

Ballarat Christian College

Child Safe Strategy (v6 April 2025)

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Ballarat Christian College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. Wherever it is at risk, child safety will be the primary focus of our care and decision making. Ballarat Christian College has zero tolerance for child abuse and neglect.

Ballarat Christian 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 and with Ballarat Christian 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.

Child Safe Standards

In 2016 the Victorian Government generated Child Safety Standards to ensure all schools were implementing the best possible practice towards child safe environments. In 2022 these standards were updated by Ministerial Order 1359 to include:

- Standard 1: Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
- Standard 2: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- Standard 3: Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- Standard 4: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- Standard 5: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- Standard 6: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

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- Standard 7: Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.
- Standard 8: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- Standard 9: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- Standard 10: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
- Standard 11: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Our Strategies

In order to ensure that Ballarat Christian College provides a child safe environment which produces the safest environment for our children, we have developed a culture throughout all aspects of our College to reinforce this priority.

Ballarat Christian College will:

- Maintain a Compliance and Risk Management Committee of the Board that will monitor and evaluate child safety within the College and provide direction to all staff in issues relating to child safety.
- Maintain a specific role of Child Safety Officer.
- Maintain a Child Safety Policy that forms the foundations of Ballarat Christian College's policies, procedures and practices in relation to child safety.
- Update Codes of Conduct for staff and students, outlining specifically expected behaviours of all who are associated with the College's environment and activities - making reference to the following people; employees, staff, volunteers, visitors, onsite contractors and students.
- Review policies and procedures related to child safety and update as required
- Update the College's website to include new information on child safety.
- Review Human Resources policies and procedures to include specific references to Child Safety, including highlighting the Child Safe Standards in the induction process
- Periodically review all position descriptions in relation to child safety.

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- Maintain a Risk Register which includes a process for identification, assessment and mitigation of risk to child safety.
- Review current approaches to educate students on child abuse and create greater awareness.
- Engage consultants to maintain and develop the College's Child Safety policies.
- Regularly communicate strategies for parents, students and the wider school community to maintain a zero tolerance on child abuse and a child safe culture within the College.