

## Duty of Care Statement

### School Background:

Doxa School Bendigo is a Child Safe community committed to providing an environment that is true to the values of our schoolwide expectations: being **Safe, Kind** and **Curious**. We promote care for all individuals in the school community and this is reflected in our support of students to learn to understand and regulate their own behaviour.

All of Doxa School's policy and procedural documentation is underpinned by our **5 key Pillars of the Doxa School Model: Student-Centred Approach, Trauma Sensitive Practice, Social and Emotional Literacy, Choice Theory and our Catholic Identity** and complies with the requirements of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd. This Policy can be found on our school website, [www.doxabendigo.catholic.edu.au](http://www.doxabendigo.catholic.edu.au) and applies to all staff members of Doxa School Bendigo.

### Purpose:

Doxa School Bendigo works in partnership with parents/carers/families and external supports to ensure the best interests of students are catered for. We acknowledge and accept the duty of care we have to students to take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions that we can reasonably foresee would be likely to result in harm or injury to the student. Our work is focused for the positive wellbeing of each child.

We also recognize that we owe a duty to take reasonable care that any student (or other person) on the premises will not be injured or damaged because of the state of the premises, including things done or omitted to be done to the premises. As such, Doxa School has a duty of care to provide a safe and protected environment for all students and adults in the school environment on a daily basis or in casual association.

### Key Duty of Care Statements:

- ✓ Duty of care is a matter for the whole school
- ✓ Duty of care is non-delegable, meaning that it cannot be assigned to another person

## **Principles:**

In accepting our duty of care responsibilities, Doxa School will manage these by:

- protecting students, staff members and those in the school environment from foreseeable risks of injury by providing safe and suitable buildings, grounds and equipment
- ensure adequate supervision of students at all times
- take necessary preventative measures to ensure safety at all times
- ensure reasonable precautions to ensure that any person on the premises will not be injured or suffer loss or damage due to things that are done or omitted by the school
- recognise that greater measures of care may be required in relation to younger students, students with disabilities, students from diverse backgrounds and/or vulnerable students in order to fulfil duty of care obligations
- adhere to all requirements in relation to Child Safety to protect students from any form of negligence or abuse. Ensuring all staff are aware of their legal obligations in relation to Child Safety legislation and policies

## **Scope:**

Duty of care applies to all sites under the control of the school and applies to all members of the leadership team, teaching and non-teaching staff members, casual relief teachers, contractors engaged by the school and volunteers.

## **School Environment:**

The school's duty of care is a matter for all school environments and is not just confined to the geographical area of the school. It also applies to school activities that occur outside the school where students are acting on a staff member's instructions.

The school must take reasonable steps to protect students, staff members and anyone that attends the school site from foreseeable risks of injury. The school must take reasonable precautions to ensure that any person on the premises will not be injured or suffer loss or damage due to things that are done or omitted by the organisation.

## **School Staff:**

Principals, teachers and wellbeing staff of Doxa school are held to a high standard of care in relation to students. Meeting duty of care requirements means the Principal, teachers and wellbeing staff of the school must take reasonable steps to minimise the risk of foreseeable harm from injury or child abuse to students whilst the child is under the care, supervision or authority of the school.

Doxa School and our teaching and non-teaching staff members owe a duty of care to students within their care and to parents, placement students, volunteers, visitors or contractors who may sustain injury, loss or damage as a result of our conduct. The duty of care also applies to situations both before and after school where students can be assumed to be under the staff member's care.

All members of staff at the school must adhere to all requirements in relation to child safety from any form of negligence or abuse. All staff must be aware of their legal obligations in relation to child safety legislation laws and policies. The school ensures that policies and codes of conduct regarding child safety are accessible and understood by all members of our school community.

### **Implementation:**

Doxa School has developed policies and procedures to manage common risks in our school environment to ensure our duty of care is met. These include:

- Attendance monitoring procedures
- Bullying Prevention and Intervention
- Child Safety policies
- Codes of Conduct
- Communication of policies with the school community procedures
- Emergency Management processes
- Employment and management of staff policies
- Health and First Aid Policies
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement practices
- Supervision of Students in the school environment

The school will address its duty of care obligations by:

- providing and maintaining suitable and safe premises
- the provision of safe and secure learning environments
- ensuring adequate system of supervision of students
- implementing programs and strategies to prevent bullying
- ensuring that medical assistance is provided to a sick or injured student
- identifying and mitigating against the risk of child abuse
- monitoring school attendance

Examples of school personnel failing in duty of care may include:

- arriving late to scheduled timetabled yard duty responsibilities
- leaving students unattended in the classroom
- using and operating damaged equipment or allowing others to do so
- failing to take appropriate action where hazards have been identified
- failing to adequately assess risks associated with activities
- failing to instruct students who are acting inappropriately
- ignoring dangerous play activities
- leaving the school during time release without approval
- providing inadequate supervision on a school excursion
- not acting on a reasonable belief that a child was subject to abuse by reporting to the relevant authorities
- inappropriate engagement and use of online environments