



Broadford Secondary College

# Child Safe Standards

## Child Safe Standard 3

### Policy and Procedure

*Broadford Secondary College actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of all students. All staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment in accordance with their legal obligations including Child Safe Standards.*

Date Implemented	1 <sup>st</sup> July 2022
Author	Reno Lia, Jodie Masters & Ann Brown
Approved By	Tania Pearson
Approval Authority (signature & date)	
Date Reviewed	
Responsible for Review	College Council / Policies Sub-Committee / Principal Class Officers
Review Date	Ongoing
References	DEECD

## Purpose

The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) commenced in Victoria in January 2016. After five years, we have seen how the Standards improve safety for children and young people.

Changes are being made to make our Standards even stronger.

The new Standards set out minimum requirements and outline the actions Broadford Secondary College must take to keep children and young people safe. They provide more clarity for schools and are more consistent with Standards in the rest of Australia.

## Objective

- to involve families and communities in Broadford Secondary College efforts to keep children and young people safe
- for a greater focus on safety for Aboriginal children and young people
- to manage the risk of child abuse in online environments
- in relation to governance, systems and processes to keep children and young people safe.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- all staff, including casual relief staff and volunteers who work at the school

### **Child Safe Standard 3 – Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously**

- In complying with Child Safe Standard 3, Broadford Secondary College must, at a minimum, ensure:
- 3.1 Children and young people are informed about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation.
- 3.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated.
- 3.3 Where relevant to the setting or context, children and young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.
- 3.4 Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.
- 3.5 Broadford Secondary College have strategies in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people.
- 3.6 Broadford Secondary College provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement.

## Overview

This standard supports schools to create a culture that values and promotes student participation. This includes:

- informing students about their rights and responsibilities in an age-appropriate way
- recognising the importance of friendships and peer support
- enabling students to actively participate in creating a culture that is safe for them and their peers.

## Benefits of empowering students

Empowering children and young people improves child safety. Policies and practices that are shaped by children's and young people's views can better prevent the risk of harm. Children and young people are more likely to speak up when they feel respected and confident that they will be heard.

## Supporting friends and peers

Children and young people benefit from strong friendships. They often see their friends as their main source of support, information and advice, and will go to them for help.

Supporting students to raise concerns about the safety or wellbeing of their friends to encourage students to support their peers.

## Actions Broadford Secondary College will take

To comply with this standard, at minimum, Broadford Secondary College will:

- inform students about all their rights, including their rights to safety, information and participation
- recognise the importance of friendships and encourage support from peers, to help students feel safe and be less isolated
- make sure staff and volunteers:
  - are attuned to [signs of harm](#)
  - facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns
- develop a culture that encourages participation and responds to what students say
- give students opportunities to participate, and respond to their contributions to strengthen confidence and engagement
- offer students access to sexual abuse prevention programs and related information in an age-appropriate way. School boarding premises are required to offer sexual abuse prevention programs and related information where it is relevant to the setting or context
- develop curriculum planning documents or other documentation that details how the school will address these requirements.

## **Broadford Secondary College will review their child safety and wellbeing policies:**

- after any significant child safety incident
- at least once every 2 years.

## **Relevant standards**

- [Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises \(PDF, 363KB\)](#)
- [Child Safe Standard 3](#) – Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

## **To implement this standard Broadford Secondary College will:**

### **Inform students of their rights**

- Provide age appropriate and accessible information to students such as information about:
  - the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct.
  - the Charter of Commitment under the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
  - the work of the [Commission for Children and Young People](#)
  - how the adults in the school should behave.
- Inform students of their [rights and special protections](#) including the right to:
  - live and grow up healthy
  - have a say about decisions affecting them
  - get information that is important to them
  - be safe and not harmed by anyone.
- When sharing information under the [information sharing schemes](#):
  - work to build trust by being open and transparent about information sharing and keep the child and family informed each time their information is shared if it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so
  - seek and consider the views of the child (or the relevant family members) about sharing their confidential information if it is appropriate, safe and reasonable to do so
- Provide information through the curriculum via relevant subject areas to promote:
  - [Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships](#)
  - [School-wide Positive Behaviour Support Framework](#)
  - [Safe Schools](#)
  - [Bully Stoppers](#)
  - [Vic SRC's Introduction to Student Voice](#)
  - [eSmart](#).

### **Empower students to contribute to school life**

- Display visually engaging and easy-to-read posters promoting student voice and agency.

- Discuss commitment to student's voice at enrolment and organise orientation activities focused on activating student's voice.
- Conduct year-level meetings and form groups to discuss students' rights and safety issues.
- Invite students to provide feedback on school-wide decisions and take their views into account in school decision-making.
- Document student participation in activities that contribute to the life of the school.
- Involve students in consultation processes and inform them of their impact on decision-making.
- Demonstrate that the school takes students seriously by acting on their concerns, noting that what might seem unimportant to an adult may be important to a young person.
- Become a [VicSRC Partner School](#).
- Provide students who find it harder to speak up or be heard with multiple avenues for communicating, including writing, drawing, or physical forms of communication.

### **Empower students to raise their concerns**

- Provide students with information about complaints processes.
- Give students a variety of ways to raise concerns. For example:
  - provide an anonymous, year-level student suggestion box
  - distribute regular online surveys
  - display information about the adults who students can talk to if they have a concern.
- Highlight student views in your school community or public-facing documents, including quoting students where appropriate.
- Create opportunities for all student voices by being aware of discriminatory barriers and any overreliance on the input of student leaders.

### **Strengthen peer support for safety and wellbeing**

- Display posters acknowledging sexuality and gender diversity and identify safe spaces where students can go if they need support.
- Carry out regular whole school [wellbeing assessment surveys](#).
- Use the [Bully Stoppers survey tool](#) to assess bullying in your school.
- Establish Student Action Teams to investigate issues of inclusion and exclusion.
- Discuss healthy boundaries for friendships. Point out that the risk of harm can occur in child-to-child interactions, as well as adult-to-child interactions.
- Use school transition programs, like [Transition: A Positive Start to School \(DOCX, 4.3MB\)](#) or [Transition – Year 6 to 7](#), to provide support for students entering the school.
- Provide buddying or mentoring programs for new students transitioning to the school mid-year or outside of the regular transition timeline.

### **Establish protective factors**

- Teach students practical protective strategies, including:
  - what to do when they feel unsafe
  - phrases they can use to raise an objection

- pathways for raising safety concerns, and
  - online safety behaviours.
- Provide contact information for independent child and youth advocacy services or helplines.
- Provide a range of age-appropriate picture books, fiction and non-fiction that include:
  - children's rights and empowerment themes
  - cultural and linguistic diversity
  - neurodiverse characters and people with disability
  - diversity in sexual orientation and gender.
- Support all students to identify trusted adults and friends they can talk to about a concern at school, at home or in the community.
- Deliver age-appropriate curriculum content about respectful relationships, sexuality, consent and sexual abuse prevention through the [Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships teaching and learning materials](#).
- Use the [School's Mental Health Menu](#) to support students in your school.
- Empower students with the knowledge that adults are accountable and that students have a right to safety.

### **Communicate in a respectful and age-appropriate way**

- Educate staff to uphold Aboriginal cultural safety and be respectful of identity and culture.
- Train staff and volunteers to facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.
- Educate staff and volunteers about children's rights, including the 4 guiding principles in the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#).

### **Use sensitivity and build trust**

- Provide training to staff and volunteers to be attuned to [signs of harm](#) and risk factors in students.
- Remind staff and volunteers to recognise that students might communicate in different ways, including through verbal and non-verbal cues, play, body language, facial expressions, drawings or behaviours.
- Follow through on your commitments – show students that the leadership team and staff are trustworthy and take their worries or concerns seriously.

### **Resources**

- [Amplify – Empowering students through voice, agency and leadership \(PDF, 2.6MB\)](#)
- [Bullying Prevention Policy](#)
- [Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights – Students Policy](#)
- [Information Sharing and Family Violence Reforms Contextualised Guidance and Toolkit](#)
- [Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships](#)
- [Safe Schools](#)
- [Sexuality and Consent Education](#)
- [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#)

- [Student representatives on school council](#)
- [Transition – Early Childhood to School Policy](#)
- [Transition-Year 6–7 Policy](#)

## **Support**

For further help to meet Child Safe Standard 3 and Ministerial Order 1359, contact [child.safe.schools@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:child.safe.schools@education.vic.gov.au).