and Year 10 Mental Health units
- Conduct sessions in Intergreat and assemblies at Year 9 focussed on the resilience project, failure and appropriate behaviour (*Intergreat and Year 9 coordinators*)
- Support students if they disclose information regarding child abuse or if a member of staff has formed the opinion, on reasonable grounds, that the student is at risk of harm (*Wellbeing team*)
- Conduct programs that focus on building healthy and respectful relationships and resilience (Year 8 Wellbeing days, Gravity Year 10, Year 7 & 8 Bounce, Year 9 & 10 Health)

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed every three years or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstance.