



A School With A View

Parent Information Book

2022

Boronia Heights Primary School purpose is:

To provide a challenging and supportive environment that develops students who are confident and resilient learners and valued members of the community.

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Letter to Parents



Dear Parents,

It is with great pride that I welcome you to Boronia Heights Primary School. As your child begins their educational journey, I look forward to sharing the successes of that journey with them and you.

BHPS prides itself in providing a safe learning environment to guide and support your child throughout their school life. Our dedicated and passionate staff will work with you to provide your child with the learning opportunities aimed at developing a passion for lifelong learning.

The partnership that our staff will form with you will develop your child's confidence, curiosity, resilience and passion for learning. Ensuring positive and productive communications between home and school is crucial, we welcome your contribution, and we encourage you to be an active participant in your child's education.

We are thrilled and feel privileged that you have chosen Boronia Heights Primary School for your child's education. We offer a comprehensive and extensive program that includes all areas of the Victorian Curriculum, including specialist teachers in the areas of German, Visual Arts, Performing Arts, Physical Education and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths). All of our staff have been trained to provide a strong focus on student wellbeing. The Berry Street Model enables and promotes self-regulation, mindfulness, and a strong focus of remaining in the learning zone. This positive education enables our students to develop their interpersonal skills and values, such as kindness, gratitude and respect through a variety of formal routines and activities, including circle time, student leadership and a social and emotional learning curriculum.

We welcome you to join us in enriching the school program, through participation in an informal way in class activities, excursions, sports days, as a classroom helper, or more formally through involvement as a member of the School Council, Community Hub and Building and Grounds.

I look forward to working with you to support your child to achieve their dreams and encourage, engage and inspire your child to be the best they can be.

Kind Regards,

Leanne Jennings

Principal



School Information

School:	Boronia Heights Primary School
Address:	Landscape Drive Boronia, 3155
Telephone:	9729 2614
Email:	boronia.heights.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au
Website:	www.boroniahtsps.edu.vic.gov.au
Principal:	Leanne Jennings
Assistant Principals:	Leah Hodgson Kristy Foster
Business Manager:	Lori Lundberg
Office Administrator:	Tracey Holden
Office Administrator:	Sharon La Morticella
First Aid Officer:	Tanya Wick
Outside School Hours Care (OSHC):	1300 395 735
OSHC Coordinator:	Stephanie

School times

School begins at 9.00am every day.

The school grounds are supervised from 8.45am on regular school days. This is the earliest a child needs to arrive at school. No supervision of children is provided before 8.45 am. Students arriving after 9.00am need to be “signed in” by parents at the office and take a “late pass” to the classroom teacher.

Learning Time	9.00 am	to	11.00 am
Recess Play	11.00 am	to	11.30 am
Learning Time	11.30 am	to	1.30 pm
Lunch Eating time	1.30 pm	to	1.40 pm
Lunch Play	1.40 pm	to	2.30 pm
Learning Time	2.30 pm	to	3.30 pm

School Dates 2022

Term 1: Friday 28th January to Friday 8th April (2.30 finish)

Curriculum Day	Friday 28 th January
Students Years 1 - 6 commence	Monday 31 st January
Preps commence fulltime	Monday 7 th February
Meet & Greet Teachers	Tuesday 7 th & Wednesday 8 th February
School Photo Day	Friday 18 th February
Athletics Day (Year 3-6)	Friday 4 th March
Labour Day	Monday 14 th March
Curriculum Day	Tuesday 15 th March
3 Way Conference	Monday 4 th & Thursday 7 th April
Happy Hour	Friday 8 th April

Term 2: Tuesday 26th April to Friday 24th June (2.30 finish)

Anzac Day Holiday	Monday 25 th April
Curriculum Day	Wednesday 4 th May
Queen's Birthday	Monday 13 th June

Term 3: Monday 11th July to Friday 16th September (2.30 finish)

3 Way Conference	Wednesday 14 th September
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Term 4: Monday 3rd October to Tuesday 20th December (1.30 finish)

Curriculum Day	Monday 31 st October
Melbourne Cup	Tuesday 1 st November

3 Way Conferences

At the end of Term 1 and Term 3, we will be operating 3 Way Conferences. These interviews include yourself and your child, and the classroom teacher/specialists. You will receive information regarding these dates nearer the time and you will be able to book your time through Compass.

If you have anything to discuss with your child's teacher at any other time, please contact them on Compass as it is difficult for teachers to discuss matters once the school day has begun without an appointment as this limits learning time.

Absences

If your child is absent from school you need to log on to Compass to mark your child as being away and provide the reason. Access to Compass will be issued following your enrolment.

Ambulance cover

The school strongly encourages parents to be a member of the Ambulance Service. This will ensure that your child/children are covered in case of an emergency. Parents will always be contacted but in an emergency an ambulance will be called. Parents will be responsible for any costs relating to the use of an ambulance.

Anaphylaxis

Anaphylaxis is a severe, rapidly progressive allergic reaction that is potentially life threatening. The most common allergens in school aged children are peanuts, eggs, tree nuts (e.g. cashews), cow's milk, fish and shellfish, wheat, soy, sesame, latex, certain insect stings and medication. The key to prevention of anaphylaxis in schools is knowledge of those students who have been diagnosed at risk, awareness of triggers (allergens) and prevention of exposure to these triggers. Partnerships between school and parents are important in ensuring that certain foods or items are kept away from students while at school.

The school does not ban certain types of foods (e.g. nuts) as it is not practicable to do so, and is not a strategy recommended by the Department of Education or the Royal Children's Hospital, as it is possible it can encourage complacency amongst staff and students. It would also be difficult to monitor and enforce a food ban due to the presence of hidden allergens. It is better for school communities to become aware of the risk associated with anaphylaxis.

However, due to the age of students in the junior classes, it is not reasonable even with education to assume the students will take appropriate precautions to minimise the risk. We will therefore implement practical age appropriate strategies to minimise the risk. The school will request that parents do not send those items to school, and the canteen will eliminate or reduce the likelihood of such allergens. The school will reinforce the rules about not sharing foods. It is impossible to effectively reduce the many products that have 'traces of nuts', therefore other procedures are in place to minimise the risk to anaphylactic students. It is also impossible to guarantee compliance with this policy by all parents/guardians and there will be times when other people prepare lunches for students, therefore other precautions need to be taken to minimise the risk to anaphylactic students.

If your child has a severe allergy requiring medication or an EpiPen, you need to contact the office and complete a plan. The office can supply you with further information and a copy of the schools Anaphylaxis policy.

Assemblies

A face-to-face school assembly conducted by the Grade 6 Student Leaders will be held every third Friday afternoon in the gym, virtual assemblies will be offered for other weeks. Assembly will start at 3.00pm and conclude by 3.30pm.

Behaviour Expectations

This school has a positive, proactive approach to behaviour management and our expectations for behaviour are in accordance with our school values of: Respect, Responsibility, Pride, Optimism and Integrity. Individual student management is the responsibility of all staff. Classroom teachers have the support of Team Leaders, Assistant Principals and the Principal.

Bike Education

A Bike Education program is conducted for students in Year 4. If children are riding to school on a bike or a scooter they must wear a helmet and walk their bicycle whilst on school grounds. Bike storage is available. All bikes should have a lock. The school is not responsible for bikes that are brought to school.

Book Club

Boronia Heights subscribes to a Book Club in which students are offered selected books each month at bargain prices. There is no obligation to purchase, but if you do wish to take advantage of the scheme at any time, please complete the order and return it in a sealed envelope on the date required.

Bullying and Harrassement

Bullying is when one or more students repeatedly and intentionally want to hurt, frighten, embarrass, threaten or upset another student. Participant bystanders who are urging or inciting bullying are considered just as responsible as those initiating the bullying behaviours. Boronia Heights Primary School considers that bullying/harassing behaviours are unacceptable and examples of these behaviours can be found on our anti bullying policy on the website.

This policy is consistent with BHPS's Student Code of Conduct, Berry Street Program and Student Welfare Policy. Successful implementation of this policy involves the whole school community - parents, teachers, students and the school council. A whole school approach to the promotion of anti bullying practices will be used, encouraging respect, compassion and cooperation. Positive behaviours are taught in all classrooms, through class teacher initiated programs. Building relationships in classes at the beginning of each year will assist the development of a positive climate.

Staff will receive ongoing Professional Development to assist in the successful implementation of the policy.

Brain Food

To promote healthy food options and to keep the children's bodies hydrated and alert, children are encouraged to bring snack sized portions of fresh fruit, vegetables and a water bottle for snacks during learning time. No packaged food allowed.

BYOD (Bring Your Own Device)

BYOD programs are part of an international move towards individualising learning, which can increase independence and self-initiated learning in students and extend their learning beyond the classroom. Students who have their own devices have been found to take greater pride and ownership over the knowledge they create.

Reasons We Undertake a BYOD Program:

- To improve student achievement
- To provide equity of student access to these digital resources at school, and helps us continue to enhance and transform the quality of teaching.
- We want students to have access to technology whenever they need it, rather than waiting for a time when ICT is available.
- Digital Literacy skills are essential for 21st Century Learners.
- Devices will be used as tools, helping students develop skills in information analysis and evaluation, problem solving and decision-making.
- Students will be able to continue working on projects at home.
- It provides the opportunity to teach Cyber Safety in a controlled and regulated environment.

The Aims of the program are:

- To allow students to use an approved device to access the Boronia Heights Primary School wireless network for educational purposes,
- To enable students to use technology to further their learning in structured lessons and independently at home,
- To enable students to develop skills and behaviours reflective of responsible digital citizens,
- To harness student connectivity to personal devices for the purpose of developing 21st century teaching and learning skills and for fostering digital literacy, fluency and social responsibility in a safe environment, and
- To ensure the smart, safe and responsible use of devices at Boronia Heights Primary School.

Camps

Camps are an integral part of the school curriculum as they enable students to explore and enrich their learning and social skills development in a non-school setting. Overnight school camps are offered to children in Years 4 to 6. All Camps are approved by the Principal, Assistant Principal and the School Council. A two-night and three-day camp for Year 4, a two-night and three-day camp for Year 5 and a full-week camp for Year 6 is planned each year. Parents may also be invited to participate, depending on the staff student ratio required.

Parents can be assured that the school follows all procedures set out by DET in regard to safety and bus travel requirements.

CSEF - Camps Sports & Excursion fund

The Camps, Sports and Excursions Fund (CSEF) provides payments for eligible students To attend activities like Camps, sports and excursions/incursions. The amount of \$125, per student, is paid directly to the school by the Victorian Government. If you hold a valid concession card you may be eligible for CSEF. Please visit the front office for an application form. You will need to produce your healthcare card to be copied. Applications close at the end of Term 2 each year.

Canteen

Canteen operates each Monday and Friday. We run a Healthy Foods canteen which operates on three categories: Green – food from the five food groups, healthy options choose regularly, Amber –more processed foods with some added fat, salt or sugar, choose carefully and Red – less nutritious option, choose occasionally. We have carefully chosen foods in the Amber category to contain less fat, salt or sugar than other alternatives. Our everyday menu contains NO foods from the red food group. Icy Poles are sold by our parents from The Community Hub at recess during Terms 1 and 4.

Casual Relief Teachers

On days where your classroom teacher is absent, a casual relief teacher will be employed to teach the class. The normal school timetable will apply.

Children's Health

Preventing Infections:

School is not the place for a sick child. A child whose health is in doubt should be kept at home. Unfortunately the school is not equipped to treat sick students for any extended period of time, hence the parent or emergency contact of any student too ill to attend normal activities will be requested to take the student home or for medical attention. You can help in this regard by ensuring that we always have contact information that is up to date. Please inform the office when changes occur in employment and/or telephone numbers or emergency contracts.

Minor injuries such as blood noses, abrasions etc, will be treated at school and recorded on Compass. We will contact parents for any injuries above the shoulder. We will take the necessary medical attention eg. a cool pack. We will inform you if we believe your child needs to be picked up for further medical attention.

To protect others from the risk of infections, which can spread very rapidly in places like school, the DEECD has issued the guidelines for the exclusion of students suffering from infectious diseases. Students should stay away from school if they have contracted:

School Exclusion Table – Medical Conditions

Condition	Exclusion Of Cases	Exclusion Of Contacts
	Exclude until fully recovered or for at least five days after the first eruption	

Chicken Pox	appears. Note that some remaining scabs are not a reason for exclusion	
Conjunctivitis	Exclude until discharge from eyes has ceased	
COVID 19 symptoms	If you child has any symptoms they must stay home and get tested.	Return after the symptoms clear and a negative test results
COVID 19 positive	Excluded until a negative result is shown and child is well	
Diarrhoea	Exclude until diarrhoea has ceased, or medical certificate provide	
Hand Foot & Mouth	Until all blisters have dried	
Hepatitis A	Exclude until a medical certificate of recovery is received, but not before 7 days after the onset of jaundice or illness	
Herpes ('cold sores')	Exclude while lesion is weeping. Lesion to be covered where possible	
Head Lice	Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	
Influenza & Influenza like illness	Exclude until well	
Measles	Exclude for at least four days after rash	Unimmunised contacts should be excluded until 14 days after first day of appearance of rash in the last case.
Meningitis	Exclude until well	
Mumps	Exclude for 9 days or until swelling goes down (whichever is sooner)	
Ringworm	Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	
Rubella (German Measles)	Exclude until fully recovered or at least four days after the onset of the rash	
Scabies	Re-admit the day after appropriate treatment has commenced	

Whooping cough	Exclude the child for 5 days after starting antibiotic treatment	Unimmunised contacts aged less than 7 years -14 days after the exposure to infection or until they have taken five days of a ten day course of antibiotics
Worms	Exclude if diarrhoea present	

Change of Clothes

It is recommended that children in junior grades carry a change of clothes (especially underwear) in their school bags. The school does not have spare clothing.

Child Safety Standards

At Boronia Heights Primary School we are committed to child safety. As a community we want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. There is zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures. We meet our legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Boronia Heights Primary School is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks. We have robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers. Our school is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from a culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for vulnerable children and children with a disability. Boronia Heights Primary School has specific policies, procedures and training in places that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments. Leah Hodgson and Kristy Foster are the school's Child Safety Officers, please feel free to contact them if you require any further information or help. The 'Protect' pamphlet is very informative, should you suspect abuse and is in this handbook. Our Child Safe Policies are available on the school website. Please see attached policies.

A Code of Conduct agreement needs to be signed by parents at the commencement of each year. If you are working with students at school as a volunteer, you will need to have signed the Code of Conduct agreement and have a Working with Children card.

Classroom Blogs

Classroom blogs are another way of finding out information. Blogs go out fortnightly on Fridays to inform parents of what is coming up in the following weeks. This may include photos, upcoming dates and an overview of curriculum focus. A link to the blog is sent out via COMPASS when there is a new post available. Use this link as so you are not missing out on vital information.

Classroom Helpers

At Boronia Heights Primary School, we welcome the involvement of parent helpers within our classroom programs. Parent's assistance is utilised in literacy, reading programs, numeracy, excursions, sporting events and special events such as our bi-annual fete and musical production. Having parents so involved in our school life helps our children to understand the importance of school while enjoying the additional assistance that extra adults can offer. Our parents report feeling greater connectedness to the school and satisfaction at being able to assist. Our teachers appreciate the assistance in running the many programs that create such a vibrant learning environment for our students.

Parents who assist teachers in classrooms are required to participate in a 'Classroom Helpers' course to increase their understanding of how children learn and how we cater for each and every child. This course is run at the school at the commencement of each year. All parents helpers are required to have a 'Working with Children' card. All parent helpers are required to sign in and out at the office and wear a 'Classroom Helper' badge. Need to be fully vaccinated and provide proof.

Communication

Teachers can be contacted via Compass. If you have any concerns or questions in regard to your child, please speak directly to your classroom teacher or Year Level Team Leader for advice and/or assistance. School notices and newsletters are via COMPASS. Notices and diary dates can be accessed via the school's website. The school encourages all parents to login to compass on a regular basis.

Compass

Boronia Heights Primary School uses Compass for attendance, payment of parent payments, payment and consent of excursions, camps etc., parent teacher interviews and viewing of Student reports. You will be provided with your Compass login details on enrolment. 'A Parent's Guide to Compass' is available on the school website or ask for a copy at the office.

Compass Calendar

The Compass calendar shows all excursions, incursions, curriculum days and up coming school activities. It is accessible from the Compass home page and is accessible on your mobile phone via the Compass App.

Computers

Boronia Heights is committed to learning technologies. Students in all grades (P-6) use computers and have access to interactive whiteboards and or televisions. The school currently uses chrome books and iPads, which are used extensively in the classroom in a variety of ways. ICT is a high priority. The school is networked and children have supervised access to the Internet. Students are required to read the Internet Protocol with their parents or guardians and discuss the contents. They understand that they need to use the computers in an appropriate manner and in accordance with Internet protocol. If they do not, their user rights may be withdrawn for a specified period of time.

Continuous Reporting

Reports on your child's progress will be issued in June and December each year and available on Compass. BHPS shares student achievement in English and Maths with parents and carers continuously throughout the year in the form of Continuous Reports, also available via Compass.

Curriculum Days

During the course of the year there will be 4 nominated Curriculum days or Student free days. On these days staff are engaged in whole school Professional Development. The Curriculum days are communicated to parents well in advance and are available on the website.

Curriculum Planning

Curriculum planning is carried out in grade teams. There is a planning fortnight at the end of each term, where staff plan explicitly for the following term.

Curriculum/Other Contributions

Schools provide students with free instruction to fulfil the standard Victorian Curriculum and we want to assure you that all contributions are voluntary. Nevertheless, the ongoing support of our families ensures that our school can offer the best possible education and support for our students. We want to thank you for all your support, whether that's through fundraising or volunteering your time. This makes a huge difference to our school and the programs we can offer.

The environment and resources that we enjoy today represent the contributions made by our parent/carer community over many years. Parent/Carers voluntary contributions make significant difference to the quality of our programs. This financial support ensures that we can continue to provide the excellent range of facilities and resources for your children.

Your support in 2021 allowed us to:

- Provide high quality programs and specialist class materials and equipment.
- Maintain and develop the school grounds.
- Upgrade play areas.
- Ensure the upkeep of our computer devices to enhance learning opportunities.
- Maintain sufficient class sets of books for students to develop their reading skills.
- Provide hands on maths equipment i.e. measuring materials for teaching purposes.
- Facilitate Literacy and Mathematics online digital subscriptions.
- Deliver a range of sporting equipment.
- Offer effective First Aid for all students.

STUDENT BOOK PACKS - Educational items for students to own

COS supply Student book packs for educational items for students. These items are ordered online. COS is a 100% Australian Family Owned & Operated school supplier. We've been working with COS to make sure your child has an easy start to the new school year. We've selected the list of items your child needs to start the year and worked with COS so

you can order everything you need in one go and it will be delivered direct to your home before school starts.

Custody Restrictions and Court Orders

Teachers are aware of the children in their care where custody restrictions apply and are diligent of the family situation. If there are custody restrictions/court orders in place, the principal and staff are required to request copies of the relevant court orders or informal arrangements that are in place. Custody restrictions are kept on file at the front office.

Parents and guardians and or carers are responsible for providing the principal and staff with up to date information and documentation relating to relevant court orders or informal arrangements in place or if /when they end. If you have any queries relating to custody restrictions, please contact the office for assistance.

Cyberbullying

Bullying is when one or more students repeatedly and intentionally want to hurt, frighten, embarrass, threaten or upset another student. Participant bystanders who are urging or inciting bullying are considered just as responsible as those initiating the bullying behaviours. Boronia Heights Primary School considers that bullying/harassing behaviours are unacceptable, and examples of these behaviours can be found on our anti bullying policy on the website. This policy is consistent with BHPS's Student Code of Conduct, Berry Street Program and Student Welfare Policy. Successful implementation of this policy involves the whole school community - parents, teachers, students and the school council. A whole school approach to the promotion of anti-bullying practices will be used, encouraging respect, compassion and cooperation. Positive behaviours will be taught in all classrooms, through class teacher-initiated programs. Building relationships in classes at the beginning of each year will assist the development of a positive climate.

Staff will receive ongoing Professional Development to assist in the successful implementation of the policy

Displays

Displays of children's work celebrate their success and adds to the overall school environment. They provide a valuable reflection of the work being undertaken by the students. Please feel free to view the displays at any time.

Drinks

Children are encouraged to bring water to school in a plastic bottle and clearly named. They are encouraged to drink throughout the day. **NO drinks in glass bottles.** Milk based drinks are undesirable as there is no safe storage.

Duty of Care

Children are supervised at all times in accordance with DET guidelines and the school's Supervision of Children Policy. Classrooms are locked at recess, lunch times and other times when not occupied. Please note that the school grounds are supervised by staff between 8.45 am and 3.45 pm

Early Leave

Students leaving early **must be** signed out at the office on the Compass Kiosk, the student will be sent to the office to be collected. The person collecting the student must be a parent/guardian or an adult on the student's emergency contacts. If the person is not on the student's emergency contacts, a phone call or note is required and proof of identification may be requested.

Emergency Contacts

People nominated as emergency contacts are an extra adult the school can contact when they are unable to make contact with parents. Emergency contacts cannot collect a child early unless the school has written or verbal permission provided by the parents.

Emergency Management

Each staff member is provided with a copy of the school's EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLAN (EMP) and are totally conversant with the roles, responsibilities and the procedures required in an emergency, particularly in regard to the evacuation of the school. Regular evacuation drills are conducted throughout the year.

Enrolment Forms/Alternate Family Enrolment Forms

Families where parents do not reside together or live as an extended family are able to complete an Alternate Family Enrolment form. This form can be found on our website or please contact the office for additional forms.

Extra Curricula Activities

Unstructured playtime can be quite daunting for some children. To support students at Boronia Heights we offer a range of organized activities at lunchtime to stimulate their interests and meet their needs. These may include:- Lunchtime Library Activities where students play board games, draw and play with toys while learning social skills. Little Sprout Garden Club, Dance in the Hall, Adventure Challenge, Band, Drawing Club, Coding Club, Choirs etc.

Excursion and Incursions

Excursions and incursions are planned in year level teams. They are an extension to the school's curriculum and give children the opportunity to participate in a variety of experiences. All excursions/incursions are on a user-pays basis and will be posted on Compass and will require consent

and payment by the due date. If the consent and payment is not received by the due date, school policy states that your child may not be able to attend.

Facebook

Boronia Heights Primary School has an official Facebook page run by the school. This is a promotional page highlighting all our wonderful programs. Any enquiries to the school should be made by email or phone not via the Facebook page. We also have a Hubsters Fundraising page. This page is for Hubsters information and not a social page.

First Aid

During recess and lunchtime play the First Aid room is supervised by a qualified staff member. All are trained to assist your child when they are ill or hurt. There are 3 teachers on duty outside during this time and children are able to report to them. These teachers carry a small first aid kit, they evaluate the situation and send a child to sickbay if necessary. Students sent to the First Aid Room during class time bring a referral note from their teacher, which is handed to the office staff for them to attend to your child.

Parents are notified if their child suffers any type of head injury, in most cases it will be to notify you of an incident. Children with visible head bumps will be required to be picked up from school.

Fundraising

Fundraising is carried out at BHPS by our wonderful parent group called the Community Hub (Hubsters). The Hub organises fun activities to raise money for various upgrades for the school. The synthetic turf at the front of the school was paid for by profits from the bi-annual Fete. Other activities include Fun Runs, Easter and Christmas raffles, Cadbury Chocolate sales, coffee cards to support local business, Entertainment Book sales and Trivia Nights, to name a few. We are currently saving to upgrade our playgrounds.

Graduation – Year Six

In December, a Graduation function is held at which graduating Year 6 students will be presented with recognition of the completion of their Primary education at Boronia Heights Primary School. Parents will be notified of specific arrangements during Term 4.

Headlice

Students with Head lice should be treated before returning to school. Please inform the School office if your child has head lice and a COMPASS message will be sent to Parents with information on treating and controlling Headlice, so parents can check their child. If you need further information on Head lice please see the office staff.

Home & School Communication

The school actively encourages parents to keep up to date with their child's /children's "school life." Communication between home and school is vital and is in the best interest of each child's education. School notices and newsletters are accessible from our school website and COMPASS. Parents are encouraged to access our website to seek the latest information. Boronia Heights Primary School uses Compass for attendance, parent teacher interviews and viewing student reports. You will be provided with your Compass login details on enrolment.

Homework

The school has a homework policy so that children can develop home study skills, practise their schoolwork and parents can keep in touch with their children's educational programs. Specific requirements with regard to homework are relayed to parents at the beginning of each school year from their teachers. The aims of homework outlined in school policy are:

- To build partnership between teachers and parents in promoting children's learning.
- To provide children with the opportunity to demonstrate their learning to parents.
- To provide children with the opportunity to practise skills and complete classroom tasks.
- To develop and encourage in children responsibility for managing their out of school time through self motivation and discipline.

House System

There are four houses – Landscape, Montana, Phipps and Lockwood. House colours are as follows:

- Landscape **Blue**
- Montana **Red**
- Phipps **Yellow**
- Lockwoods **Green**

Students are placed in even numbers in the houses with family members in the same house. Year 6 students elect two House Captains from Year 6 for each house at the beginning of the school year. The house system is used for sporting activities and to encourage team spirit.

Hours Of Attendance – Staff

Teachers are on duty from 8.45 am to 3.45 pm daily. Teachers attend scheduled staff meetings, leadership team meetings, curriculum meetings, network meetings in times outside normal school hours.

Staff remain on site during their scheduled breaks on Total Fire Ban and Wet Day Timetable days.

Hot Days

On hot days children are required to play ONLY in shady areas. Teachers advise children to drink water, have less physical activity and wear their hat. Hats are compulsory during Terms 1 & 4. All classrooms are fitted with air conditioning. On extremely hot days students will be kept inside.

Immunisation

Children who begin school require an immunisation certificate. Children who are not immunised will be excluded from school should there be an outbreak of measles, diphtheria, polio or whooping cough.

Junior School Council

Junior School Council consists of a group of children voted by classmates and teachers. The Junior School Council members are chosen to represent the students of our school and have a range of responsibilities, from decision making, being the voice for other students and raising important issues. They have regular meetings during lunchtimes to discuss ideas they would like try at our school or people they would like to help. The three focus areas are; Sustainability, Fundraising and Student Wellbeing and Safety. Any other students interested in a specific area are welcome to be a part of these meetings. Meetings are supported by teachers.

As a part of our Junior School Council we have expanded our help into the local community. The children have been involved in programs where they can see the benefits of reaching out and helping others in a variety of ways. For example, At Clovelly Cottage in Boronia, an aged care facility, they were involved in an intergenerational program, spending time with the elderly residents. The Book Library at Alchester Village shops, was another Junior School council initiative. Ideas change based on community needs and students interests.

Label Clothing

We request that all personal requisites and removable clothing be clearly marked with your children's names. Please label school bags inside with name, address, and telephone number. It also assists identification if a plastic tag holder containing your child's name is clipped onto the handle ring. Lost property is sorted at the end of each term and any unnamed items are donated to the Second Hand Uniform Shop.

Late Arrivals

All students who arrive after 9.00 am must report to the front office and be signed in on the COMPASS Kiosk by a parent, to receive a late pass. These students will be marked as late so teachers encourage students to arrive at school promptly and on time. Children arriving late miss out on the beginning of day instructions. Please ensure your children arrive at school on time.

Library Books

Children are assisted by staff to borrow library books during their library sessions. All borrowing is recorded by the library teacher or assistant. Children in Prep are able to borrow 1 book, children in years 1 to 5 are able to borrow 2 books, whilst children in grade 6 may borrow 4 books. Children are required to return their Library Books to the library during their library class or can return them to the return box located inside the library door.

Lost Library Books – If your child has lost a library book you will be notified by the librarian or library assistant. There will be a cost associated, so the book can be replaced. This payment will be made to the office.

Our Library /Resource Centre provides a comprehensive study, skill and literature appreciation program as well as a wide range of good quality reading and reference material. Students are encouraged to use the facilities of our Library and to borrow books on a regular basis, both during their weekly library sessions and on other occasions when the library is open. Please ensure your child has a **library bag** to carry any books borrowed from the Library. Our Library also hosts a bank of netbook computers so that teachers can take whole class sessions.

Lost Property

We encourage children to take personal responsibility for their own clothing and property. All lost property is kept in lost property cupboard near the Assistant Principals Office. All named articles are returned at regular intervals. At the end of each term, all lost property is displayed in the eating area for classes to look at. Any unclaimed items are donated to the Second Hand Uniform Shop. Children are discouraged from bringing expensive items e.g. mobile phones, fidget spinners, gameboys etc to school. Any such items brought along will be secured in the office for safe keeping until the end of the day. The school cannot be responsible for items not stored in this manner.

Lunch Arrangements

Students eat their lunch in their classrooms from 1.30 to 1.40 p.m., supervised by their teachers. Our Health Program includes activities in balanced diets and we are anxious to avoid any possible conflict between their content of our courses and the diet of students while at school. Parents are requested to support the school's policy by ensuring that lunches provided from home are nutritional and well balanced.

Medication

If a student is required to take medication at school, parents must complete the medication form available from the school office or the school website. All labelled medication must be handed in at the school office.

All ongoing medications are stored in a secure cabinet in the First Aid Room. It is important that all medications are supplied in the original packaging and kept within the use by date. Parents will be notified when their child's medication is due to be replaced. Parents are required to replace medications when contacted.

Mobile Phones

The school does understand that some children will carry a mobile phone or smart watch for contacting parents out of school hours for security and peace of mind reasons. Students are to sign them in at the school office at the beginning of the day to be secured. This further applies to

students during school excursions and camps. Mobile phones brought to school by students is done so at their own risk.

Music

All classes take part in the Music Program. There is a yearly Christmas concert and a Musical Production every second year. Two 'Happy Hour Concerts' are organised twice a year, when students perform at our outdoor stage area. There is a Junior and Senior School Choir and a School Band. Private tuition is available for guitar, keyboard, flute, voice, violin, drums, clarinet and saxophone.

No Rubbish

We promote a rubbish free lunch environment at Boronia Heights. Children are encouraged to have fresh food cut and put into re-usable containers. This improves nutrition for brain functions, as well as, promote environmentally friendly practises. If students do bring wrappers, they take them home in their lunchbox.

Notices

School notices, excursions/incursions and any other information will be on COMPASS.

Newsletter

The newsletter is produced on a fortnightly basis and includes children's work and photos depicting their activities and conveys important information for parents including calendar dates. This is a great way to stay in touch with what is happening at Boronia Heights Primary School. Newsletters are available to parents on Compass and the school website.

Office

The Office Staff can help you with any queries and questions. The office is open from 8.30 am until 4.30 pm each day. You can contact the office via the school email on boronia.heights.ps@education.vic.gov.au or phone 9729 2614

Out of School Hours Care

Before And After School Care and Vacation Care Programs operate at Boronia Heights Primary School and are available to students attending the school. The program is conducted by OSHClub - telephone 1300 395 735, website oshclub.com.au

Care is available to all Primary School Age children, either on a permanent basis or by a casual booking. A high level of quality care is exercised at all times. A wide variety of activities is always provided, including art and craft, sewing, cooking, dress-ups, indoor and outdoor games. Parents may receive assistance by registering with CentreLink.

The following programs operate:

- Before School Care Program from 6:45am to 8.45am
- After School Care Program from 3.30pm to 6.00pm each weekday during school terms.
- Holiday Care program conducted during school vacation.
- Pupil Free Days when teaching staff have planning days or 3 Way Conference days or Wednesday Prep transition days. We would advise families to register with OSHClub just in case you require this service unexpectedly. It is free to register but you'll be in the system.

Parents On Holiday

If parents are away from their children for vacations or business and children are cared for by relatives or friends, the school asks that the office is notified of children's care arrangements. This information is important in cases of emergency.

Payments

With the introduction of an excursion/incursion levy this year, the need for continuous payments should be reduced. Most other payments ie: sporting activities will need to be paid and processed via Compass.

If you are paying by cash, the exact amount should be put in an envelope and clearly labelled with your child's name, class and what you are paying for. Cash can be handed to your child's classroom teacher or brought to the Front Office. We also have EFTPOS facilities at the office.

Personal Parent & Student Information

All parent and student information is considered private and confidential. Parents are asked to ensure all their and their child's personal information is kept up to date. This information is especially important if the school needs to contact you in an emergency. Updates can be entered on Compass or by emailing the school at boronia.heights.ps@education.vic.gov.au Please note our Privacy Policy is available on our website.

Personal Property

Children often like to bring toys or other personal items to school. If your child brings something to school please ensure that the item is named and discourage the bringing of valuable items. Loss or damage can easily occur! Whistles, guns, knives, water pistols, skateboards and roller blades are not permitted. Money at school is discouraged unless for a specific purpose eg. Social Service, icy poles, etc.

Policies

Many of the school's policies are available from the school's website. Policies are reviewed and updated by the School Council and appropriate committees every three years or as required.

Photographs

Each year school photographs are taken. You will be notified of the date when photographs are to be taken. Each student has an individual photograph and a class photograph taken and if you wish, a photograph with Boronia Heights siblings, can be arranged. Photographs can be ordered and paid online. Children are to wear School Uniform for their school photographs.

Play Areas

Each year level has a special playground to call their own, where they can play with their peers. There are also communal play areas where children can play with younger or older children if they wish.

PMP (Perceptual Motor Program)

PMP operates for Year Prep (and Year 1 for a term). This program supports the development of children's gross motor skills, hand/eye co-ordination, balance and eye tracking development. Parents are invited to assist with this program.

Prep Transition

The transition from preschool to school is an exciting leap for both children and their families. At Boronia Heights Primary School we welcome everyone to feel a part of our supportive school community and join in with as many transition and school activities throughout the year as you are able.

Transition begins officially in Term 4 and continues throughout Term 1 to ensure your child feels supported, happy and eager to join in with all that school life has to offer. Your child's well-being is our paramount intention throughout this period so that they can be successful learners. Please feel welcome to talk to your child's teacher if you need additional information or have any concerns.

Production

Our Performing Arts Program endeavours to provide every student with the opportunity to learn and develop their performance skills and also to build their confidence and develop their creativity, personality and focus for the stage. We hold a whole School Production every second year. A successful school production showcases the talents of our students and staff alike, it is the culmination of hardwork that covers vital curriculum areas and reinforces everything we value about the all-round development of our students.

PSD (Program for Students with Disabilities)

There are a number of students with special funding for disabilities and impairments in the school. These students have the support of an Integration Aide who spends several hours each week working with them in the classroom. Parents have the opportunity to attend a Student Support Group (SSG) meeting once per term to discuss their educational program.

School Council

School Council is the planning and decision making body of the school, School Council encourages parents to become involved in this process by becoming a member of Council sub-committees, attending council meetings, becoming a councillor. This shared commitment between parents and staff gives Council a special energy.

Boronia Heights' Constituting Order provides for a Council elected membership of 10 parent elected members, and 4 DET employee elected members. All members serve a term of two years with half the membership retiring on March 31st each year. Meetings are normally held on the fourth Monday of each month in the staffroom at 6.30 pm or online.

School Gates

School Gates are automatically unlocked each morning at 8.40am and will lock at 9.30am and reopen at 3.10pm until 4.15pm. The main entrance gate at the corner of Landscape Drive and Phipps Ave is open all day from 8.30am until 4.30pm.

School Nurse

The school nurse visits the school each year to conduct health assessments for Prep Students, or students from Years 1-6 who would benefit from an assessment.

During the visit the school nurse will:

- conduct the health assessment on Prep students
- follow up students with problems identified
- be available for health advice

Smoking Free Zone

From 13th April 2015, smoking was banned within four metres of an entrance to all schools and within the schools grounds. **No Smoking** signs have been installed at entrances to the school grounds. The smoking ban applies to anyone present or to any activities that take place on the school premises during and after school hours.

Specialist Programs

These include a weekly Performing Arts (Music), Physical Education, LOTE (German), and Library session, each 40 minutes, and a fortnightly 80 minute Visual Arts session and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Maths).

Staff Car Park

No parents are to use the staff carpark area as a drop off and pick up zone for students. This is for staff parking only.

Staff Contact

Teachers have staff meetings scheduled on Tuesday afternoons and Thursday mornings before school. Please organise with your child's teacher to arrange any meeting outside of these times. If you wish to contact your child's classroom teacher you can email them via Compass or via the school at boronia.heights.ps@education.vic.gov.au

Student Insurance

Parents are reminded that the Department does not provide personal accident insurance for students. Parents and guardians are responsible for paying the cost of medical treatment for injured students, including any transport costs. Student accident insurance policies are available from some commercial insurers. These cover a range of medical expenses not covered by Medicare or private health insurance.

Student Leaders

Our Student Leaders are selected from our Year 6 students. Leaders are chosen based on a speech or written application. We have two School Captains who are supported by two Vice Captains. We also have a Sports Captain and Vice-Captain for each of our four sport houses. Leadership at Boronia Heights Primary School is an opportunity for our students to excel in all areas at school and within the community. We have a large and diverse leadership profile showcasing the different strengths of our students. This includes Library Leaders, Promotional Leaders, Environmental Leaders, Choir and Band, Art and German Captains and IT Captains.

Student of the Week

Student of the Week Certificates are awarded at Assembly to acknowledge children who are following the school's well being program. The skills we encourage are CARE, Community, Achievement, Respect and Engagement.

Student Welfare

Programs within the school to support student welfare include the Chaplaincy Program, Buddy Programs, Welfare Program – Berry St Model Education Model, Integration and Individual needs Programs.

Sun Smart Policy

Our school's Sun Smart policy is Hats on in September and off in May.

All students are required to wear an approved hat when outside for any period of time beyond simply walking from one building to another. Students without hats must remain in shaded areas during recess and lunchtime.

School hats are available from the Uniform shop and Front Office.

Swimming

This is an integral part of our school program with students in years Prep – 4 attending for an intensive 5 day program each year. Year 5 and 6 Students have the opportunity to attend surfing lessons. The Physical Education teacher makes the initial arrangements and class teachers supervise their students throughout their swimming outings, including changing room supervision. Parents Helpers are welcome to assist.

The Community Hub

The Hubster's work for the welfare of the school. The Hub's main functions are fundraising and social activities for the community. This group meets on the third Thursday of each month.



There are many ways for parents and carers to become involved in school activities and The Community Hub is one way in which you can participate, whilst making new friends. A member of staff attends the meetings and gives a report and you are welcome to ask questions.

Total Fire Ban Days

All Staff remain on the premises during days of Total Fire Ban. Students are not to remove their shoes on Total Fire Ban days. Students may be called in from recess/lunch at staff discretion on such days. The School will be Closed on days where the fire danger is at the CATASTROPHIC – CODE RED LEVEL. Information will be relayed to parents via Compass on known Catastrophic Days.

Transfers

If your child will be moving school please email the school office with name, last date and new school details. boronia.heights.ps@education.vic.gov.au

Uniforms

Boronia Heights has a compulsory uniform policy to ensure that all children are dressed in safe, comfortable clothing that is SunSmart and ensures all children feel a part of the school. Uniform items can be ordered from Spartan School World, 1/210-214 Canterbury Road, Bayswater. You can order in the store or online at www.spartanschoolworld.com.au. A Spartan School World pricelist is on our school website.

Year 6 students are able to purchase special graduation tops.

Values Program

Our school values of COMMUNITY, ACHIEVEMENT, RESPECT and ENGAGEMENT are an integral part of the classroom and playground. These values are integrated into all classroom programs and interactions between children, staff and parents.

Volunteers

Boronia Heights Primary School is committed to encouraging an open, friendly and safe learning environment that actively welcomes visitors and volunteers to the school. The school encourages parents/guardians to take part in their children's development and to create strong partnerships with community services, schools, businesses and the wider community. Volunteers require a "Working with Children's Check" and a signed "Code of Conduct" to participate in school activities. A copy of your card must be presented to the school office prior to volunteering in the school and with the current climate all visitors must show proof of Covid-19 double Vaccination.

For further information, see our schools Visitors to School Policy located on the school website. Information on the Child Safe Code of conduct is on Page 40.

Welfare/Discipline

Our School's Code of Behaviour Booklet has been printed after extensive collaboration between student's, parents and teachers. It is designed to promote a secure, caring and positive environment and foster acceptable behaviours and attitudes through a system of relationships, rights, responsibilities, rewards and logical consequences for inappropriate or unacceptable behaviour. Copies are available to new families, when students commence at Boronia Heights Primary School. Refer to Bullying Prevention policy on page 32.

Well Being Program

The goal at our school is for all students to realise their potential and to achieve the best of their ability. The Berry Street Curriculum is purposefully designed to support the sequential development of students' physical, psychological, social and emotional capacities. It is designed to be responsive to the needs of children and young people as they emerge.

The Berry Street curriculum has been developed with a few core principles in mind. First, it is designed as a process so that students' capacities build over time. As students progress through their learning journey, they become better able to regulate their physical wellbeing, identify and manage their emotions, cultivate resilience, and identify and use character strengths. Consequently the curriculum is focused on students' growth and development as they move through different topics and learn valued skills.

Website

Our website is full of information regarding our school. You can view the newsletter, canteen and uniform price list, view school hours and a host of other information. www.boroniahtsps.edu.vic.gov.au.

Wet Day Timetables

Children will not be allowed outside if it is raining at recess or lunch time. A timetable will be distributed and supervision will be shared so teachers get a break. Each teacher will supervise two adjoining classrooms. Before school on wet days a bell will ring and an announcement made at 8.45 am for children to come inside. If you are dropping your children at school prior to 8.45 am encourage them to wait in dry areas until they are invited to come inside.

Working Bees and Maintenance

At Boronia Heights Primary School, we attempt to have one working bee per term. By keeping up with pruning, weeding and general tidying of BHPS we provide lovely surroundings for our students to play and work in...not to mention the front of the school looking great for our Christmas concert! A note will be sent home with dates and times.

Working With Children's Check

All volunteers at our school are required to have a current Working with Children's card. If a volunteer's occupation exempts them from the requirement to also have a WWCC eg: police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim. A Working With Children's card is valid for 5 years and is available from selected Post Offices or online.



A School With A View

Bullying Prevention Policy

Purpose

Boronia Heights 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
- make clear that all forms of bullying at Boronia Heights will not be tolerated
- 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 victims, bystanders and perpetrators)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Boronia Heights.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Boronia Heights aims to:

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

Boronia Heights 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 applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

Policy

Definitions

Bullying occurs when someone, or a group of people, deliberately and repeatedly upset, harass, intimidate, threaten or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying, where the bully or bullies have more power than the victim due to their age, size, status or other reasons.

Bullying may be direct or indirect, physical or verbal, and includes cyberbullying. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike.

Bullying can be:

1. *direct physical bullying* – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. *direct verbal bullying* – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.

3. *indirect bullying* – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person’s social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyberbullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile phone, tablets, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written or include use of images, video and/or audio.

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 harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied. Harassment, nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school.

Many distressing behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing behaviours of concern are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff.

Bullying Prevention

Boronia Heights 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 Boronia Heights 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 have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing through our whole school approach through our ‘You Can Do It’ Program.
- We use whole School common language to promote positive relationships ‘bucket filling’ and identify negative communication ‘bucket dippers’ throughout every classroom. The use of ‘Growth Mindsets’ supports and directs students to seek a positive approach to relationships and learning.
- We use a whole school approach through the development of our ‘Rigor, Routine and Respect Program’ at the beginning of every year. This explicitly teaches and supports our students how to build positive relationships with their peers and teachers while transitioning to a new class. Setting clear expectations and creating respectful classrooms across the school is a priority.
- 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.
- Provide weekly social skills and friendship groups by our school chaplain to further develop and support social skills for students. These groups are designed on a needs basis in our school to encourage and develop positive relationships.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.

- 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.
- The Peer Support Program and the Peer Mediation Program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels (1,2 and 5). We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- The Buddies program encourages positive relationships between students from Prep and Year 4. Encouraging younger students to communicate, build positive relationships and feel safe with older students in the school and have the opportunity to continue these relationships for three years before the Buddy finishes primary school.
- Through our 'Student Leadership Program' 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 seek ongoing funding of social skills program through our local council to fund programs such as: MAT (Martial Arts program) Revved Up and M Power. These programs are run in Years 4, 5 or 6.

Incident Response

Reporting concerns to Boronia Heights

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

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.

In most circumstances, we encourage students to speak to their teacher/team leader. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, wellbeing staff, school chaplain or Assistant Principal or Principal

Parents or carers who may develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Boronia Heights should contact Leanne Jennings, Kristy Foster or Leah Hodgson, Principals, by phone on 9729 2614 or by email via Compass

Investigations

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

1. record the details of the allegations in Compass; and
2. inform Student Wellbeing Team, Assistant Principal, Principal

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

- speak to the students involved in the allegations, including the victim/s, the alleged perpetrator/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents 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 Principal Class 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 Boronia Heights 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. Student Wellbeing Team, teachers, SSS, Assistant Principal, Principal or Chaplain

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, Boronia Heights 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 victim student
- whether the perpetrator student or students have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the perpetrator demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation

Boronia Heights may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the victim student or students, including referral to Student Wellbeing Team, Student Support Services, Chaplain or external provider.
- Offer counselling support to the perpetrator student or students, including referral to Student Wellbeing Team, Student Support Services, Chaplain or external provider.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the victim student, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, Student Support Services, Chaplain or external provider.
- 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.
- Implement disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator students, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare an Individual Management Plan restricting contact between victim and perpetrator students.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including social skills programs
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.

Boronia Heights is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

Boronia Heights understands the importance of monitoring the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Boronia Heights are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

Evaluation

This will be reviewed on a 2 year basis following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to bullying to ensure that this policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data will be collected through:

- discussion with students
- attitudes to school survey
- regular staff surveys
- analysis of school based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with school council



A School With A View

Child Safety Policy

(Child Safe Standard 2)

• Our Commitment To Child Safety

Boronia Heights Primary School is committed to child safety. As a community, we want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. There is zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures. We meet our legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

Boronia Heights Primary School is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks. We have robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers. Our school is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks. As a community, we support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability. Boronia Heights Primary School has specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

If you believe, a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000

Our Children

This policy is intended to empower children who are vital and active participants at Boronia Heights Primary School.

We involve them when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

We promote diversity and tolerance in our organisation, and people from all walks of life and cultural backgrounds are welcome. In particular, we:

promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children

promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds

- ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.

Our Staff and Volunteers

This policy guides our staff and volunteers on how to behave with children in our organisation.

All of our staff and volunteers must agree to abide by our code of conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children. All staff and volunteers, as well as children and their families, are given the opportunity to contribute to the development of the code of conduct.

Training and Supervision

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our organisational culture aims for all staff and volunteers (in addition to parents/carers and children) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We train our staff and volunteers to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to: develop their skills to protect children from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be supervised regularly to ensure they understand Boronia Heights Primary School's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate (please refer to this organisation's code of conduct to understand appropriate behaviour further). Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels, including the Department of Health and Human Services and Victoria Police, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

Recruitment

We take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with children. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities. Boronia Heights Primary School understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations. **We actively encourage applications from Aboriginal peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.**

All people engaged in child-related work, including volunteers, are required to hold a Working with Children Check and to provide evidence of this Check. Please see the [Working with Children Check](http://www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au) website <www.workingwithchildren.vic.gov.au> for further information

We carry out reference checks and require proof of police record checks where applicable to ensure that we are recruiting the right people. Police record checks are used only for the purposes of recruitment and are discarded after the recruitment process is complete. We do retain our own records (but not the actual criminal record) if an applicant's criminal history affected our decision-making process.

If during the recruitment process a person's records indicate a criminal history, then the person will be given the opportunity to provide further information and context.

Fair Procedures for Personnel

The safety and wellbeing of children is our primary concern. We are also fair and just to personnel. The decisions we make when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action will always be thorough, transparent, and based on evidence.

We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using our incident reporting form¹, including investigation updates. All records are securely stored.

If an allegation of abuse or a safety concern is raised, we provide updates to children and families on progress and any actions we as an organisation take.

Privacy

All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be staff, volunteers, parents or children, unless there is a risk to someone's safety. We have safeguards and practices in place to ensure any personal information is protected. Everyone is entitled to know how this information is recorded, what will be done with it, and who will have access to it.

Legislative Responsibilities

Boronia Heights Primary School takes our legal responsibilities seriously, including:

Failure to disclose: Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police.i

Failure to protect: People of authority in our organisation will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so. ii

- Any personnel who are **mandatory reporters** must comply with their duties.iii

Risk management

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified (see information about failure to protect above). In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

We have risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments (for example, any doors that can lock), and online environments (for example, no staff or volunteer is to have contact with a child in organisations on social media).

Regular review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

Allegations, concerns and complaints

Boronia Heights Primary School takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose above).

If an adult has a **reasonable belief** that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident. Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

a child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)

behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim is observediv

someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it

observing suspicious behaviour.

Review Period

This policy was ratified at School Council on 25th March 2019 and due to be reviewed March 2020

GLOSSARY OF TERMS	
Term	Definition
• The Act	• <i>Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005</i>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS	
Term	Definition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person under the age of 18 who: • is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent • identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and • is accepted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the purposes of these standards, abuse constitutes any act committed against a child involving: • physical violence • sexual offences • serious emotional or psychological abuse • serious neglect •
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child or young person who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person who is under the age of 18 years.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the context of the child safe standards, child safety means measures to protect children from abuse.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child safe organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the context of the child safe standards, a child safe organisation is one that meets the child safe standards by proactively taking measures to protect children from abuse.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural competency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enable them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural abuse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions and attitudes that deliberately ignore, denigrate or attack the culture of a person or community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural safety for Aboriginal children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. • A culturally safe environment does not ignore, challenge or deny cultural identity. Cultural safety upholds the rights of Aboriginal children to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify as Aboriginal without fear of retribution or questioning • have an education that strengthens their culture and identity • maintain connections to their land and country • maintain their strong kinship ties and social obligations • be taught their cultural heritage by their Elders • receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner • be involved in services that are culturally respectful
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for children; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their cultural or linguistic identity, of who they are and what they need. Efforts need to be made to ensure the culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and their families receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner, including in relevant community languages.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS	
Term	Definition
backgrounds	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children with a disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury or intellectual disability or developmental delay that affects a child’s ability to undertake everyday activities. A disability can occur at any time in life. Children can be born with a disability or acquire a disability suddenly through an injury or illness. Some disabilities may be obvious while others are hidden.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The <i>Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005</i> (the Act) will provide that the standards apply to ‘applicable entities’, which are defined in the Act as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an incorporated body or association an unincorporated body or association (however structured) an individual who carries on a business and engages contractors, employees or volunteers to assist in the business in providing services or facilities.

i A person will not commit this offence if they have a reasonable excuse for not disclosing the information, including a fear for their safety or where the information has already been disclosed.

Further information about the failure to disclose offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence>.

ii Further information about the failure to protect offence is available on the [Department of Justice and Regulation website](http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence) <www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence>.

iii Mandatory reporters (doctors, nurses, midwives, teachers (including early childhood teachers), principals and police) must report to child protection if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse.

See the Department of Health and Human Services website for information about [how to make a report to child protection](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first) <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/reports-publications/guide-to-making-a-report-to-child-protection-or-child-first>.



A School With A View

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Purpose

Boronia Heights Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended

to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of Boronia Heights Primary School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of Boronia Heights Primary School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Acceptable Behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's child safe policy and other policies
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities; including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- welcoming all children and their families and carers and being inclusive
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- modelling appropriate adult behaviour
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's Principal, or Assistant Principal
- following the steps in Flowchart: CHILD SAFETY REPORTING PROCESS when one wants to raise a concern about breaches of the code and to how to make a complaint
- listening to children and responding to them appropriately
- reporting and acting on any breaches of the Code of Conduct, complaints and concerns
- complying with our guidelines on physical contact with children (see unacceptable behaviours)
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm
- respecting the privacy of children and their families and only disclosing information to people who need to know

Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work must not:

- seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse

- develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show inappropriate attention that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- engage in rough physical games
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- treat a child unfavourably or discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- 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 school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances

Review Period

This Code of Conduct was ratified at School Council on 22 Feb, 2019 and is due for review in February 2020



A School With A View

Mandatory Reporting Policy

(Child Safe Standard 5)

• Rationale

All children have a right to feel safe and to be safe. In schools, we have a legal and moral responsibility to respond to serious incidences involving abuse and neglect of the children with whom we have contact, and to report instances that we believe involve physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect.

School staff have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care. If a staff member has concerns about the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care they should take immediate action.

• Aim

To ensure that children's rights to be safe are maintained and each child is protected against physical and sexual abuse, and neglect.

- **Implementation**

- All members of the Teaching Service are mandated by law to report signs or risks of harm, disclosures of abuse or neglect, or a reasonable belief a student is subjected to sexual abuse or physical harm.
- Mandatory reporters, who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse, must report their concerns to Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection.
- All other staff members who form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person:
 - is in need of protection, should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police
 - is displaying sexually abusive behaviours and is in need of therapeutic treatment should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection.
- If staff have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child or young person they should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST. (See attachment for process)
- In cases where staff have concerns about a child or young person, they should also discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.
- New staff will be informed of mandatory reporting responsibilities and procedures as part of their induction procedure.
- Staff will be reminded of mandatory responsibilities annually.
- All concerns must be reported immediately to the principal, or in his/her absence, the assistant principal.
- The principal will keep a record of all discussions about a student with whom there is a concern.
- If a belief has been formed by a staff member that a mandatory report must be made, a "Mandatory Reporting Information Sheet" available from the principal must be completed and filed in the principal's office.
- The teacher and/or the principal class officer will contact the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) by telephone as soon as possible to make an official notification on:
 - **(03) 9479 6222 or after school hours crisis line 131278**
 - North-Western Region on 1300 338 691**
- In the case of international students, the principal must notify the International Education Division of the Department on **(03) 9637 2990** to ensure that appropriate support is arranged for the student.
- Members of Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), or associated support or intervention services that visit the school following a notification, will interview staff and children only in the presence of a principal class member or his/her nominee.
- All "Mandatory Reporting Information Sheets" remain filed in the principal's office.
- All reports, information sheets and subsequent discussions and information are to be recorded and remain strictly confidential.
- All incidents to be monitored, and any subsequent signs or indications of abuse are also to be reported.
- While only mandated by law to report incidents of physical and sexual abuse, and neglect; teachers are also encouraged to report incidents of emotional abuse or neglect.
- Students, who disclose to staff a desire to harm themselves or others, must be reported by staff to the principal.
- Legal Obligations – see Appendix A.

- **Failure To Disclose**

Any staff member who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 has an obligation to report that information to police. Failure to disclose the information to police is a criminal offence, except in limited circumstances such as where the information has already been reported to DHHS Child Protection.

This offence applies to all adults (not just professionals who work with children) who form a reasonable belief that another adult may have committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 years of age and fail to report this information to Victoria Police.

Failing to disclose a sexual offence based on concerns for the interests of the perpetrator or organisation (e.g. concerns about reputation, legal liability or financial status) will not be regarded as a reasonable excuse.

- **Failure To Protect**

- This offence applies to a person in a position of authority within an organisation who:
 - knows of a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16, under the care, supervision or authority of the organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with the organisation (e.g. employee, contractors, volunteer, visitor); and
 - negligently fails to remove or reduce the risk of harm.

Within a school setting, a position of authority includes principals and assistant principals and staff in institutional management positions (e.g. in government schools this includes Regional Directors and other senior managers). See Appendix B for additional information.

Review Period

This policy was ratified by School Council on March 2019. Due for review 2020

Appendix A: Legal obligations

Type of Reporting	By Whom	To Whom
<p>Mandatory Reporting</p> <p>Mandatory reporters must make a report as soon as practicable if, in the course of practising their profession or carrying out their duties, they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection, as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and the child's parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.</p>	<p>Mandatory reporters</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers registered to teach or who have permission to teach pursuant to the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) • Principals of government and non-government schools • Registered medical practitioners • Nurses • All members of the police force • Social Workers • Youth Workers • Psychologists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHHS Child Protection
<p>Child in need of protection</p>	<p>Any Person</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHHS Child Protection

<p>Any person may make a report if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection for any of the following reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The child has been abandoned and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child. • The child’s parents are dead or incapacitated and there is no other suitable person who is willing and able to care for the child. • The child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical injury and the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child. • The child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of sexual abuse and their parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child. • The child has suffered or is likely to suffer emotional or psychological harm and the parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child. • The child’s physical development or health has been, or is likely to be significantly harmed and the parents are unable or unwilling to provide basic care, or effective medical or other remedial care. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Victoria Police
<p>Child in need of therapeutic treatment</p> <p>Any person may make a report if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child who is 10 years of age or over, but under 15 years of age, is in need of therapeutic treatment because he or she has exhibited sexually-abusive behaviours.</p>	<p><i>Any Person</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHHS Child Protection

<p>Significant concerns about wellbeing of a child Any person may make a report if they have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child.</p>	<p><i>Any Person</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DHHS Child Protection • Child FIRST
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Appendix B: Further Information

Statement

A broad range of professional groups are identified in the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (CYFA)* as mandatory reporters. Mandated staff members must make a report to Child Protection as soon as practicable after forming a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and the child’s parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

The following professionals are prescribed as mandatory reporters under section 182 of the CYFA:

- primary and secondary school teachers and principals (including students in training to become teachers)
- registered medical practitioners (including psychiatrists)
- nurses (including school nurses)
- police.

There may be times when two or more mandated staff members, for example a teacher and a Principal, have formed a belief about the same child or young person on the same occasion. In this situation it is sufficient for only one of the mandated staff members to make a report. The other staff member is obliged to ensure that the report has been made and that all of the grounds for their own belief were included in the report made by the other staff member.

Non-mandated staff members

Section 183 of the CYFA states that any person, who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, may report their concerns to Child Protection. This means that any person, including non-mandated school staff, is able to make a report to Child Protection when they believe that a child or young person is at risk of harm and in need of protection, and the child’s parents are unable or unwilling to protect the child.

Forming a belief on reasonable grounds

A person may form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection after becoming aware that a child or young person’s health, safety or wellbeing is at risk and the child’s parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child.

There may be reasonable grounds for forming such a belief if:

- a child or young person states that they have been physically or sexually abused
- a child or young person states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves)
- someone who knows the child or young person states that the child or young person has been physically or sexually abused
- a child shows signs of being physically or sexually abused
- the staff member is aware of persistent family violence or parental substance misuse, psychiatric illness or intellectual disability that is impacting on the child or young person’s safety, stability or development
- the staff member observes signs or indicators of abuse, including non-accidental or unexplained injury, persistent neglect, poor care or lack of appropriate supervision
- a child’s actions or behaviour may place them at risk of significant harm and the child’s parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child.

Reporting a belief

Staff members, whether or not mandated, need to report their belief when the belief is formed in the course of undertaking their professional duties. A report must be made as soon as practicable after forming the belief and on each occasion on which they become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.

If one staff member has a different view from another staff member about making a report and the staff member continues to hold the belief that a child is in need of protection, that person is obliged to make a report to Child Protection.

Protecting the identity of the reporter

Confidentiality is provided for reporters under the CYFA. The CYFA prevents disclosure of the name or any information likely to lead to the identification of a person who has made a report in accordance with legislation, except in specific circumstances.

The identity of a reporter must remain confidential unless:

- the reporter chooses to inform the child, young person or family of the report
- the reporter consents in writing to their identity being disclosed
- a court or tribunal decides that it is necessary for the identity of the reporter to be disclosed to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the child
- a court or tribunal decides that, in the interests of justice, the reporter is required to attend court to provide evidence.

Information provided during a protective investigation may be used in a court report if the risks to the child or young person require the case to proceed to court. In these circumstances, the source of the information may be required to provide evidence to the court.

If Child Protection decides that the report is about a significant concern for the wellbeing of a child, they may refer the report to a community-based child and family service and disclose the identity of the reporter to that service. However, the CYFA provides that neither Child Protection nor the community-based child and family service may disclose the reporter's identity to any other person without the reporter's consent.

Professional protection for reporters

If a report is made in good faith:

- it does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics on the part of the reporter
- the reporter cannot be held legally liable in respect of the report.

This means that a person who makes a report in accordance with the legislation will not be held liable for the eventual outcome of any investigation of the report.

Failure to report

A failure by mandated professionals and staff members to report a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of physical or sexual abuse may result in the person being prosecuted and a court imposing a fine under the CYFA (Children, Youth and Families Act 2005).

Making a report to Child Protection

The CYFA allows for two types of reports to be made in relation to significant concerns for the safety or wellbeing of a child – a report to Child Protection or a referral to Child FIRST.

A report to Child Protection should be considered if, after taking into account all of the available information, the staff member forms a view that the child or young person is in need of protection because:

- the harm or risk of harm has a serious impact on the child's immediate safety, stability or development
- the harm or risk of harm is persistent and entrenched and is likely to have a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development

-
- the child's parents cannot or will not protect the child or young person from harm.

Where, during the course of carrying out their normal duties, a school staff member forms the belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection, the staff member must make a report to Child Protection regarding this belief and the reasonable grounds for it as soon as practicable.

Staff members may form a professional judgement or belief, in the course of undertaking their professional duties, based on:

- warning signs or indicators of harm that have been observed or inferred from information about the child
- legal requirements, such as mandatory reporting
- knowledge of child and adolescent development
- consultation with colleagues and other professionals
- professional obligations and duty-of-care responsibilities
- established protocols
- internal policies and procedures in an individual licensed children's service or school.

Upon receipt of a report, Child Protection may seek further information, usually from professionals who may also be involved with the child or family, to determine whether further action is required.

In most circumstances, Child Protection will inform the reporter of the outcome of the report. When the report is classified by Child Protection as a Wellbeing Report, Child Protection will, in turn, make a referral to Child FIRST.

Any person who is registered as a teacher under the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*, or any person who has been granted permission to teach under that Act, including principals, is mandated to make a report to Child Protection. In the course of undertaking their professional duties, mandated staff members are required to report their belief, when the belief is formed on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of sexual abuse or physical injury.

Teachers are encouraged to discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the principal or a member of the school leadership team. If a principal or member of the leadership team does not wish to make a mandatory report, this does not discharge the teacher's obligation to do so if they have formed a reasonable belief that abuse may have occurred. If the teacher's concerns continue, even after consultation with the principal or member of the leadership team, that teacher is still legally obliged to make a mandatory report of their concerns.

Information about the identity of a person making a report to Child Protection must be kept confidential unless the reporter consents to the disclosure of their identity. If the staff member wishes to remain anonymous, this information should be conveyed at the time that the reporter makes the mandatory report.

The role of school staff

School staff have a duty of care to protect and preserve the safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people in their care and staff must always act in the best interests of those children and young people. If a staff member has any concerns regarding the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person it is important to take immediate action.

Note: The role of investigating an allegation of child abuse rests solely with Child Protection and/or Victoria Police.

The roles and responsibilities of staff in supporting children and young people who are involved with Child Protection may include acting as a support person for students, attending Child Protection case plan meetings, observing and monitoring students' behaviour, and liaising with professionals.

Confidentiality

Staff must respect confidentiality when dealing with a case of suspected child abuse and neglect, and may discuss case details and the identity of the child or the young person and their family only with those involved in managing the situation.

When a child or young person has moved to another school, professional judgement should be exercised as to what information needs to be passed on. This will be guided by usual procedures for passing on information about a child's general wellbeing or special needs, and the role of the school in any ongoing care plans.

Interviews at Victorian schools

Child Protection may conduct interviews of children and young people at school without parental knowledge or consent. However, a child will be interviewed at a Victorian school only in exceptional circumstances and if it is in the child's best interests to proceed in this manner. Child Protection will notify the school of any intention to interview a child or young person. This may occur regardless of whether the school is the source of the report to Child Protection.

When Child Protection practitioners arrive at the school, the principal or their nominee should ask to see their identification before allowing Child Protection to have access to the child or young person.

Support persons

Children and young people should be advised of their right to have a supportive adult present during interviews. If a child is too young to understand the significance of the interview, a staff member should make arrangements for a supportive adult to attend with the child.

A staff member may be identified as a support person for the child or young person during the interview. Prior to the commencement of the interview, the Child Protection practitioner should always authorise the staff member to receive information regarding Child Protection's investigation.

This may occur verbally or in writing using the relevant Child Protection proforma.

Independent persons must refrain from providing their opinions or accounts of events during interviews. A principal or their delegate may act as an independent person when the child or young person is to be interviewed, unless they believe that doing so will create a conflict of interest.

Advising parents, carers or guardians

Staff do not require the permission of parents, carers or guardians to make a report to Child Protection, nor are they required to tell parents, carers or guardians that they have done so.

It is the responsibility of Child Protection to advise the parents, carers or guardians of the interview at the earliest possible opportunity. This should occur either before, or by the time the child arrives home.

Ensuring that a Child Protection interview takes place

The school does not have the power to prevent parents, carers or guardians from removing their children from the school and should not attempt to prevent the parents, carers or guardians from collecting the child. If a parent/carer or guardian removes a child before a planned interview has taken place, the principal and/or their nominee should contact Child Protection or Victoria Police immediately.

Staff Training

Staff will be informed of Mandatory Reporting requirements as part of their initial induction to the school and will be provided with supporting documentation in their staff handbook.

Updates will take place annually as part of the Performance and Development/Staff meeting rotation.

Reference: School Policy & Advisory Guide –Mandatory Reporting

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/health/Pages/childprotection.aspx>

<http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/protecting-children-together>

<http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children%2c-youth-and-families/child-protection/specialist-practice-resources-for-child-protection-workers/child-development-and-trauma-specialist-practice-resource>

http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/586465/information-guide-registered-teachers-principals.pdf

<http://www.dhhs.vic.gov.au/for-individuals/children,-families-and-young-people/child-protection/about-child-abuse>