

Policy Title	Child Safety Policy (Including Managing Risk to Students and Reporting Child Protection and Employee Misconduct Concerns)
Date Policy Approved	July 2026
Policy Owner & Position	Board
Team Responsible for Policy	Principal
Authorised by	Board
Who is the Policy for?	All employees including staff, students, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and onsite contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College
Version Control	Version 10
Statutory/ Legislative Requirement	• Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 (Vic) • Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) • Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) • Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) • Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) • Ministerial Order 1359
Relevant Cross References	• Vision, Purpose, Objects & Values, Child Safety Undertaking, Principles and Statement of Faith • Child Safe Strategy • Staff Code of Conduct (including Child Safety Code of Conduct) • Digital Technology User Agreements • Privacy Policy • Recruitment and Selection Policy • OH&S Policy and Procedures • Anaphylaxis Management Policy • Anti-Bullying Policy • First Aid Policy • Student Codes of Conduct • Student Wellbeing Policy • Sun and UV Protection Policy • Visitors & Volunteers Policy • Working with Children Check Policy • Excursion Policy • Records Management Policy • Duty of Care Policy
Include during Induction	Yes
Review Date	2028
Statement of Context, Purpose and Scope	Ballarat Christian College (the College) is committed to protecting its students from all aspects of harm, and has established strategies, practices, policies and procedures to uphold this commitment. The College's aim is to create an environment where students can receive a Christian education in a calm and Christ focused environment characterised by ethical behaviour and defined professional boundaries, and where they feel safe and supported by the College.

All policies, protocols and procedures flow from the Ballarat Christian College Statement of Purpose:

To provide each student Christian education that gives opportunities to develop gifts and talents to fulfil the will of God in his or her life.

In accordance with its ethos, the College recognises that all students are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) and are, therefore, valued by God. Thus, they should be valued highly and safe-guarded by staff, their peers, visitors to the College, and family members. The care and protection of children is also a key principle in the teaching of Jesus Christ, who reserved his most severe condemnation for those who 'cause a child to stumble' or hinder them. The policies and procedural strategies we implement are the practical expression of our faith in Christ and desire to be faithful to his teachings.

The College takes a zero-tolerance approach to any behaviours that jeopardise student safety and wellbeing (including all forms of child abuse and reportable conduct). The College regards its student safety and wellbeing responsibilities with the utmost importance as it delivers a Christian educational program that promotes the College Motto, Statement of Belief, Mission and Purpose.

The College recognises that any person in authority within, or in relation to the College has a statutory duty under section 490 of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) to protect students studying at the College from any substantial risk that they will become the victim of a sexual offence committed by another person who is 18 years of age or more and associated with the College.

In addition, the College has a pastoral, moral and legal responsibility to create an inextricable connection between the student safety and learning, especially in a personalised learning environment where the College discovers what motivates and inspires its students and focuses on their strengths and ambitions.

This connection will be the foundation of all decisions made, and actions taken by the College when delivering quality education by its students. At all times, the ongoing safety of its students will be at the forefront of mind, and the College's primary focus.

The College treats seriously its reporting obligations in relation to student safety matters, including to the Social Services Regulator (SSR), Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), Child Protection, and Victoria Police. The College recognises that whilst reporting obligations may differ depending on a person's position within the College, all staff are required to uphold the ethos of this policy by ensuring that student safety and wellbeing matters are reported internally, and externally where required.

The Ballarat Christian College Child Safety Policy demonstrates the College's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This policy sets out how the College will meet its responsibilities and commitment to student safety and wellbeing, and is a child safety policy made in accordance with [Ministerial Order 1359](#), including the [Victorian 11 Child Safety Standards](#).

It informs the College community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of its work.

	This policy: • applies to all Board members, employees, volunteers, contractors and other authorised personnel required to perform functions on the College's premises, or at College-organised activities and events (collectively referred to as 'staff') • extends to any other person who is engaged in student-connected work at the College, or that otherwise has direct and regular contact with the College's students (whether supervised or not).
The Policy Statement	Ballarat Christian College is committed to providing an environment and culture where its students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Its child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students. The College has no tolerance for child abuse and takes proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in its school environments. It promotes positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect. The College takes proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in its school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, it treats these seriously and responds promptly and thoroughly. Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those with diverse identification, those unable to live at home, and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics -such as (but not limited to) racism or homophobia - are not tolerated at the College, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences. Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in the College has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety. The College is committed to regularly reviewing its child safe practices, and seeking input from students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform ongoing strategies. Definition of terms used by the College in the implementation of this policy are taken to be those referenced in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 (Vic)
Roles and Responsibilities	College Leadership Team The College Executive Leadership Team (comprising the Principal, Business Manager, Head of Primary, Head of Secondary, and Head of Teaching and Learning) is responsible for ensuring that a strong child-safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359. The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- ensure that child safety is a fixed agenda item at all ELT and Staff meetings
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students and adults, and between students
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the College community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and College Board meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of, and responding to, abuse
- create and maintain an environment and culture where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

College staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and ongoing training provided by the College, and always follow the College's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with its [Child Safe Strategy](#) and [Staff Code of Conduct \(Including Child Safety Code of Conduct\)](#)
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with this policy, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#), as well as other [PROTECT](#) documents and guidelines.
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

College Board

The College Board members will:

- champion and promote a child-safe culture with the broader College community
- ensure that child safety is a fixed agenda item at Board meetings
- undertake annual training on child safety
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with, the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to College Board members

Specific staff child safety responsibilities

The College has appointed a Child Safety Officer to support the Principal in implementing its child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training.

	The responsibilities of the Child Safety Officer are outlined at Guidance for child safety champions. In addition to these roles, the Child Safety Officer is also responsible for: - ensuring that the College has followed the requisite MARAM training and procedures - conducting regular child safety briefings and updates for staff - the overall promotion of child safety considerations in all aspects of the College's operations The Principal and Child Safety Officer are the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents. - The Child Safety Officer is responsible for monitoring the College's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in the College community should approach the Child Safety Officer if they have any concerns about the College's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. - The Principal is responsible for informing the College community about this policy, and making it publicly available - Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safe Strategy, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and Child Safety Risk Register. The Principal and Child Safety Officer will act as the College's authorised contact persons and users of the following schemes/services: Child LinkFamily Violence Information Sharing Scheme Child Information Sharing Scheme The Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) The College has established a Student Wellbeing Team and will establish a Student Reference Group on child safety. The Student Wellbeing Team meets regularly to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safety and wellbeing. The Student Reference Group will provide an opportunity for student input into College strategies. The Board monitors the Child Safety Risk Register
Child Safety Code of Conduct	The College Staff Code of Conduct (Including Child Safety Code of Conduct) sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments. The College ensures that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.
Managing risks to child safety and wellbeing	The College identifies, assesses and manages risks to child safety and wellbeing in its physical and online environments. These risks are managed through its child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in its activity specific risk registers, such as those developed for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services contracted through third party providers for student use.

	The College's Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. The College's ELT will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.
Risk Management	The College will develop and implement risk management strategies regarding student safety and wellbeing, both online and in the physical College environment without compromising a student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities. These strategies will identify, control, remove, and focus on preventing and reducing, the risk(s) of child abuse, reportable conduct and otherwise, risks to student safety and wellbeing by taking into account the nature of the environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics and needs of all students expected to be present in that environment. In addition, these strategies will place a positive responsibility on ensuring that student safety and wellbeing is actively promoted at the College. Where the College identifies risks of actual or suspected child abuse or reportable conduct occurring in the online or physical College environment, it will make a written record of those risks and determine the action(s) it will take to remove or otherwise reduce the risks (risk controls and risk treatments). The College will monitor, review and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls and risk treatments annually, and update these where required. The College will ensure it creates, maintains and disposes of any records about student safety and wellbeing in line with the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards, including minimum retention periods regarding these obligations. The College will detail its information sharing and record-keeping processes and ensure all staff (including volunteers) understand their relevant obligations as outlined in the Child Information Sharing Scheme.

APPENDIX 1 — *Contact Details*

The Orange Door (<i>formerly Child First</i>) - Grampians	1800 219 819
Child Protection Crisis Line (24 hours)	131 278
DFFH Child Protection	1800 000 551
Headspace - Ballarat	(03) 5304 4777
Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
Lifeline	(03) 5332 1009
Victoria Police (Emergency)	000
Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team (SOCIT)	(03) 5336 6000

APPENDIX 2 –Responding to an Incident

Refer to Procedures above for a detailed outline.

PERSON ALERTED TO INCIDENT OR CHILD IN NEED OF PROTECTION	
Immediate care, concern, and prayer to envelop entire process	
Ensure child is safe	
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Report incident to supervisor, then Principal	
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Report to appropriate authorities:	
<u>Immediate Danger (life threatening)</u> Police 000 After hours and to report concerns about the immediate safety of a child: Child Protection 131 278	
<u>Non-Immediate Danger</u>	
Voluntary report (VIC) <u>Who:</u> any person <u>May report if:</u> they have significant concern for wellbeing of child	Mandatory Report (VIC) a. <u>Who:</u> Any person over 18 years of age. <u>Must report if:</u> they have formed a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria against a child by another person of or over the age of 18 years. NB. Exceptions may apply b. <u>Who:</u> Teachers, Principals, Registered medical practitioners, midwives, registered nurses, persons in religious ministry, and Police Officers. <u>Must report if:</u> • They form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child needs protection from physical injury of sexual abuse • The parents cannot or will not protect the child; and • The belief is formed while practicing his / her position of employment • NB: exceptions may apply
Report to: DFFH Child Protection 1300 360 391	Report to: If an offence has been committed: Victoria Police 000 If a child needs protection: DFFH Child Protection 1800 000 551
Care and concern continue as you follow up with all parties involved.	