



Child Safe Policy

1.0 PREAMBLE

The dignity of the human person, who is created in the image and likeness of God, is the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching and leads us to afford all people, but especially children, young people and the most vulnerable, the highest respect. Within this context, effective Catholic schools provide a safe, supportive and secure environment that promotes respect and care and values diversity. The mental, physical, spiritual and emotional wellbeing of children and young people are essential preconditions for successful learning. These qualities cannot be developed for individuals in isolation from the health and wellbeing of the school community as a whole.

Doxa School Bendigo is committed to the creation of a safe, just and respectful environment that supports wellness for all members of the school community. In this, there is a moral and professional obligation and shared responsibility to protect the most vulnerable members of the community.

Doxa School Bendigo believes that, while protecting children and young people against all forms of abuse is a community wide responsibility, schools have particular moral and legal responsibilities to ensure children and young people are safe in their care and to actively and intentionally work to eliminate all forms of abusive behaviours towards them. There are also particular moral and legal obligations for those in authority to prevent, reduce and minimise child abuse and exploitation in all forms.

2.0 PURPOSE

This policy applies to the whole school community in supporting safe environments for all children and young people.

All students enrolled, and any child visiting, have a right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe and are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety.

3.0 KEY PRINCIPLES

- A safe environment is required to protect children and young people from harm and to prevent staff from abusing their position of authority and trust.
- The child and young person's ongoing safety and wellbeing must be the primary focus of all decision making.
- School leaders and all staff must be fully self-aware of, and comply with, their professional obligations and responsibilities.

- The commitment to protecting children is embedded in the organisation’s culture and responsibility for taking action is understood and accepted at all levels of the organisation.

At Doxa School:

- The staff and volunteers of Doxa School Bendigo encourage students to express their views. We listen to their suggestions, especially on matters that directly affect them. We actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.
- We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us.
- The curriculum at Doxa School Bendigo has a strong focus on Personal Development and Social and Emotional Learning that empowers our students to openly express views and concerns, develops resilience and specifically addresses personal safety.
- We value and celebrate diversity, especially cultural diversity, and we do not tolerate discriminatory practices. To achieve this we:
 - promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students and their families
 - promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD) and their families; and
 - promote the personal safety, participation and empowerment of all students with a disability and make them feel welcome and part of all aspects of school life

4.0 RECRUITMENT OF STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS

Doxa School Bendigo will apply the most thorough and rigorous standards in the recruitment and screening of staff and volunteers. We interview and conduct referee checks on all staff require the appropriate Working With Children Checks and National Police Checks for all staff, Volunteers and Contracted workers as required. Appropriate supervision of all visitors to our school is undertaken as required.

5.0 SUPPORTING STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS

Doxa School Bendigo provides support and supervision to all staff and volunteers so people feel valued, respected, affirmed in their work and fairly treated. We have a Code of Conduct to provide guidance to our staff. Volunteers and Contractors are made aware of all obligations and responsibilities through a thorough Induction Process.

6.0 REPORTING A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN OR COMPLAINT

Our school records any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Code of Conduct, and store the records in accordance with security and privacy requirements. Our complaints and disclosure processes are outlined and detailed in the following policies and procedures:

- Child Protection – Child Safety Policy
- Child Protection – Failure to Disclose Policy
- Child Protection – Failure to Protect Policy
- Child Protection – Grooming Policy

- Child Protection – Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Child Protection – Working with Children Policy
- Risk Assessment Procedures
- Induction Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct

The Principal has the responsibility, as Child Safety Officer, for responding to any complaints made by staff, volunteers, parents or students in relation to Child Safety.

7.0 RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management is an approach that minimises the potential for child abuse or harm to occur. Our Risk Management Planning documentation outlines and details all aspects of risk across our whole school environment (on site and off site school activities) with specific activity risk assessments. In addition to our general Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S) risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse and harm to our students.

8.0 POLICY REVIEW

This policy is reviewed every three years and we undertake to seek feedback from students, parents, carers, staff and volunteers.

Policy Ratified:	2016
Reviewed:	July 2019
Next Review:	July 2022