



# NORTHERN BAY COLLEGE

## CHILD SAFE STANDARDS POLICY NBC080

### 1. PURPOSE

The child safe standards policy sets out the Northern Bay College approach to creating a child safe community where children and young people are safe and feel safe; and provides the policy framework for the college's approach to the Child Safe Standards."

### 2. SCOPE

- This Policy applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people.
- The policy applies across all campuses and venues where students are under the duty of care of the college.
- When required this policy will be provided to partner organisations as applicable

### 3. Statement of Commitment and Principles

- 3.1. Northern Bay College is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.
- 3.2. Northern Bay College has zero tolerance for child abuse.
- 3.3. We are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks. In the context of our college and the local community, we are particularly vigilant with children at risk of health concerns, material support, ATSI identification, CaLD students and those with disabilities.
- 3.4. Every person involved in Northern Bay 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.
- 3.5. In our planning, decision making and operations Northern Bay College will:
  - a) Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety
  - b) Increasingly value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives
  - c) Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
  - d) Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount
  - e) Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children
  - f) Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development
  - g) Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues
  - h) Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
  - i) Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
  - j) Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers."

### 4. Policy and Procedures

- 4.1. We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, employed staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors to achieve these commitments.
- 4.2. Our commitment to School Wide Positive Behaviours Support (SWPBS) enables our students to develop positive social behaviours and problem solving skills.
- 4.3. Each Campus will have a designated Child Safety Officer who will oversee student safety and wellbeing across the college.
- 4.4. We are committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.
- 4.5. The college takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly.
- 4.6. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations
- 4.7. Through the organisational structure and SWPBS the college has a proactive and strategic stance with issues of student wellbeing, rather than operating in a consistently reactive mode.

- 4.8. The college will implement wellbeing support structures and programs which prioritise and address the identified needs of individual students or the college as a whole and that help implement the aims of the policy. *Refer to the Code of Conduct, Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy and Anti Bullying and Harrassment Policy*
- 4.9. All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected.
- 4.10. Northern Bay College has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers, including selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities including WWC and VIT requirements.
- 4.11. We carry out reference checks and police record checks to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. (If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.)
- 4.12. The college has in place effective structures to monitor and respond to Child Safety including:
- protracted student absence data
  - Trauma Management
  - Protocol for Child Safety Reporting.
  - Student Support Groups for children in need.
  - Behaviours will be acknowledged and entered on Compass. Unacceptable behaviour will be addressed and recorded at the time of the incident and have timely entry on Compass.
  - Compass wellbeing entries will be reviewed by Leadership on a regular basis with trends, hot-spots and repeated offences measured for the purpose of monitoring our student wellbeing throughout the college.
- 4.13. **The college will also access outside services to provide support for students and staff which include:**
- Network Support Services Officers and Visiting Teachers providing support for 'at risk' children, including teacher guidance and counselling.
  - Department of Human Services case managers and support workers.
  - Relevant DET support staff.
  - Secondary School Nurses
- 4.14. **The college will endeavour to cater for children identified with specific welfare issues by:**
- Creating support groups.
  - Developing Learning Support Plans (LSP) which may include reference to behaviour goals and Behaviour Management Plans. Monitoring performance and behaviour

#### **A child-safe culture**

- Northern Bay College promotes a culture which encourages staff to raise, discuss and scrutinise concerns making it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.
- The College's plan for creating a child safe culture can be found on the website at [insert hyperlink] and in the following school policy/ies."

#### **Personnel understand their roles and responsibilities/ Code of Conduct**

- All staff are aware of the Child Safety Reporting Policy and Procedures and their responsibilities
- School leaders and managers will ensure that each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Staff will be provided with the College's Code of Conduct and will have to sign that they have received it, and asked to sign agreement to it.
- The college's Code of Conduct sets out clear awareness of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. The Code of Conduct can be found on the website or on Compass
- The school's approach to human resources practices that ensure child safety can be found on the website.

#### **Reporting a child safety concern or complaint**

- The college has clear expectations for staff and volunteers in making a report about a child or young person who may be in need of protection. Immediate action should include reporting their concerns to the DHHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency and notifying the principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns. The school will take action to respond to a complaint

- The college policy and procedure for reporting a child safety concern or complaint can be found on the website or Compass.

### **Risk reduction and management**

The school's approach to child safety risk reduction and management can be found on the website.

### **Listening to children**

- The college has developed a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. We encourage child and parent/carer involvement and engagement that informs safe school operations and builds the capability of children and parents/carers to understand their rights and their responsibilities."

### **Confidentiality and privacy**

- This school collects, uses and discloses information about particular children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy law. The principles regulating the collection, use and storage of information is included in the School Privacy Policy.
- When the college is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct with, or abuse of, a child the school will listen to the complainant's account of things and take them seriously, check understanding and keep the child (or their parents/carers) informed about progress."

## **5. Policy evaluation and review**

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed in the context of school self-evaluation undertaken as part of the school accountability framework. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community."

## **6. Review Cycle**

This policy was last updated July 2019 and is scheduled for review June 2021.

## **7. Definitions**

Ministerial Order 870 provides definitions, including:

### **Child abuse**

Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving:
  - a sexual offence, or
  - an offence under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming)
- the infliction, on a child, of:
  - physical violence
  - serious emotional or psychological harm, and
  - serious neglect of a child.

### **Child-connected work**

Child-connected work means work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

### **Child safety**

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.

### **School environment**

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

### **School staff**

School staff being: an individual working in a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary)
- a minister of religion.

## 8. Related policies and documents

- 8.1. [School Policy and Advisory Guide - Duty of Care](#)
- 8.2. [School Policy and Advisory Guide - Child Protection Reporting Obligations](#)
- 8.3. [DET Child Wellbeing and Safety Framework](#)
- 8.4. [School Privacy Policy](#)
- 8.5. Code of Conduct
- 8.6. Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy
- 8.7. Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

### **The college will endeavour to implement and maintain programs such as:**

- Starting & Continuing Right
- Brave Hearts program
- Anti-Bullying Programs eg: Sticks and Stones Productions
- Restorative Practices Seasons Program
- Calmer Classrooms
- Buddies program
- Student Awards, relating to college values
- Drug Education
- Transition programs
- College Chaplaincy Program
- Recess and Lunch clubs
- HeadsUp Ambassadors
- Regular Student wellbeing meetings at College and Campus level with child safe agenda item at all meetings.