

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

A safe and nurturing environment for all children and young people within the Billanook College community

Billanook College is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children, and to ensure that those people who care for our students act in their best interests and take all reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure school environment. We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

Everyone working at Billanook College is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse. The College has a duty of care to provide safe, open and supportive environments that protect our students, and where those who represent the College (staff, volunteers and contractors) work within the framework of our vision, mission and objectives. In particular we are committed to providing an environment where all of our students are protected from any form of abuse.

Creating child-safe school environments is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by the College, families and our community. It is marked by collaboration, vigilance and proactive approaches across policies, procedures, curriculum and practices.

Every person involved in the Billanook community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Billanook College commits to providing a safe and nurturing environment, promoting and protecting the interests and safety of our students through:

1 Upholding the importance of the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in our school community will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with specific attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a safe and supportive environment, and to ensure we are able to protect the children under our care, the College will actively develop, review and modify our child protection policies, processes and practices.

2 Empowering families, children, young people and staff to participate in maintaining a culture of child safety.

The College, in partnership with our families, will ensure children and young people feel empowered to contribute to the school's understanding and treatment of child safety.

As such the views of staff, children, young people and families are taken seriously and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner. Children and young people are also provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to secure and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.

3 Employing rigorous risk-management and human resources practices.

The College will systematically and continually identify and assess risk to child safety and will work diligently to reduce potential sources of harm. Effective risk management will be embedded in College life through clear, effective, transparent, and accessible policies, procedures and practices.

The College will employ highly competent and professional staff who are trained and motivated to maintain the safety of all students. The high quality of staff appointments will be upheld through rigorous employment and staff review processes and practices.

Billanook College will stay abreast of current legislation and will meet its legislative duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care, including the Victorian Child Safe Standards; mandatory reporting; and the grooming, failure to disclose and failure to protect reporting requirements under the Crimes Act (Vic.).

