



NATHALIA SECONDARY COLLEGE

CHILD SAFE POLICY

Purpose

Nathalia Secondary College is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. We have zero tolerance to child abuse.

Everyone working at Nathalia Secondary College is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse.

Guidelines

1. To prevent child abuse within Nathalia Secondary College.
2. To work towards an organisational culture of child safety.
3. To facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within Nathalia Secondary College.
4. To ensure that all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs.
5. To provide guidance to staff/volunteers/contractors as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation.
6. To provide a clear statement to staff/volunteers/contractors forbidding any such abuse.
7. To provide assurance that any and all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

Implementation

1. Nathalia Secondary College is committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of students involved in its programs. All students have equal rights regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, family or social background; have equal rights, including protection from abuse. **See Student Engagement Policy and Personal Responsibility Policy**
2. Nathalia Secondary College has zero tolerance to child abuse. All employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the Nathalia Secondary College community are responsible for the care and protection of the children within our care and reporting information about suspected child abuse. **See Mandatory Reporting policy.**
3. At Nathalia Secondary College leadership appointment processes and decisions will have students care and safety as a primary focus. **(See student engagement, excursion, incursion, mandatory reporting, supervision and first aid policies.)**
Leadership team will
 - Deal with and investigating reports of child abuse;
 - Ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of relevant laws, organisational policies and procedures, and the organisation's Code of Conduct;
 - Ensure that all adults within the community are aware of their obligation

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to report suspected sexual abuse of a child in accordance with these policies and procedures;

- Ensure that all staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Code of Conduct (particularly as it relates to child safety) and requirements in regard to failure to disclose and failure to protect.
- Provide support for staff, contractors and volunteers in undertaking their child protection responsibilities.

All teachers must ensure that they:

- Promote child safety at all times;
- Assess the risk of child abuse within their area of control and minimise any risk to the extent possible;
- Educate all about the prevention and detection of child abuse; and
- Facilitate the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour or suspected abusive activities, as per the Department Child Protection Reporting Obligations.
- Stating schools procedures do not impinge on the responsibilities of staff with regard to failing to disclose suspected child abuse nor failing to protect a child reporting child abuse.

4. Nathalia Secondary College will ensure that all recruitment and screening process for all workers and volunteers
 - a) Will promote and protect the safety of all children in our care;
 - b) Will prevent a person from working at Nathalia Secondary College if they pose a risk to children.
 - c) Will ensure that a person applying for a role as a teacher within the Nathalia Secondary College Community must be registered with the regulatory body such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching or have a current Working with Children Check. (**see Working with Children policy**)
 - d) May require applicants to provide a police check in accordance with the law and as appropriate, before they commence working at Nathalia Secondary College and during their time with Nathalia Secondary College at regular intervals.
 - e) Will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure.
5. All **staff/volunteers/contractors** share in the responsibility for the prevention and detection of child abuse, and must:
 - a) Familiarize themselves with the relevant laws, the Code of Conduct, and Nathalia Secondary College's policy and procedures in relation to child protection, and comply with all requirements;
 - b) Report any reasonable belief that a child's safety is at risk to the relevant authorities (such as the police and / or the state-based child protection service) and fulfil their obligations as mandatory reporters;



NATHALIA SECONDARY COLLEGE

- c) Report any suspicion that a child's safety may be at risk to their supervisor (or, if their supervisor is involved in the suspicion, to a responsible person in the organisation); and
 - d) Provide an environment that is supportive of all children's emotional and physical safety.
6. To reduce risk of child abuse the following procedures are in place
- a) Apart from Nathalia Secondary College teaching and ES staff any other person on site when students are present must sign in either as a visitor or in the staff log.
 - b) Regular police checks, ensuring VIT and working with children certification is current
 - c) Notification of changes of legal standing for a student is communicated to the College and recorded in the student file.
 - d) Supervision policies for in class, incursion and excursions and yard.
 - e) Department regulations are followed regarding staffing guidelines.
7. Nathalia Secondary College will consider the opinions of children and use their opinions to develop child protection policies. See student voice, homegroup pastoral care, HHR classes, school nurse and wellbeing teacher, mentors when required.
8. If an allegation of abuse is made against employees, staff such as workers, contractors, associates or members of the Nathalia Secondary College community the appropriate services will be informed, this includes IRIS report, police and conduct and ethics. The advice from these organisations will be followed. This can include standing down of the employee.

See attachments

1. Informing the College Community
2. Child Safe Standard
3. Child Safe staff selection
4. Child safe risk management
5. Child safe code of conduct – acceptable and unacceptable behaviour

Policies

1. Student engagement
2. Personal Responsibility
3. Mandatory reporting
4. Excursion
5. Incursion
6. Suspension
7. First Aid
8. Working with Children Checks

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