

Rationale

Scoresby Secondary College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all students who take part in school activities both during and outside of school hours. This includes activities conducted outside of the college such as sporting events, camps and excursions as well as the online school learning environment. The College 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.

Aim

Scoresby Secondary College is committed to supporting and enabling all members of the school community, which includes all school staff, all parents and all students to be able to identify and report child safety matters to the appropriate person or persons. The College will define the roles and responsibilities of the staff in protecting the safety and wellbeing of students as well as supporting and assisting students and staff in the process of reporting child abuse.

Implementation

Scoresby Secondary College will handle child safety concerns in a sensitive, confidential and timely fashion and will comply with all requirements set out in Ministerial Order 870 and included in the child safe standards.

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

Scoresby Secondary College will:

Providing a Staff Code of Conduct to all staff, student teachers and volunteers, that clearly articulates the required expectations in relation to interactions with students.

- The *Code of Conduct for staff* (Appendix A) and volunteers is included in the Scoresby Secondary School Staff Handbook. This will be highlighted at the induction of all new staff and volunteers.

Ensure that staff and volunteers understand they have a duty of care to students in relation to child safety and treat a report of child abuse seriously.

Annual staff and volunteer briefings will occur to

- develop a shared understanding that it is an offence for any staff member if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and who have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.
- outline roles and responsibilities under the Scoresby Secondary College *Mandatory Reporting Policy (Appendix B)*
- provide role clarity for staff members or volunteers who receive information about child abuse to report that information directly to the Head of Student Services or a member of the Principal team.
 - The Head of Student Services report will any child abuse matter to the Principal who contacts the appropriate authority
 - In the case of any alleged sexual abuse, the DET procedures for responding to allegations of student sexual abuse will be followed
 - Where the report of child abuse implicates a staff member or volunteer the report should be made directly and with urgency to the Principal. If the Principal is unavailable, the report should be directly made to an Assistant Principal.
- Provide staff with assurance that should they have to make a report regarding child abuse, they will be offered support through the Principal and the Student Services Team.

Manage known risks to students effectively.

- Upon enrolment, the parent enrolling the child will be required to present copies of any intervention or court orders which will be kept on file
- Parents have the responsibility to provide new copies of intervention or court orders that are changed or updated. The office will record and update information about intervention or court orders on CASES.
- staff at the College will only provide information about a child's enrolment or attendance at the College to the custodial parent, the Victorian Police or the Department of Human Services. All care will be taken to ensure that the identity of any callers requesting this type of information will be established before any information is provided.

Implement clear risk management strategies in relation to child safety in the recruitment of new staff.

- When recruiting staff or volunteers to the College the importance of child safety will be made clear to all potential candidates
- All employment advertisements will include a reference to the College's commitment to providing a child-safe environment.
- All employees, volunteers (including parents) or service providers who work in any College environment as defined by the policy statement will be required to have either a current *Working with Children Check*, police check or VIT registration.
- A copy of this policy will be provided during all induction programs.

Implement a clear risk management strategy in relation to child safety with existing staff.

- The Principal will speak directly to all staff at the beginning of the year and at other key times about child safety and associated policies (including the College Code of Conduct).
- All possible breaches of the Code of Conduct, whether they relate to child abuse or not, will be investigated following due DET procedures.

Ensure that staff will be provided with professional learning to assist recognizing the physical and psychological signs of child abuse.

- The Student Services Team will be responsible for providing professional learning for all staff in relation to recognizing the signs of child abuse and the legal and moral obligations of staff to act.

All Scoresby Secondary College staff will:

- **Undertake professional learning in relation to issues related to child safety.** Professional learning related to mandatory reporting and managing student disclosures will be provided for all staff upon induction and on an annual basis.
- **Be aware that they have a duty of care for students in any College environment where they interact with students. This duty of care is not limited to the school day.**
 - Staff therefore
 - will adhere to the acceptable behaviors when interacting with students, as outlined in the Child Safety Code of Conduct
 - be aware of and act in accordance with the Anti-Bullying procedures
 - follow Mandatory Reporting procedures if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a student's health, safety or wellbeing is at risk
 - abide by the Victorian Institute of Teaching Profession Code of Conduct, and adhere to the expectations described in the Duty of Care Policies and Procedures
 - treat students with respect and foster an environment that is safe, secure and supporting, free from bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination and intimidation as described in the *Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy - Rights and Responsibilities*
- Staff who interact, as part of their teaching practices, with students in online environments have a duty of care to those students in those online environments.
- Where a staff member or volunteer becomes aware of child abuse in an online environment they are required to report that information as a matter of urgency to the Assistant Principal or Head of Student Services.
- Each member of staff will have the phone numbers of the Principal team. Should they need assistance to report an issue of child abuse outside of school hours they should contact the Principal, or if unavailable the Assistant Principal.

All students of Scoresby Secondary College will:

- have the right to be treated with respect and to be protected from any form of child abuse
- have the right to be and feel safe in their interactions with staff, volunteers and visitors to the College
- are required to adhere to the College Code of Conduct,
- be provided with active wellbeing support from the Student Services team
- be provided with support coordinated by the Principals/Head of Student Services if they are subjected to child abuse or who are deemed to be in danger (where allegations of sexual assault are made student support must be in accordance with the Department of Education and Training procedures specified)
- be case managed by the Student Services Team who will coordinate support for students and families in the broader community.
- Receive internal support where wellbeing support in the broader community is not taken up by the student or family
- Have their wellbeing maintained by providing year level coordinators and classroom teachers sufficient information about their circumstances to provide ongoing monitoring without breaching the student's privacy.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every three years or as often as required due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

This policy was ratified at School Council on:
To be reviewed: September 2019