








## Information for parents

### Our commitment to the responsible use of digital technology






At Mount Beauty Secondary College we are committed to building a culture of respect and responsibility. We show this in the way we use technology and interact online. We teach our students about responsible digital behaviours, including how to recognise and respond to online dangers and threats. We support students to develop the digital skills they need to make a positive impact in the world. We are intentional and discerning about our integration of digital tools into the curriculum, providing rich, interactive and personalised experiences, while ensuring a balance with offline learning opportunities.

### What we do:

	<p><b>We set clear expectations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have clear expectations about appropriate conduct using digital technologies.</li> <li>Our <a href="#">Mobile Phone Policy</a> outlines our school’s expectations relating to students using mobile phones during school hours.</li> <li>We have clear and appropriate consequences when students breach these expectations, in line with our <a href="#">Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy</a>.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>We teach appropriate conduct</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We teach our students to be safe, intentional and responsible users of digital technologies, including age-appropriate instruction on important digital issues such as cybersafety and cyberbullying.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>We partner with families</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We work with parents and carers to understand the digital technology-related issues they are facing at home. We support them with information and tools that help.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>We provide access to technology</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We provide access to educational software for students to use. (e.g. Microsoft Office 365, Compass, Adobe Platform, Photocopier Access, ClickView, Library Catalogue)</li> <li>We create student email accounts which are non-identifiable.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>We supervise digital learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We supervise students using digital technologies in the classroom, consistent with our duty of care.</li> <li>We use clear protocols and procedures to protect students working in online spaces</li> </ul>
	<p><b>We take appropriate steps to protect students</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We provide a filtered internet service to block inappropriate content. Full protection from inappropriate content cannot be guaranteed, however, we have processes to report and act on inappropriate content.</li> <li>We may access and monitor messages and files sent or saved our network, if necessary and appropriate.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>We appropriately manage and respond to online incidents</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We work to prevent, respond, and learn from issues or incidents relating to the use of digital technology, including cybersecurity incidents, cyberbullying and risks to child safety.</li> <li>We refer suspected illegal online acts to the police.</li> </ul>

## How parents and carers can help

Learning about technology and its impacts doesn't stop at the school gate. Below are our suggestions for ways you can support your children to responsibly use digital technology.

	<p><b>Establish clear routines</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk to your child about expectations including when, where, and how digital devices can be used at home, ensuring these rules are age-appropriate and consistent. These can include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Requiring devices to be used in a common area, such as a living room or study area</li> <li>○ Setting up a specific area for charging devices overnight, away from bedrooms, to promote better sleep hygiene.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<p><b>Restrict inappropriate content</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use built-in parental controls on devices and apps to help manage their device access and restrict inappropriate content.</li> <li>• Consider restricting the use of apps with addictive game mechanics (e.g. rewards, badges, limited exit options).</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Talk about online safety</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk with your child about the importance of protecting personal information, recognising online scams, and understanding and adjusting privacy settings on social media.</li> <li>• Encourage your child to talk to you or another trusted adult if they feel unsafe online.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Model responsible and balanced technology use</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage a healthy balance between screen time and offline activities, especially outdoor unstructured play and time with friends and family, face-to-face.*</li> <li>• Demonstrate responsible and balanced tech use in your own daily routine to set a good example for your child.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Work with us</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Let your child's teacher know about concerns you have regarding their technology use</li> <li>• Keep informed about what your child is learning at school, so you can help reinforce positive messages at home.</li> </ul>

**\*Australia's physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines** include the following recommendations for children between 5-17 years-old regarding sedentary recreational screen time:

- no more than 2 hours of sedentary recreational screen time per day
- avoiding screen time 1 hour before sleep
- keeping screens out of the bedroom.

Source: Australia's physical activity and sedentary behaviour guidelines, <https://www.health.gov.au/topics/physical-activity-and-exercise/physical-activity-and-exercise-guidelines-for-all-australians/for-children-and-young-people-5-to-17-years>.

### Support for parents and carers

To learn more about how to support the safe, intentional and responsible use of digital technologies at home, the eSafety Commissioner provides [advice for parents](#), and outlines available [counselling and support services](#).

## Personal devices at Mount Beauty Secondary College

Mount Beauty Secondary College operates a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) program. Parents/carers are invited to purchase or supply a device for their child to bring to school.

### Technical specifications for BYOD devices

To ensure smooth and reliable technology access and student support, we have set the following technical specifications for all personal devices. If purchasing or supplying a personal device to use at Mount Beauty Secondary College, please ensure that it complies with the following specifications:

	Windows	Apple
<b>Operating System</b>	Windows 11, 23H2 * or higher	MacOS 13 (Ventura) * or higher
<b>Wireless</b>	802.11	802.11
<b>RAM</b>	8GB or larger	8GB or larger
<b>Hard Drive</b>	256GB or larger	256GB or larger
<b>Battery Life</b>	Minimum 7 hours of advertised battery life	Minimum 7 hours of advertised battery life

\* Avoid second-hand computers that cannot be updated to these versions.

### Behavioural Expectations – Personal devices

When bringing a personal device to schools, students must ensure that:

- it is fully charged each morning
- it is carried to school with appropriate care in a carry case and stored in lockable storage when not in use
- it is kept in good working order
- it is clearly labelled with the student's name and class

### Supports and services provided

Mount Beauty Secondary College will provide the following technical support services for personal devices brought to school:

- Support to access software (e.g. Microsoft Office 365, Compass, Adobe Platform, Photocopier Access, ClickView, Library Catalogue)
- Connecting devices to the internet
- Providing student log-in credentials to access the schools network, including a school email account, and educational student accounts
- Support with the use of Email, Compass, Folder Management, copying/printing.





\* Please note that our school **does not have insurance** to cover accidental damage to students' devices, and parents/carers are encouraged to consider obtaining their own insurance for their child's device.

Students, parents and carers who would like more information or assistance regarding our BYOD program are encouraged to contact Mount Beauty Secondary College on 03 5754 4500.

## For students

### What we expect:

Below are our expectations of students at Mount Beauty Secondary College when using digital technologies.

<p><b>Be safe</b></p> 	<p><b><i>At Mount Beauty Secondary College, we protect personal information and keep safe online.</i></b></p> <p>We do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not sharing our password or using someone else’s username or password.</li> <li>• Logging out of our devices when they are not in use.</li> <li>• Restricting the personal information we post online, including images and videos.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Be respectful</b></p> 	<p><b><i>At Mount Beauty Secondary College, we are kind and show respect to others when using technology.</i></b></p> <p>We do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acting with kindness and never bullying or impersonating others online.</li> <li>• Thinking about how our words might make others feel before we say or write them.</li> <li>• Only taking photos or recordings of others when they are aware and have given us permission to do so.</li> <li>• Seeking permission before sharing others’ information online.</li> <li>• Never using a generative artificial intelligence (AI) tool to upload or generate images of a student, parent, or teacher.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Be responsible</b></p> 	<p><b><i>At Mount Beauty Secondary College, we are honest, handle technology with care and follow the school rules.</i></b></p> <p>We do this by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handling devices with care and not interfering with school-managed network or security settings, other people’s work, or devices we don’t own.</li> <li>• Following the terms and conditions of any digital tool we use.</li> <li>• Not downloading or using inappropriate programs like games, or programs/networks designed to bypass the school’s internet and content restrictions.</li> <li>• Not using technology to cheat or steal, and always acknowledging when we use information sourced from others or generate content using AI tools.</li> <li>• Turning off and securely storing our mobile phone during school hours.</li> <li>• Ensuring a healthy balance between screen time and offline activities at school.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ask for help</b></p> 	<p><b><i>At Mount Beauty Secondary College, we ask for help if we feel unsure or see something inappropriate.</i></b></p> <p>We do this by talking to a teacher or a trusted adult if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We feel uncomfortable or unsafe.</li> <li>• We see others participating in unsafe, inappropriate, or hurtful online behaviour.</li> <li>• We notice any damage to school technologies.</li> <li>• We need help understanding about a digital tool or how it can be used.</li> </ul>

### Support for students:

For useful information to help you stay safe online, the e-Safety Commissioner provides [information for young people](#), and outlines available [counselling and support services](#).

## My ideas on safe and responsible online behaviour

Your task:

- Talk with your classmates and/or your parents about what safe and responsible online behaviour means for you.
- Write or draw your response in the boxes below:

**Be safe** - I protect personal information and keep safe online. This means I:

(write or draw...)



**Be respectful** - I am kind and show respect to others when using technology. This means I:

(write or draw...)



**Be responsible** - I am honest, handle technology with care and follow the school rules. This means I:

(write or draw...)



**Ask for help** - I ask for help if I feel unsure or see something inappropriate. This means I:

(write or draw...)



## Instructions

- Students are encouraged to speak with their parents or teachers prior to signing this agreement if they don't understand what it means, or if they have questions they would like to discuss.
- Complete the agreement, including parent/carer acknowledgement and return it by **[insert date]**.
- Completed agreements can be dropped at the front office.

## Student Agreement

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(Student name)

I understand and commit to uphold the expectations on me as a student at Mount Beauty Secondary College when using digital technology.

I will do my best to:

- **be safe** to protect personal information and keep safe online.
- **be respectful** and kind to others when using technology.
- **be responsible** by demonstrating honesty, handling technology with care and following the school rules.
- **ask for help** if I feel unsure or see something inappropriate.

I will continue to learn about how to use digital technology in a safe and responsible way.

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(Student's signature)

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(Date)

## Parent/carer acknowledgement

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(Parent/carer name)

I acknowledge your commitment and will support you to safely use and learn about digital technologies.



## BULLYING PREVENTION

Reviewed by: School Council  
Date reviewed: September 2024  
Date of next review: September 2026  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact our office on 03 5754 4005.

### **Purpose:**

Mount Beauty Secondary College is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Mount Beauty Secondary College community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Mount Beauty Secondary College will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Mount Beauty Secondary College to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Mount Beauty Secondary College.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Mount Beauty Secondary College aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

Mount Beauty Secondary College acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

### **Scope:**

This policy addresses how Mount Beauty Secondary College aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Mount Beauty Secondary College recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our Student Code of Conduct, Inclusion and Diversity Policy and Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It also applies to bullying behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.

## **Policy:**

### **Definitions**

#### **Bullying**

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

*Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*

*Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)*

*Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

There are four main types of bullying behaviour:

- Physical – examples include hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.
- Cyberbullying – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to: [Bully Stoppers \(education.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.education.vic.gov.au) and the Department's [Bullying Prevention and Response](#) policy on the Policy and Advisory Library.

#### **Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours**

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in, or who witness, any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow our Student Code of Conduct, Inclusion and Diversity Policy, Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and/or this Bullying Prevention Policy where the behaviour constitutes bullying.



*Mutual conflict* involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

*Social rejection or dislike* is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

*Single-episode acts* of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Mount Beauty Secondary College will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

*Harassment* is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment.

*Discrimination* is behaviour that treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic (for example, race, religious belief or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation).

Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at our school and there may be serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group. Further information about discrimination and harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

Mount Beauty Secondary College has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Mount Beauty Secondary College is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

- We identify and implement evidence-based programs and initiatives from the [Schools Mental Health Menu](#) that are relevant to preventing and addressing bullying and help us to build a positive and inclusive school climate.
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- We participate in the Respectful Relationships initiative, which aims to embed a culture of respect and equality across our school.
- We celebrate the diverse backgrounds of members of our school community and teach multicultural education, including Aboriginal History, to promote mutual respect and social cohesion.
- We participate in the Safe Schools program to help us foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQ+ students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- We promote upstander behaviour as a way of empowering our students to positively and safely take appropriate action when they see or hear of a peer being bullied.

- The Peer Support Program and the Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- We participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy

## **INCIDENT RESPONSE**

### **Reporting concerns to Mount Beauty Secondary College**

Bullying is not tolerated at our school. We ensure bullying behaviour is identified and addressed with appropriate and proportionate consequences. All bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Mount Beauty Secondary College are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their Student Engagement Leader. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, educational support staff, chaplain, counsellors.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Mount Beauty Secondary College should contact the Assistant Principal by phone 03 5754 4005 or email. Contact details are found on Compass or by emailing the College Office [mount.beauty.sc@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:mount.beauty.sc@education.vic.gov.au).

### **Investigations**

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in Compass; and
2. inform the Student Engagement Leader.

The Student Engagement Leader is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the Student Engagement Leader may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parent/carer(s) of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the Student Engagement Leader in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

### **Responses to bullying behaviours**

When the Student Engagement Leader has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with Assistant Principal.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Mount Beauty Secondary College will consider:

- the age and maturity of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

The Student Engagement Leader may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the target student or students, through the Student Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator for referral to a provider in the Student Wellbeing Team.
- Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, through the Student Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator for referral to a provider in the Student Wellbeing Team.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student, through the Student Safety and Wellbeing Coordinator for referral to a provider in the Student Wellbeing Team.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the target student(s), the students engaging in bullying behaviour and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the target(s).
- Implement a Method of Shared Concern process with all students involved in the bullying.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan or Individual Management Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including connecting affected students with an older Student Mentor, resilience programs, etc.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement cohort, year group, or whole school targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example 'Do something nice for someone', nominate someone for a recognition award.
- Implement proportionate disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Mount Beauty Secondary College understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The Assistant Principal is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

### **Further Information and Resources:**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- ICT Use Agreement
- Student Code of Conduct

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [ReachOut Australia](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

### **EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data will be collected through any of the following:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular student bullying surveys
- regular staff surveys
- [Bully Stoppers Data Collection](#) tool
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- [Parent Opinion Survey](#)

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with School Council and the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Team.

### **Review Cycle:**

This policy was last updated on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2024 and is scheduled for review in September 2026.

<b>Consultation:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
School Council	30/10/2024

## Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy



Reviewed by: School Council  
Date reviewed: November 2024  
Date of next review: November 2026  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: Principal

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If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact our office on 03 5754 4005.

### **Purpose:**

The Mount Beauty Secondary 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, volunteers 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 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.

### **Definitions**

The following terms in this policy have [specific definitions](#):

- child
- child safety
- child abuse
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- school environment
- school boarding environment
- school staff
- school boarding premises staff
- school governing authority
- school boarding premises governing authority
- student
- volunteer.

### **Statement of commitment to child safety:**

Mount Beauty Secondary 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, queer, questioning and asexual (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 principal, learning specialist and leading teacher 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 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 [\[insert link\]](#)
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures [\[insert link\]](#), 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 using the Child Safe Standards School Council Training slide presentation available on [PROTECT - 2024 PROTECTchild-safe-standards-government-school-council-training-pptx](#)
- 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 Mount Beauty Secondary College, school council employment duties are delegated to the principal who is bound by this policy.

Specific staff child safety responsibilities

Mount Beauty Secondary College has nominated the assistant principal as an alternative child safety champion 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 and child safety champion are the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

- The principal is responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our school community should approach [job title] 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 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 [\[insert link\]](#) 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.

- Promote a culture of online and physical safety for all students
- Manage risk in physical spaces
- Supervise appropriately
- Promote student safety online
- Promote acceptable behaviour by staff and volunteers
- Consider procurement and third parties

### Establishing a culturally safe environment:

At Mount Beauty Secondary 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
- Provide a welcoming environment for Aboriginal children
- Actively address racism
- Guide and train staff and volunteers
- Build knowledge of Aboriginal culture in school planning and curriculum
- Partner with Aboriginal communities
- Review and assess how the school supports cultural inclusion



### **Student empowerment:**

To support child safety and wellbeing at Mount Beauty Secondary 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 through, implementing our whole school approach to Respectful Relationships, our student Code of Conduct, 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 school office.

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.

Ways our school will support student empowerment:

- Inform students of their rights
- Empower students to contribute to school life
- Empower students to raise their concerns
- Strengthen peer support for safety and wellbeing
- Establish protective factors
- Communicate in a respectful and age-appropriate way
- Use sensitivity and build trust

### **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 Mount Beauty Secondary 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:

- Seeking input from families and the community through the school website, newsletters, other communications, school council, subcommittees of school council, student, staff, and parent meetings.
- all of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for students and parents at <https://mbsc.vic.edu.au/> or the school office.
- Newsletters 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

### **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 [\[insert link\]](#) provides more information about the measures we have in place to support diversity and equity.

### **Suitable staff and volunteers:**

At Mount Beauty Secondary 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.
  - 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:

- 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 by regular performance reviews

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 [insert link]**, 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
- Mount Beauty Secondary College child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

### **Complaints and reporting processes:**

Mount Beauty Secondary 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 at [\[insert link\]](#).

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers (including school council employees) must follow our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures [\[insert link\]](#). 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 [\[insert link\]](#) and Bullying Prevention Policy [\[insert link\]](#) cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

### **Communications:**

Mount Beauty Secondary 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 posters around the school
- updates in our school newsletter
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school council meetings.

### **Privacy and information sharing:**

Mount Beauty Secondary 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](#).

### **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 Mount Beauty Secondary 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.

**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](#)

**Policy status and review:**

The principal is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers, and the Mount Beauty Secondary College community.

**Review Cycle: 3-4 Years**

This policy was last updated on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024 and is scheduled for review in November 2026.

<b>Approval:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
School Council	19 <sup>th</sup> February 2025

## Child Safety Code of Conduct

Reviewed by: School Council  
Date reviewed: November 2024  
Date of next review: November 2026  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact our office on 03 5754 4005.

### **Purpose:**

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school.

All Mount Beauty Secondary College staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, school council members and any other adult involved in child-connected work must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by students. It also applies during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the school for student use (for example, a school camp).

### **Acceptable behaviours:**

As Mount Beauty Secondary College, staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding our Mount Beauty Secondary College commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- treating students and families in our school community with respect in our school environment and outside our school environment as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they disclose that they or another child or student has been abused or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or student
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer, questioning and asexual (LGBTIQA+) students
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the principal or assistant principal (child safety champion).
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures [\[insert link\]](#) and the [PROTECT Four Critical Actions](#).
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

### **Unacceptable behaviours:**

As Mount Beauty Secondary College, staff, volunteers, contractors and member of our school community involved in child-connected work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to ‘grooming’ behaviour (for example, by offering gifts)
- display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context
- ignore an adult’s overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance
- treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to schoolwork or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child or student in a school environment except in accordance with the [Photographing, Filming and Recording Students policy](#) or where required for duty of care purposes
- consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present
- have contact with any student outside of school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought.

**Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct:**

All Mount Beauty Secondary College staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-connected work who breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the Department of Education and Training Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Mount Beauty Secondary College Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the principal.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact the assistant principal.

**Policy evaluation and review:**

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

This policy was last updated on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024 and is scheduled for review in November 2026.

Approval:	Date:
School Council	19 <sup>th</sup> February 2025

## Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures

Reviewed by: School Council  
Date reviewed: November 2024  
Date of next review: November 2026  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact our office on 03 5754 4005.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the procedures our school has in place to respond to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse and to ensure that all staff and members of our school community understand and follow the various legal obligations that apply to the reporting of child abuse to relevant authorities.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to complaints and concerns relating to 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 (physical and online).

### **Definitions:**

#### **Child abuse**

Child abuse includes:

- physical violence inflicted on a child
- sexual offences committed against a child
- grooming of a child by an adult
- family violence committed against or in the presence of a child
- serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.

The definition of child abuse is broad and can include student to student incidents and concerns, as well as behaviour committed by an adult.

#### **Grooming**

Grooming is a criminal offence under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic) and is a form of child abuse and sexual misconduct. This offence targets predatory conduct undertaken by an adult to prepare a child under the age of 16 to engage in sexual activity at a later time, either with the groomer or with another adult.



Grooming can include communicating (including electronic communications and communicating by conduct) and/or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent or carer.

### **School staff member**

For the purpose of this policy a school staff member includes a contractor engaged by the school or school council to perform child-related work.

### **Policy:**

Mount Beauty Secondary College understands the important role our school plays in protecting children from abuse. We have a range of policies and measures in place to prevent child abuse from occurring at our school or during school activities.

### **Information for students:**

- All students should feel safe to speak to any staff member to raise any concerns about their safety or any other concerns that they have.
- If a student does not know who to approach at Mount Beauty Secondary College they should start with their student engagement leader or the principal

### **Identifying child abuse:**

To ensure we can respond in the best interests of students and children when complaints or concerns relating to child abuse are raised, all staff and relevant volunteers must:

- understand how to identify signs of child abuse and behavioural indicators of perpetrators - for detailed information on identifying child abuse and behavioural indicators of perpetrators refer to [Identify child abuse](#).
- understand their various legal obligations in relation to reporting child abuse to relevant authorities - for detailed information on the various legal obligations refer to Appendix A
- follow the below procedures for responding to complaints or concerns relating to child abuse, which ensure our school acts in the best interests of students and children and complies with both our legal and Department policy obligations.

At Mount Beauty Secondary College we recognise the diversity of the children, young people, and families at our school and take account of their individual needs and backgrounds when considering and responding to child safety incidents or concerns.

### **Procedures for responding to an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse:**

In responding to a child safety incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion, Mount Beauty Secondary College will follow:

- the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) for complaints and concerns relating to all forms of child abuse
- 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 for complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful student behaviours.

## School staff and volunteer responsibilities:

### 1. Immediate action

If a school staff member or volunteer witnesses an incident of child abuse, or reasonably believes, suspects or receives a disclosure or allegation that a child has been, or is at risk of being abused, they must:

- If a child is at immediate risk of harm, separate alleged victims and others involved, administer first aid (appropriate to their level of training) and call 000 for urgent medical or police assistance where required to respond to immediate health or safety concerns.
- Notify the principal or a member of the leadership team as soon as possible, who will ensure our school follows the steps in these procedures.

NOTE for staff and volunteers:

- if you are uncertain if an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion gives rise to a concern about child abuse you must always err on the side of caution and report the concern to the principal.
- If the principal is unavailable, the assistant principal will take on this role.
- If the concerns relates to the conduct of the principal, notify the assistant principal or the [relevant regional office](#) who must then take on responsibility for ensuring our school follows these procedures.

Refer to Appendix B for guidance on how to respond to a disclosure of child abuse.

### 2. Reporting to authorities and referring to services

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, the principal must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible.

The following steps will ensure our school complies with the four critical actions as well as additional actions required under the Child Safe Standards.

The principal must ensure:

- all relevant information is reported to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection, Victoria Police or relevant services where required
- the incident is reported to the Department's [eduSafe Plus portal](#) or the Incident Support and Operations Centre (1800 126 126) in accordance with the severity rating outlined in the [Managing and Reporting School Incidents Policy](#)
- all [reportable conduct](#) allegations or incidents are reported by the Principal to the Department's Employee Conduct Branch (03 7022 0005) – where a reportable conduct allegation is made against the Principal, the Regional Director must be informed who will then make a report to Employee Conduct Branch

NOTE: In circumstances where staff members are legally required to report child abuse to DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police and they are unable to confirm that the information has been reported by

another person at the school or the designated member of school staff does not agree that a report needs to be made, the staff member who has formed the reasonable belief must still contact DFFH Child Protection and Victoria Police to make the report.

If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but you still hold significant concerns for their wellbeing you must still act. This may include making a referral or seeking advice from Child FIRST or The Orange Door (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support) DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police.

### **3. Contacting parents or carers**

The principal must ensure parents and carers are notified unless advised otherwise by DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police, or there are other safety and wellbeing concerns in relation to informing parents/carers.

Principals may contact the Department of Education and Training Legal Division for advice on notifying parents and carers, and where relevant, the wider school community.

For further guidance, refer to [PROTECT Contacting parents and carers](#)

### **4. Ongoing protection and support**

The principal must ensure appropriate steps are taken by the school to protect the child and other children from any continued risk of abuse. These steps must be taken in consultation with any relevant external agency or Department staff such as DFFH Child Protection, Victoria Police, Legal Division or Employee Conduct Branch. Ongoing protection will also include further reports to authorities if new information comes to light or further incidents occur.

Appropriate, culturally sensitive and ongoing support must be offered and provided to all affected students. Ongoing support will be based on any available advice from the Department, parents and carers, health practitioners, and other authorities (such as DFFH or Victoria Police) and may include referral to wellbeing professionals, development of a safety plan, student support group meetings, and, for student to student incidents, behaviour management and support measures.

### **5. Recordkeeping**

The principal will ensure that:

- detailed notes of the incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion are taken using the [Responding to Suspected Child Abuse: Template](#) or the [Responding to Student Sexual Offending: Template](#) including, where possible, by the staff member or volunteer who reported the incident, disclosure, or suspicion to them
- detailed notes are taken of any immediate or ongoing action taken by the school to respond to the incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion
- all notes and other records relating to the incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion, including the schools immediate and ongoing actions, are stored securely in a sealed envelope within a secure admin filing cabinet.

#### **For school visitors and school community members:**

All community members aged 18 years or over have legal obligations relating to reporting child abuse – refer to Appendix A for detailed information.

Any person can make a report to DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. For contact details, refer to the [Four Critical Actions](#).

Members of the community do not have to inform the school if they are making a disclosure to DFFH Child Protection or the Victoria Police. However, where a community member is concerned about the safety of a child or children at the school, the community member should report this concern to the principal so that appropriate steps to support the student can be taken

**Additional requirements for all staff:**

All staff play an important role in supporting student safety and wellbeing and have a duty of care to take reasonable steps to prevent reasonably foreseeable harm to students.

Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities in the above procedure does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse. This means that if, after following the actions outlined in the procedure, a staff member reasonably believes that a child remains at risk of abuse, they must take the following steps:

- if they are concerned that the school has not taken reasonable steps to prevent or reduce the risk, raise these concerns with the principal in the first instance, and escalate to the regional office if they remain unsatisfied.
- report the matter to the relevant authorities where they are unable to confirm that the information has been reported by another staff member

Staff must refer to Appendix A for further information on their obligations relating to reporting to authorities.

**COMMUNICATION:**

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

- Available publicly on our school's website (or insert other online parent, carer, student communication method)
- Included in staff induction processes and annual staff training
- Included in volunteer induction processes and training for relevant volunteers
- Discussed at annual staff briefings or meetings
- Included in the school documentation portal on COMPASS
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

**Further information and RESOURCES:**

The following Department of Education and Training policies and guidance are relevant to this policy:

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Protecting Children — Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#)

- [Managing and Reporting School Incidents](#)
- [Reportable Conduct](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)
- [Identify child abuse](#)
- [Report child abuse in schools \(including four critical actions\)](#)
- [Identify and respond to student sexual offending](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this policy:

- [Child Safety \[and Wellbeing\] Policy](#)
- [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)
- [Volunteer Policy](#)
- [Duty of Care Policy](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity Policy](#)

**Review Cycle: 2 Years**

This policy was last updated on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024 and is scheduled for review in November 2026.

<b>Approval:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
School Council	<b>19<sup>th</sup> February 2025</b>

## Complaints Policy

Reviewed by: School Improvement Team  
School Council  
Date reviewed: November 2024  
Date of next review: November 2026  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact our office on 03 5754 4005.

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to:

- provide an outline of the complaints process at Mount Beauty Secondary College so that students, parents and members of the community are informed of how they can raise complaints or concerns about issues arising at our school
- ensure that all complaints and concerns regarding Mount Beauty Secondary College are managed in a timely, effective, fair and respectful manner.

### **Scope:**

**This policy relates to complaints brought by students, parents, carers, or members of our school community and applies to all matters relating to our school.**

**In some limited instances, we may need to refer a complainant to another policy or area if there are different processes in place to manage the issue including:**

- Complaints and concerns relating to fraud and corruption will be managed in accordance with the department's [Fraud and Corruption Policy](#)
- Criminal matters will be referred to Victorian Police
- Legal claims will be referred to the Department's Legal Division
- Complaints and concerns relating to child abuse will be managed in accordance with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures [[insert hyperlink](#)] – Child Safety

### **Policy:**

Mount Beauty Secondary College welcomes feedback, both positive and negative, and is committed to continuous improvement. We value open communication with our families and are committed to understanding complaints and addressing them appropriately. We recognise that the complaints process provides an important opportunity for reflection and learning.

We value and encourage open and positive relationships with our school community. We understand that it is in the best interests of students for there to be a trusting relationship between families and our school.

When addressing a complaint, it is expected that all parties will:

- be considerate of each other's views and respect each other's role
- be focused on resolution of the complaint, with the interests of the student involved at the centre
- act in good faith and cooperation
- behave with respect and courtesy
- respect the privacy and confidentiality of those involved, as appropriate

- operate within and seek reasonable resolutions that comply with any applicable legislation and Department policy.
- recognise that schools and the Department may be subject to legal constraints on their ability to act or disclose information in some circumstances.

### **Complaints and concerns process for students**

Mount Beauty Secondary College acknowledges that issues or concerns can cause stress or worry for students and impact their wellbeing and learning. Mount Beauty Secondary College encourages our students to raise issues or concerns as they arise so that we can work together to resolve them.

Students with a concern or complaint can raise them with a trusted adult at school, for example, with your classroom teacher, Student Engagement Leader, Wellbeing staff, or Education Support staff. This person will take your concern or complaint seriously and will explain to you what steps we can take to try to resolve the issue and support you.

You can also ask your parent, carer or another trusted adult outside of the school, to talk to us about the issue instead. Information about our parent/carer complaints and concerns process is outlined further below. The parent/carer process also applies to students who are mature minors, refer to: [Mature Minors and Decision Making](#).

Other ways you can raise a concern or complaint with us include:

- talking to a member of the student representative council about your concern and any suggestions you have for resolving it
- participating in student forums

Further information and resources to support students to raise issues or concerns are available at:

- [Report Racism Hotline](#) (call 1800 722 476) – this hotline enables students to report concerns relating to racism or religious discrimination
- [Reach Out](#)
- [Headspace](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#) (call 1800 55 1800)
- [Victorian Aboriginal Education Association](#) (VAEAI)

### **Complaints and concerns process for parents, carers and community members**

#### **Preparation for raising a concern or complaint**

Mount Beauty Secondary College encourages parents, carers or members of the community who may wish to submit a complaint to:

- carefully consider the issues you would like to discuss
- remember you may not have all the facts relating to the issues that you want to raise
- think about how the matter could be resolved
- be informed by checking the policies and guidelines set by the Department and Mount Beauty Secondary College (see “Further Information and Resources” section below).

#### **Support person**

You are welcome to have a support person to assist you in raising a complaint or concern with our school. Please advise us if you wish to have a support person to assist you, and provide their name, contact details, and their relationship to you.

#### **Raising a concern**

Mount Beauty Secondary College is always happy to discuss with parents/carers and community members any concerns that they may have. Concerns in the first instance should be directed to your child’s teacher, Student Engagement Leader, Assistant Principal or Principal. Where possible, school staff will work with you to ensure that your concerns are appropriately addressed.

## Making a complaint

Where concerns cannot be resolved in this way, parents or community members may wish to make a formal complaint to the Principal or Assistant Principal.

If you would like to make a formal complaint, in most cases, depending on the nature of the complaint raised, our school will first seek to understand the issues and will then convene a resolution meeting with the aim of resolving the complaint together. The following process will apply:

- 1. Complaint received:** Please either email, telephone or arrange a meeting through the front office with the Assistant Principal or Principal, to outline your complaint so that we can fully understand what the issues are. We can discuss your complaint in a way that is convenient for you, whether in writing, in person or over the phone.
- 2. Information gathering:** Depending on the issues raised in the complaint, the Principal, Assistant Principal or nominee may need to gather further information to properly understand the situation. This process may also involve speaking to others to obtain details about the situation or the concerns raised.
- 3. Response:** Where possible, a resolution meeting will be arranged with the Assistant Principal or Principal to discuss the complaint with the objective of reaching a resolution satisfactory to all parties.

If after the resolution meeting we are unable to resolve the complaint together, we will work with you to produce a written summary of the complaint in the event you would like to take further action about it.

In some circumstances, the Principal may determine that a resolution meeting would not be appropriate. In this situation, a response to the complaint will be provided in writing.

- 4. Timelines:** Mount Beauty Secondary College will acknowledge receipt of your complaint as soon as possible (usually within two school days) and will seek to resolve complaints in a timely manner. Depending on the complexity of the complaint, Mount Beauty Secondary College may need some time to gather enough information to fully understand the circumstances of your complaint. We will endeavour to complete any necessary information gathering and hold a resolution meeting where appropriate within 10 working days of the complaint being raised. In situations where further time is required, Mount Beauty Secondary College will consult with you and discuss any interim solutions to the dispute that can be put in place.

Please note that unreasonable conduct (e.g. vexatious complaints) may need to be managed differently to the procedures in this policy.

## Resolution

Where appropriate, Mount Beauty Secondary College may seek to resolve a complaint by:

- an apology or expression of regret
- a change of decision
- a change of policy, procedure or practice
- offering the opportunity for student counselling or other support
- other actions consistent with school values that are intended to support the student, parent and school relationship, engagement, and participation in the school community.

In some circumstances, Mount Beauty Secondary College may also ask you to attend a meeting with an independent third party, or participate in a mediation with an accredited mediator to assist in the resolution of the dispute.



## Escalation

If you are not satisfied that your complaint has been resolved by the school, or if your complaint is about the Principal and you do not want to raise it directly with them, then the complaint should be referred to the North Eastern Victoria Regional Office by contacting:

Phone: 1300 333 231

Fax: (03) 8392 9300

Email: [nevr@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:nevr@edumail.vic.gov.au)

Mount Beauty Secondary College may also refer a complaint to the North Eastern Victoria Regional Office if we believe that we have done all we can to address the complaint.

For more information about the Department's parent complaints process, including the role of the Regional Office, please see: [Raise a complaint or concern about your school.](#)

## Record keeping and other requirements

To meet Department and legal requirements, our school must keep written records of:

- Serious, substantial or unusual complaints
- Complaints relating to the Child Information Sharing Scheme and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, to meet regulatory requirements - refer to Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes for further information

Our school also follows Department policy to ensure that record-keeping, reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met when responding to complaints or concerns.

## Communication:

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

- Available publicly on school website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Hard copy available from school administration upon request

## Further information and resources:

The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):

- [Complaints - Parents](#)

The Department's parents' website:

- [Raise a complaint or concern about your school](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)

School's local policy:

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- 

## Review Cycle and Evaluation

This policy was last updated on 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024 and is scheduled for review in November 2026.

Consultation:	Date:
School Council	19 <sup>th</sup> February 2025

## Visitors Policy

Reviewed by: School Council  
Date reviewed: October 2024  
Date of next review: October 2028  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact our office on 03 5754 4005.

### **Purpose:**

To provide a safe and secure learning and teaching environment for students and staff by establishing processes to monitor and manage visitors to Mount Beauty Secondary College.

### **Scope:**

This policy outlines our school's arrangements for visitors who attend school grounds when the school is open for instruction between the hours of 8:30am to 4:00pm, and when the office is staffed to monitor/receive visitors at reception, including parents, contractors, [insert any other visitors that are common visitors at your school]. Outside of these times, our front office is not staffed and this policy does not apply.

### **Definition:**

*Child-related work:* As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)*, child-related work is work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to the work.

### **Policy:**

Mount Beauty Secondary College strives to create an open and inclusive school community, and encourages parents and carers to be actively involved in their child's development and education. We also strive to foster strong partnerships with local community services, schools and other organisations.

Mount Beauty Secondary College is not a public place. The principal has the authority to permit or deny entry to school grounds and encourages all visitors to familiarise themselves with our school's *Statement of Values, Child Safe Policy, Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, Child Safety Code of Conduct*.

From time to time, different members of the public may visit our school. Visitors may include, but are not limited to:

- Parents
- Volunteers – see our school's Volunteers Policy for more information
- Prospective parents, students and employees
- Invited speakers, sessional instructors and others addressing learning and development
- Public officials (eg Members of Parliament, local councillors)
- Persons conducting business eg: uniform suppliers, booksellers, official school photographers, commercial salespeople
- Tradespeople
- Children's services agencies
- Talent scouts
- Department of Health and Human Services workers
- Victoria Police
- Persons authorised to enter school premises (eg Work Safe inspectors, health officers, etc.)

- Other Department of Education and Training staff (including allied health staff) or contractors
- NDIS therapists or other allied health or health practitioners.

### **Sign in procedure**

All visitors to Mount Beauty Secondary College are required to report to the General Office on arrival. This includes parents/carers.

Visitors must:

- Record their name, date and time of visit and who they are visiting in the compass kiosk
- Provide proof of identification to office staff upon request
- Produce their valid Working with Children Check where required by this policy (see below)
- Read the College's Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Sign the College's Visitor's/Volunteer's Agreement
- Where appropriate, complete an OH&S induction
- Follow instruction from school staff and abide by all relevant policies relating to appropriate conduct on school grounds including, but not limited to: Child Safety Code of Conduct, Sexual Harassment Policy, Workplace Bullying Policy, Respect for School Staff, Statement of Values
- Return to the office upon departure and sign out.

Mount Beauty Secondary College will ensure that our school's Child Safe Code of Conduct is available to visitors when they sign in and a copy of the Visitor's/Volunteer's Agreement is made available to sign.

### **Requirements for visitors to produce a valid Working with Children Check card**

For Working with Children Check (WWCC) and other suitability check requirements relating to parents/carers and other volunteers working with students, please check our Volunteers Policy.

All visitors who are engaged in **child-related work** (see definition above) that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child, must have a valid WWCC.

In some circumstances, visitors to Mount Beauty Secondary College who are **not** engaged in child-related work will also be required to produce a valid WWC Check depending on the particular circumstances of their visit. For example, Mount Beauty Secondary College will require a valid WWC Check for:

- **visitors who will be working regularly with children** during the time they are visiting, even though direct contact with children is not a central part of their normal duties
- **visitors (e.g. contractors)**, who will regularly be performing unsupervised work at the school during school hours or any other time where children are present. Further background checks, including references, may also be requested at the discretion of the principal.

Visitors who will be working in areas away from students (e.g. a visiting auditor who will be located in the front office with administration staff) or who will be supervised and accompanied by a staff member during their visit (e.g. a Member of Parliament, a journalist, a prospective parent on a school tour) will not be required to have a WWC Clearance.

Sworn Victoria Police officers or sworn Australian Federal Police officers are exempt from requiring a WWC Check, but may be asked to verify that they are sworn officers by providing proof of identification.

### **Invited speakers and presenters**

On occasion, Mount Beauty Secondary College may invite external speakers or providers to deliver incursions, presentations, workshops and special programs for our students. Consistent with Department of Education and Training requirements, Mount Beauty Secondary College will:

- ensure that the content of presentations and programs by external providers contributes to the educational development of our students and is consistent with curriculum objectives
- ensure that any proposed visit, programs or content delivered by visitors complies with the requirement that education in Victorian government schools is secular and is consistent with the values of public education, Department policies and the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic).
- In particular, programs delivered by visitors are to be delivered in a manner that supports and promotes the principles and practice of Australian democracy including a commitment to:

- elected government
- the rule of law
- equal rights for all before the law
- freedom of religion
- freedom of speech and association
- the values of openness and tolerance
- respect the range of views held by students and their families.

**Parent visitors**

We understand that there may occasionally be a reason why a parent or carer may want to speak to or see their child at school, during school hours.

If there is a particular pressing or unavoidable issue that cannot wait until the end of the school day, we ask that parents or carers call the General Office to make the request to speak to, or see their child, during school hours. We also ask that parents avoid arranging to visit their children at school wherever possible, as this can cause inappropriate disruptions to the school day.

All parents or carers who visit our school during school hours, other than for the purposes of school pick-ups and drop-offs, or for specific school events (eg parent teacher interviews, concerts, assemblies etc), are required to sign in as a visitor at the school office.

Parents or carers who are prohibited from entering the school under a court order or direction of the Principal are not permitted to visit the school. Our school [maintains and provides office staff with a list of restricted parents/carers which may include identifying photographs and any other information as required depending on the level of risk posed.

**Other visitors**

All business operators, tradespeople and other visitors attending the school to conduct work must report to the school office upon arrival for instruction and follow the sign in procedure outlined above.

**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 administration upon request

**Related policies and resources:**

- Statement of Values
- Child Safe Policy
- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Child Safe Code of Conduct
- Volunteers Policy
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Workplace Bullying Policy

**References:**

- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Visitors in Schools](#)
- [Contractor OHS Management](#)
- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)
- [Volunteers Policy](#)
- [Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Child Safe Code of Conduct](#)

**Review Cycle:**

This policy was last updated in October 2024 and is scheduled for review in October 2028.

Consultation:	Date:
School Council	30/10/2024



## Volunteers Policy

Reviewed by: School Council  
Date reviewed: October 2024  
Date of next review: October 2026  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact our office on 03 5754 4005.

### **Purpose:**

To outline the processes that Mount Beauty Secondary College will follow to recruit, screen, supervise and manage volunteers to provide a child safe environment, and to explain the legal rights of volunteers.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to the recruitment, screening, supervision and management of all people who volunteer at our school.

### **Definitions:**

*Child-connected work:* work authorised by the school governing authority/provider of a school boarding services and performed by an adult in a school or school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

*Child-related work:* As defined by the *Worker Screening Act 2020* (Vic), child-related work is work that usually involves direct contact (including in person, over the phone, written and online communication) with a child that is a central part of that person's duties. It does not include work that involves occasional direct contact with children that is incidental to the work.

*Closely related family member:* parent, carer, parent/carer's spouse or domestic partner, stepparent, parent/carer's mother or father in-law, grandparent, uncle or aunt, brother or sister, including step or half siblings.

*Volunteer worker:* A volunteer school worker is a person who voluntarily engages in school work or approved community work without payment or reward.

*School work:* School work means:

- Carrying out the functions of a school council
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of a school, by the school council, any parents' club or association or any other body organised to promote the welfare of the school
- Any activity carried out for the welfare of the school at the request of the principal or school council
- Providing assistance in the work of any school or kindergarten
- Attending meetings in relation to government schools convened by any organisation which receives government financial support

This is a broad definition and means that volunteers who participate in school community activities, such as fundraising and assisting with excursions, are legally protected (ie indemnified) from action by others in the event of an injury or accident whilst they are performing volunteer school work in good faith.

## **Policy:**

Mount Beauty Secondary College is committed to implementing and following practices which protect the safety and wellbeing of children and our staff and volunteers. Mount Beauty Secondary College also recognises the valuable contribution that volunteers provide to our school community and the work that we do].

The procedures set out below are designed to ensure that Mount Beauty Secondary College's volunteers are suitable to work with children and are well-placed to make a positive contribution to our school community.

### **Becoming a volunteer**

Members of our school community who would like to volunteer are encouraged to read the newsletter and Facebook page, to see advertisements asking for volunteers. Volunteers may be required to complete an OH&S induction. They are to contact the teacher organising the activity/excursion directly, or register their interest at the General Office.

### **Suitability checks including Working with Children Clearances**

#### ***Working with students***

Mount Beauty Secondary College values the many volunteers that assist [amend as relevant for your school community eg: in our classrooms/with sports events/camps/excursions/school concerts/other events and programs]. To ensure that we are meeting our legal obligations under the *Worker Screening Act* and the Child Safe Standards, Mount Beauty Secondary College is required to undertake suitability checks which in most cases will involve asking for evidence of a Working with Children (WWC) Clearance and may also involve undertaking reference, proof of identity, qualification and work history involving children checks.

Considering our legal obligations, and our commitment to ensuring that Mount Beauty Secondary College is a child safe environment, we will require volunteers to obtain a WWC Clearance and produce their valid card to the General Office or teacher in charge of the activity for verification in the following circumstances:

- **Volunteers who are not parent/family members** of any student at the school if they are engaged in child-related work regardless of whether they are being supervised. This is a legal requirement under the *Worker Screening Act*.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who are assisting with any classroom or school activities involving direct contact with children in circumstances where the volunteer's child is **not** participating, or does not ordinarily participate in, the activity. This is a legal requirement under the *Worker Screening Act*.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who assist with excursions (including swimming), camps and similar events, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.
- **Parent/family volunteers** who regularly assist in school activities, regardless of whether their own child is participating or not.
- **Parent/community School Council members** sitting on School Council with student School Council members, regardless of whether their own child is a student member or not.

In addition, depending on the nature of the volunteer work, our school may ask the volunteer to provide other suitability checks at its discretion (for example, references, work history involving children and/or qualifications). Proof of identity may also be required in some circumstances.

### ***Non child-related work***

On some occasions, parents and other members of the school community may volunteer to do work that is not child-related. For example, school council, participating in sub-committees of school council, other fundraising groups that meet in the evenings during which children will not be, or would not reasonably be expected to be, present.

Volunteers for this type of work are not required to have WWC Clearances or other suitability checks as they are not engaged in child-related work and children are not generally present during these activities. However, Mount Beauty Secondary College reserves the right to undertake suitability checks, including requiring proof of identity and WWC Clearance, at its discretion if considered necessary for any particular activities or circumstances.

School council members and volunteers on any sub-committee of School Council will be asked to provide evidence of a valid WWC Clearance. Whilst we acknowledge that these volunteers will not be engaging in child-related work as part of their role, even when there is a student sitting on the School Council, we believe that it is important that our volunteers who are involved in making important decisions about our school which will have an impact on students do have a valid WWC Clearance.

### **Training and induction**

Under the Child Safe Standards volunteers must have an appropriate induction and training in child safety and wellbeing.

To support us to maintain a child safe environment, before engaging in any work where children are present or reasonably likely to be present, volunteers must familiarise themselves with the policies, procedures and code of conduct referred to in our Child Safety Summary Sheet and ensure the actions and requirements in these documents are followed when volunteering for our school.

Depending on the nature and responsibilities of their role, Mount Beauty Secondary College may also require volunteers to complete additional child safety training.

### **Management and supervision**

Volunteer workers will be expected to comply with any reasonable direction of the principal (or their nominee). This will include the requirement to follow our school's policies, including, but not limited to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, our Child Safety Code of Conduct and our Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

Volunteer workers will also be expected to act consistently with Department of Education and Training policies, to the extent that they apply to volunteer workers, including the Department's policies relating to [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#), [Sexual Harassment](#) and [Workplace Bullying](#).

The principal (or their nominee) will determine the level of school staff supervision required for volunteers, depending on the type of work being performed, and with a focus on ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students.

Mount Beauty Secondary College will provide any appropriate induction and/or training for all volunteer workers. The principal (or their nominee) will determine what induction and/or training is necessary depending on what type of work the volunteer will be engaged in.

All volunteers will be provided induction in relation to Mount Beauty Secondary College's child safety practices, including reporting obligations and procedures. Our school has a Child Safety Reporting Obligations Policy which all staff and volunteers should be aware of.

Mount Beauty Secondary College will ensure that our school's Child Safe Code of Conduct is available to visitors when they sign in and a copy of the Visitor's/Volunteer's Agreement is made available to sign.



The principal has the discretion to make a decision about the ongoing suitability of a volunteer worker and may determine at any time whether or not a person is suitable to volunteer at Mount Beauty Secondary College.

### **Privacy and information-sharing**

Volunteers must ensure that any student information they become aware of because of their volunteer work is managed sensitively and in accordance with the [Schools' Privacy Policy](#) and the Department's policy on [Privacy and Information Sharing](#).

Under these policies, student information can and should be shared with relevant school staff to:

- support the student's education, wellbeing and health;
- reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to the student, other students, staff or visitors;
- make reasonable adjustments to accommodate the student's disability; or
- provide a safe and secure workplace.

Volunteers must immediately report any child safety concerns that they become aware of to a member of staff to ensure appropriate action. There are some circumstances where volunteers may also be obliged to disclose information to authorities outside of the school such as to Victoria Police. For further information on child safety responding and reporting obligations refer to: *Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures*.

### **Records management**

While it is unlikely volunteers will be responsible for any school records during their volunteer work, any school records that volunteers are responsible for must be provided to the principal to ensure they are managed in accordance with the Department's policy: [Records Management – Schools](#).

### **Compensation**

#### *Personal injury*

Volunteer workers are covered by the Department of Education and Training's Workers' Compensation Policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in school work.

#### *Property damage*

If a volunteer worker suffers damage to their property in the course of carrying out school work, the Minister (or delegate) may authorise such compensation as they consider reasonable in the circumstances. Claims of this nature should be directed to the principal who will direct them to the Department's Legal Division.

#### *Public liability insurance*

The Department of Education and Training's public liability insurance policy applies when a volunteer worker engaged in school work is legally liable for:

- a claim for bodily injury to a third party
- damage to or the destruction of a third party's property.

## 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
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

## Related policies and resources

Mount Beauty Secondary College policies and resources relevant to this policy include:

- *Statement of Values and School Philosophy*
- *Visitors Policy*
- *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*
- *Child Safety Code of Conduct*
- *Child Safety Responding*
- *Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures*
- *Inclusion and Diversity Policy*
- *Mount Beauty Secondary College Child Safety Summary Sheet*

Department policies:

- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Privacy and Information Sharing](#)
- [Records Management – School Records](#)
- [Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Volunteer OHS Management](#)
- [Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- [Workplace Bullying](#)

This policy was last updated in October 2024 and is scheduled for review in October 2026.

Consultation:	Date:
School Council	30/10/2024

## YARD DUTY AND SUPERVISION POLICY FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Reviewed by: Principal  
Date reviewed: November 2024  
Date of next review: November 2026  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Position: \_\_\_\_\_



If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact our office on 03 5754 4005.

### **Purpose:**

To ensure school staff understand their supervision and yard duty responsibilities.

### **Scope:**

This policy applies to all teaching and non-teaching staff at Mount Beauty Secondary College, including education support staff, casual relief teachers and visiting teachers.

### **Policy:**

Appropriate supervision is an important strategy to monitor student behaviour and enables staff to identify and respond to possible risks at school as they arise. It also plays a vital role in helping schools to discharge their duty of care to students.

The principal is responsible for ensuring that there is a well organised and responsive system of supervision and yard duty in place during school hours, before and after school, and on school excursions and camps and other school activities.

School staff are responsible for following reasonable and lawful instructions from the principal, including instructions to provide supervision to students at specific dates, times and places. Supervision should be undertaken in a way that identifies and mitigates risks to child safety.

### **Before and after school**

Mount Beauty Secondary College's bus area is actively supervised by staff from 8.30am and the remaining areas of the grounds and main building's corridor are supervised by school staff from 8.40am and until 3.40pm after school. The Library is not open before school, but is supervised after school until 4.30pm. Outside of these hours, school staff are not available to supervise students.

Students who wish to attend school outside of these hours are encouraged to remain in the Cafeteria area or outside.

### **Yard duty**

Teaching staff at Mount Beauty Secondary College are expected to assist with yard duty supervision and will be included in the weekly roster. Education support Staff at Mount Beauty Secondary College may be expected to assist with yard duty/supervision at special events, such as sports days.

The Daily Organiser is responsible for preparing and communicating the yard duty roster on a regular basis.

At Mount Beauty Secondary College, staff listed first on the Daily Bulletin will supervise Zone 1, staff listed second will supervise Zone 2 and staff listed third supervise the corridor, Cafe and toilets at the first half of recess and first third of lunch.

The designated yard duty areas for our school are:

Zone	Area
Zone 1 (Orange, Oval side)	Soccer pitch side of the College: School flagpole to the end of the soccer goals, Cricket nets to centre of the Les Peart oval to the corner of the main building. <b><u>On Extreme Weather days</u></b> - Rooms 2, 3, 4, and 11
Zone 2 (Pink, Pondage side)	Pondage side of the College: In front of the Technology wing and the Jessie Hollonds' Studios to centre of Les Peart oval. Under cover basketball courts, netball court, shade sail areas and first court after shade sails. <b><u>On Extreme Weather days</u></b> - Rooms 2, 3, 4, and 11
Zone 3 (Yellow, Hall and Cafeteria)	Corridors The Cafe Boys and Girls toilets. <b><u>On Extreme Weather days</u></b> - Rooms 2, 3, 4, and 11
Zone 4 (The Library)	The Library during lunchtime only.



Staff who are rostered for yard duty must remain in the designated area until they are replaced by a relieving teacher. Hand over should occur at the Front steps for Zone 1 (Soccer side), Cafe steps for Zone 2 (Pondage side) or Corridor/Cafe for Zone 3.

During yard duty, supervising school staff must:

- Collect the yard duty bum bag and vest from the back of the Staff Work Room door at the start of supervision and return it at the end
- move methodically around the designated zone to ensure that all areas are within line of sight to at least one yard duty teacher at a time
- where safe to do so, approach any unknown visitor who is observed on school grounds without a clear legitimate purpose, and ensure they have a visitor pass and have signed in (excluding drop off and collection periods)
- be alert and vigilant
- intervene immediately if potentially dangerous or inappropriate behaviour is observed in the yard
- enforce behavioural standards and implement appropriate consequences for breaches of safety or other rules, in accordance with any relevant disciplinary measures set out in the school's Student Engagement policy
- ensure that students who require first aid assistance receive it as soon as practicable
- log any incidents or near misses as appropriate, i.e. Compass chronicle, alerting the Assistant Principal
- model Sun Smart behaviour during Term 1 and 4 and enforce students to wear hats when outside
- interact with students in your zone – this builds relationships and lets students know who is on duty.

If being relieved of their yard duty shift by another staff member (for example, where the shift is 'split' into consecutive time periods), the staff member must ensure that the yard duty bum bag, vest and a brief, but adequate, verbal 'handover' is given to the relieving staff member in relation to any issues which may have arisen during the first shift.

If the supervising teacher is unable to conduct yard duty at the designated time, they should contact the Daily Organiser with as much notice as possible prior to the relevant yard duty shift to ensure that alternative arrangements are made.

If the supervising teacher needs to leave yard duty during the allocated time, they should send a message to the office, but should not leave the designated area until a relieving teacher has arrived in the designated area.

If the next duty teacher does not arrive for yard duty, the teacher currently on duty should send a message to the office and not leave the designated area until a relieving teacher has arrived.

Should students require assistance during recess or lunchtime, they are encouraged to speak to the supervising yard duty teacher.

### **Classroom**

The classroom teacher is responsible for the supervision of all students in their care during class.

If a younger child is asked to leave the classroom, send another student with the exiting student, or send another student with a note to the Assistant Principal/Principal/Office. Older students should be trusted to go to the General Office area and the classroom teacher is to follow up at the next convenient time possible.

If a teacher needs to leave the classroom unattended at any time during a lesson, he or she should first contact the Office for assistance. The teacher should then wait until a replacement staff member has arrived at the classroom before leaving.

### **School activities, camps and excursions**

The Principal and leadership team are responsible for ensuring that students are appropriately supervised during all school activities, camps and excursions, including when external providers are engaged to conduct part or all of the activity. Appropriate supervision will be planned for school activities, camps and excursions on an individual basis, depending on the activities to be undertaken and the level of potential risk involved, and will follow the supervision requirements in the Department of Education and Training [Excursions Policy](#).

### **Digital devices and virtual classroom**

Mount Beauty Secondary College follows the Department's [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Technologies Policy](#) with respect to supervision of students using digital devices.

Mount Beauty Secondary College will also ensure appropriate supervision of students participating in remote and flexible learning environments while on school site. In these cases, students will be supervised in the library or an allocated classroom.

While parents are responsible for the appropriate supervision of students accessing external schooling providers virtual classrooms from home:

- student attendance will be monitored via communication with the provider
- any wellbeing or safety concerns for the student will be managed in accordance with our usual processes – refer to our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and Procedures for further information

### **Students requiring additional supervision support**

Sometimes students will require additional supervision, such as students with disability or other additional needs. In these cases, the Principal or delegate will ensure arrangements are made to roster additional staff as required. This may include on yard duty, in the classroom or during school activities.

### **Workplace learning programs**

When students are participating in workplace learning programs, such as work experience, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, and structured workplace learning, the safety and welfare of the student is paramount. Organising staff are required to follow all applicable Department of Education and Training policies and guidelines in relation to off-site learning, including policy and guidelines on the safety and wellbeing of students. Refer to:

- [Structure Workplace Learning](#)
- [School Based Apprenticeships and Traineeships](#)
- [Work Experience](#)
- [School Community Work](#)

### **Independent Study**

Year 12 students will have at least one study block consisting of five sessions each week, designated as 'study periods.' Attendance will be recorded by the supervising teacher when these sessions are scheduled in the designated Year 12 study space.

Students may leave school grounds during these study sessions, provided that:

1. They occur during periods 1 and 2 or periods 5 and 6.
2. Parental permission has been granted.

### **Supervision of student in emergency operating environments**

In emergency circumstances our school will follow our Emergency Management Plan, including with respect to supervision.

In the event of any mandatory period of remote or flexible learning our School will follow the operations guidance issued by the Department.

## **Communication**

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

- Included in staff induction processes
- Discussed at staff briefings or meetings, as required
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Information for parents and students on supervision before and after school is available on our school website.

## **Further information and resources**

- the Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):
  - [Child Safe Standards](#)
  - [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Technologies](#)
  - [Duty of Care](#)
  - [Excursions](#)
  - [Supervision of Students](#)
  - [Visitors in Schools](#)

## **Review Process:**

This policy was last updated on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and is scheduled for review on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2026.

This policy will also be updated if significant changes are made to school grounds that require a revision of Mount Beauty Secondary College's Yard Duty and Supervision Policy.