


Policy: Child Safety and Wellbeing

Date of next Review: 2026 Responsible for review: <i>Principal</i> Consultation	Bright P-12 College Policy 	Date Approved: 13th December 2024 Approving Authority: Principal
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PURPOSE

The Bright P-12 College Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our school'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 provides an overview of our school's approach to implementing [Ministerial Order 1359](#) (PDF, 363KB) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school 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 our work.

SCOPE

This policy:

- applies to **all school staff, including Dinner Plain staff, volunteers, host families and contractors** whether or not they work in direct contact with students. It also applies to school council members where indicated.
- applies in all **physical and online school environments** used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by for a student's use (for example, a school camp and when participating in our International Student Exchange Program) and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

Key Actions

Leadership Team

Child Safety and Wellbeing Induction and Training:

1. Implement comprehensive child safety and wellbeing induction and training for all staff and volunteers.
2. Conduct regular professional learning sessions for staff and volunteers to deepen their understanding of child safety and wellbeing.
3. Train staff and volunteers on the importance of Aboriginal culture to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal students.
4. Arrange CUST or equivalent training for staff.
5. Include Aboriginal history and culture in professional learning for staff and volunteers and in curriculum planning for students.
6. Ensure staff receive annual training on child safety policies, recognizing harm, and building culturally safe environments.
7. Provide additional training tailored to specific roles and emerging needs.
8. Train school council members on child safety standards, risk management, and school policies.
9. Ensure International Student Exchange Host families complete an induction and training

Child Safety Code of Conduct:

1. Establish and maintain a Child Safety Code of Conduct for all school staff and volunteers to adhere to.

Child Safety Culture:

1. Champion and promote a child safe culture within the school community.
2. Build a strong school culture that supports cultural inclusion and respects Aboriginal culture, values, and practices.
3. Express zero tolerance of racism in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and other documents.
4. School leaders lead anti-racist actions and address unconscious bias and racism within the school community.
5. Encourage non-Aboriginal leaders and teachers to commit to being effective allies to Aboriginal students and their families.

Policy Review and Compliance:

1. Regularly review and update child safety policies and procedures in consultation with students, families, staff, and volunteers.
2. Monitor compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and promptly address any concerns raised by the school community.
3. Policy review every 2 years or after significant incidents.
4. Analyse complaints and incidents to enhance policies.
5. Share review outcomes with staff and the school community.

Risk Management:

1. Monitor and manage risks related to child safety through the Child Safety Risk Register. 2. Identify, assess, and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in all school environments, including physical and online settings.

3. Develop risk registers for specific activities such as off-site overnight camps and adventure activities.
4. School leadership team to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

Communication and Engagement:

1. Encourage open communication and regular discussions on child safety issues within the school community.
2. Ensure that students' voices are heard and their views are considered in decisions affecting their lives.
3. Families will be informed about child safety policies through the Compass parent portal, school website, newsletters, and meetings.
4. Families can contribute to the development and review of child safety policies.
5. Updates on child safety policies and initiatives will be shared via newsletters and

Compass.

Child safety as a regular agenda item in meetings.

Cultural Inclusion:

1. Begin events and meetings with a Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country.
2. Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags and display plaques and signs to acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners.
3. Share information about the local Aboriginal community through newsletters, assemblies, and parent information nights.
4. Promote safety and inclusion for Aboriginal students and their families, and build schoolwide knowledge of Aboriginal histories and cultures.
5. Create a learning environment that acknowledges, respects, and values Aboriginal cultures and identities.
6. Seek advice from KESOs to create culturally inclusive learning environments.

Privacy and Data Management:

1. Adhere to Victorian privacy laws and relevant regulations.
2. Schools' Privacy Policy for information on data handling.
3. Managing records in line with the Department of Education and Training's policy.

Hiring and Supervision:

1. Follow strict guidelines for hiring staff, including background checks and verifying qualifications.
2. New staff undergo a child safety and wellbeing induction program.
3. Ongoing supervision and assessment of staff to ensure safe behaviour towards children.
4. Ensure volunteers must comply with the Volunteers Policy, including induction and training.

Policy Availability:

1. Ensure key child safety policies will be available on the school website.
2. Child safety updates in newsletters and Compass.

Wellbeing Team

Ongoing Child Safety Matters:

1. Establish Child Safety as part of the Wellbeing Team to address ongoing child safety matters.
2. Establish a Student Reference Group to provide student input into school strategies.

Teachers and Staff

Behaviour and Reporting:

1. Clearly outline appropriate and inappropriate behaviours between adults and students in both physical and online environments.
2. Ensure students understand what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable, empowering them to confidently know what to expect from adults.
3. Include clear processes for reporting inappropriate behaviour.
4. Follow documented procedures for raising and responding to complaints and concerns.
5. Follow the Four Critical Actions for complaints related to adult behaviour and student sexual offending.

Student Wellbeing:

1. Ensure students have access to health and wellbeing resources.
2. Ensure students can voice their opinions on decisions affecting them.
3. Ensure students will receive information relevant to their safety and wellbeing.
4. Protect students from harm and abuse.
5. Celebrate diversity and promote respectful, discrimination-free environments.
6. Special attention to the needs of Aboriginal children, children from diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children impacted by family violence, international students, and LGBTIQ+ children.

College Council

Policy and Risk Management:

1. School council members will be trained on child safety standards, risk management, and school policies.

Statement of commitment to child safety

Bright P-12 College is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families. We are committed to providing environments where our 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. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments. We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect. We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

Roles and responsibilities

School leadership team

Our school leadership team (comprising the principal, assistant principals, leading teachers and learning specialists) 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.

Principals and assistant principals will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed.
- 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 school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school council 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 an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

School staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers, including Host families will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school or the Department of Education and Training, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures.
- act in accordance with our **Child Safety Code of Conduct**
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety **Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy** and Procedures, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- 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.

School council

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, school council members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community.
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings.
- undertake annual training on child safety, NOTE: school councils can use the Child Safe Standards School Council Training slide presentation available on [PROTECT](#).
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school council employees and members.
- when hiring school council employees, ensure that selection, supervision, and management practices are child safe. At our school, school council employment duties are delegated to the principal who is bound by this policy”.

Specific staff child safety responsibilities

Bright P-12 College has nominated a **Wellbeing Leading Teacher** to support the principal to implement our child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training.

The responsibilities of the child safety champion are outlined at [Guidance for child safety champions](#)

Our **Principal, Assistant Principals and Wellbeing Leading Teacher are the first point of contact** for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

- The Wellbeing Leading Teacher is responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our school community should approach the Wellbeing Leading Teacher if they have any concerns about the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- The principal is responsible for informing the school 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 Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and Child Safety Risk Register.

Our school has also established a **Child Safety and Wellbeing Team** and a Student Reference Group on child safety. The Child Safety and Wellbeing Team meet regularly to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safety and wellbeing. The Student Reference Group provides an opportunity for students to provide input into school strategies.

Our Risk Management Committee monitors the Child Safety Risk Register.

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our 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.

We ensure 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.

The ***Child Safety Code of Conduct*** also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

Managing risks to child safety and wellbeing

At our school we identify, assess, and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our ***Child Safety Risk Register*** is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Our school leadership team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

Establishing a culturally safe environment

At Bright P-12 College we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal students and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community:

Build a strong school culture to support cultural inclusion

- Begin events and meetings with a Welcome to Country or an Acknowledgement of Country as a standing agenda item. Use this as an opportunity to pause and reflect or open a discussion.
- Fly the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags on school grounds.

- Display plaques and signs to Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners.
- Celebrate the local Aboriginal community in communications with students, staff, volunteers and families. Share information through school newsletters, school assemblies, parent information nights.
- Lead on safety and inclusion for all Aboriginal students and their families. Learn more about Aboriginal histories and cultures, both locally and across Australia. Speak with respect and confidence about Aboriginal culture, knowledge systems and people.
- Build schoolwide knowledge of Aboriginal histories, cultures, perspectives, values, skills and attitudes.

Provide a welcoming environment for Aboriginal children

- Implement the Koorie Education Policy to create a learning environment for all students that acknowledges, respects and values Aboriginal cultures and identities (Government schools).
- Use Koorie Engagement Support Officers (KESOs) to provide advice to government schools about creating culturally inclusive learning environments.

Actively address racism

- Express zero tolerance of racism in your statement of commitment to child safety included in your Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and other documents.
- Address racism from students, staff, volunteers or visitors directly. Make sure racist speech or actions are always dealt with, and the culture of the school works to prevent incidents from occurring.
- Put school leaders at the front of anti-racist action. Discuss racism and work to address unconscious bias and racism in the school community.
- Encourage non-Aboriginal school leaders and teachers to commit to ways they can work as an effective ally to Aboriginal students, their families and communities.

Guide and train staff and volunteers

- Train staff and volunteers to understand the importance of Aboriginal culture to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal students.
- Arrange Community Understanding Safety Training (CUST) or equivalent for staff.

Build knowledge of Aboriginal culture in school planning and curriculum

- Find out about the Traditional Owners of the land/s where the school is situated at the Map of Indigenous Australia and learn about the importance of acknowledging Traditional Owners.
- Include Aboriginal history and culture in professional learning for staff and volunteers and in curriculum planning for students.
- Develop a resource bank of digital, hardcopy print and other artifacts that support the inclusion of Aboriginal content across the curriculum.

Partner with Aboriginal communities

- CUST Training for all staff
- Indigenous language program

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Education Plan outlines the measures we have in place to maintain an inclusive and culturally safe school for Aboriginal children and students

Student empowerment

[Child safety and wellbeing policy - draft - 2024](#)

To support child safety and wellbeing at Bright P-12 College, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging, implementing our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships, our student Code of Conduct, and our school values.

We inform students of their rights through our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns at the Front Office or on our website.

When the school is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

- inform students about all their rights, including their rights to safety, information and participation
- recognise the importance of friendships and encourage support from peers, to help students feel safe and be less isolated
- make sure staff and volunteers:
 - are attuned to [signs of harm](#)
 - facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns
- to develop a culture that encourages participation and responds to what students say
- give students opportunities to participate, and respond to their contributions to strengthen confidence and engagement
- offer students access to sexual abuse prevention programs and related information in an age-appropriate way. School boarding premises are required to offer sexual abuse prevention programs and related information where it is relevant to the setting or context
- develop curriculum planning documents or other documentation that details how the school will address these requirements.

Inform students of their rights

- When sharing information under the information sharing schemes:
work to build trust by being open and transparent about information sharing and keep the child and family informed each time their information is shared if it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so

- Provide information through the curriculum via relevant subject areas to promote:
 - Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships
 - School-wide Positive Behaviour Support Framework
 - Safe Schools
 - Vic SRC's Introduction to Student Voice
 - eSmart.

Empower students to contribute to school life

- Discuss commitment to student's voice at enrolment and organise orientation activities focused on activating student's voice.
- Conduct year-level meetings and form groups to discuss students' rights and safety issues.
- Invite students to provide feedback on school-wide decisions and take their views into account in school decision-making.
- Document student participation in activities that contribute to the life of the school.
- Involve students in consultation processes and inform them of their impact on decision-making.
- Demonstrate that the school takes students seriously by acting on their concerns, noting that what might seem unimportant to an adult may be important to a young person.
- Become a VicSRC Partner School.
- Provide students who find it harder to speak up or be heard with multiple avenues for communicating, including writing, drawing, or physical forms of communication.

Empower students to raise their concerns

- Provide students with information about complaints processes.
- Highlight student views in your school community or public-facing documents, including quoting students where appropriate.
- Create opportunities for all student voices by being aware of discriminatory barriers and any overreliance on the input of student leaders

Strengthen peer support for safety and wellbeing

- Display posters acknowledging sexuality and gender diversity and identify safe spaces where students can go if they need support.
- Discuss healthy boundaries for friendships. Point out that the risk of harm can occur in child-to-child interactions, as well as adult-to-child interactions.
- Use school transition programs, like Transition: A Positive Start to School or Transition – Year 6 to 7, to provide support for students entering the school.
- Provide buddying or mentoring programs for new students transitioning to the school mid-year or outside of the regular transition timeline.

Establish protective strategies

- Support all students to identify trusted adults and friends they can talk to about a concern at school, at home or in the community.
- Deliver age-appropriate curriculum content about respectful relationships, sexuality, consent and sexual abuse prevention through the Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships teaching and learning materials as part of implementing the whole school approach to Respectful Relationships.
- Use the School's Mental Health Menu to support students in your school.
- Provide contact information for independent child and youth advocacy services or helplines.
- Provide a range of age-appropriate picture books, fiction and non-fiction that include:
 - children's rights and empowerment themes
 - cultural and linguistic diversity
 - neurodiverse characters and people with disability
 - diversity in sexual orientation and gender.
- Teach students practical protective strategies, including:
 - what to do when they feel unsafe
 - phrases they can use to raise an objection

- pathways for raising safety concerns, and
- online safety behaviours.

Communicate in a respectful and age-appropriate way

- Educate staff to uphold Aboriginal cultural safety and be respectful of identity and culture.
- Train staff and volunteers to facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.

Use sensitivity and build trust

- Provide training to staff and volunteers to be attuned to signs of harm and risk factors in students.
- Remind staff and volunteers to recognise that students might communicate in different ways, including through verbal and non-verbal cues, play, body language, facial expressions, drawings or behaviours.
- Follow through on your commitments – show students that the leadership team and staff are trustworthy and take their worries or concerns seriously.
- seek and consider the views of the child (or the relevant family members) about sharing their confidential information if it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so

Inform students of their rights

Provide age appropriate and accessible information to students such as information about:

- the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct.
- the Charter of Commitment under the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

Inform students of their rights and special protections including the right to:
live and grow up healthy:

- have a say about decisions affecting them
- get information that is important to them
- be safe and not harmed by anyone.

Family engagement

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Bright P-12 College we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

We do this by:

- through the Compass parent portal, school website, newsletters, other communications, school council, subcommittees of school council, student, staff, and parent meetings etc.
- We will inform families through Compass
- all of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for students and parents at [insert webpage link or place, e.g., school reception]

- Newsletters and Compass will inform families and the school community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety.
- PROTECT Child Safety posters will be displayed across the school

Diversity and equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international students
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

Our ***Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy*** provides more information about the measures we have in place to support diversity and equity.

Suitable staff and volunteers

At Bright P-12 College we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

Staff recruitment

When recruiting staff, we follow the Department of Education and Training's recruitment policies and guidelines, available on the Policy and Advisory Library (PAL) at:

- [Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Suitability for Employment Checks](#)
- [School Council Employment](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management.](#)

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record:
 - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
 - the person's history of working with children
 - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

Staff induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program.

The program will include a focus on:

[Child safety and wellbeing policy - draft - 2024](#)

- the ***Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*** (this document)
- the ***Child Safety Code of Conduct***
- the ***Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations*** (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures and
- any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done through completion of mandatory learning modules and leadership visibility around the College.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school and department policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

Suitability of volunteers

All volunteers are required to comply with our ***Volunteers Policy***, which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters. In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completing the [Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#) online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

School council training and education

To ensure our school council is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment, the council is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment
- Bright P-12 College child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

Complaints and reporting processes

Bright P-12 College fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's Complaint Policy. The **Complaints Policy** can be found on our [website](#).

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including school council employees and homestay providers must follow our **Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures**. Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- the [Four Critical Actions](#) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the [Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending](#) for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Our **Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy** and **Bullying Prevention Policy** cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

Communications

Bright P-12 College is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document), Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure
- displaying PROTECT around the school
- updates in our school newsletter and Compass
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings.

Privacy and information sharing

Bright P-12 College collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to: [Schools' Privacy Policy](#).

[Child safety and wellbeing policy - draft - 2024](#)

Records management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with the Department of Education and Training's policy: [Records Management – School Records](#)

Review of child safety practices

At Bright P-12 College we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

We will:

- review and improve our policy every 2 years or after any significant child safety incident.
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in induction processes for relevant staff
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed in an annual staff briefing/meeting
- Made available in hard copy from school Front Office upon request

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaints Policy
- Digital Learning Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy

Related Department of Education and Training policies

- [Bullying Prevention and Response Policy](#)
- [Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes](#)
- [Complaints Policy](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management Policy](#)
- [Digital Learning in Schools Policy](#)
- [Family Violence Support](#)

- [Protecting Children: Reporting Obligations Policy](#)
- [Policy and Guidelines for Recruitment in Schools](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Policy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Supervision of Students Policy](#)
- [Visitors in Schools Policy](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools Policy](#)
- [Working with Children and other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)

Other related documents

- [Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- [Identifying and Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Student Sexual Offending](#)
- [Recording your actions: Responding to suspected child abuse – A template for Victorian schools](#)