



Bendigo Special Developmental School

Student Safety Policy

Ratified by School Council

15 August 2016

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1. Overview

Bendigo Special Developmental School will work to ensure a safe and secure environment is provided for all students, staff, school community and visitors to the school. We will do this by ensuring the highest standards in care and supervision, having a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and by clear and sound staff practices that place safety at the heart of all decisions. The Principal is responsible for embedding practices to create a culture of child safety.

In making a safe environment for all, we aim to provide a welcoming community which values learning through shared responsibility and to develop a caring environment in which we nurture confident, creative and resilient individuals who aspire to be the best they can.

Bendigo SDS is a school where the social, emotional, educational and physical needs including sensory and personal care needs of all students are of the utmost importance. It is a school that encourages respect for diversity in ability as well as cultural, ethnic and social backgrounds and is based on the notion that we will continually work towards providing for the needs of all students in our community.

Our purpose is to inspire children to achieve their full potential by developing:

- A culture of learning based on positive relationships between students, staff, parents and the wider community.
- A core of knowledge of academic and social competencies based on our key values of respectful, honest, encouraging and behaviours.
- Responsibility for being self-motivated lifelong learners.
- A challenging curriculum appropriate to the needs of all students.
- A positive, caring, stimulating and happy learning environment, which fosters high standards of achievement and behaviour.
- High expectations for all students to achieve their personal best socially, academically, physically and emotionally.

Any form of Corporal punishment is not used at Bendigo Special Developmental School.

Bendigo SDS believes that all school community members have a valued part to play in formalising the expectations and values of the school.

The welfare and safety of students, staff and parents and wider school community is an underlying consideration in everything that is done. Our school believes that people are the most important resource and that everyone has something to offer.

This policy will be communicated to all families in the school community by the following means

- Being published on our school website
- Being available in hardcopy at the front office
- Being provided in hardcopy to a parent should they wish to have a copy
- Having links to the policy periodically published on our social media communication including the school app

This policy will be due for review in 2017.

2. Duty of Care

2.1 Legal background

“Duty of care” is the term used to describe the legal duties owed by staff towards students. It is an element of the tort of negligence. In broad terms, the law of negligence provides that if a person suffers injury as the result of the negligence of another, they should be compensated for the loss and damage which arises from the negligent act or omission.

In order to successfully bring a claim in negligence for compensation for an injury, a person must establish, on the balance of probabilities, that:

- a duty of care was owed to the person harmed at the time of the injury
- the risk of injury was foreseeable
- the likelihood of the injury occurring was more than insignificant
- there was a breach of the duty of care or a failure to observe a reasonable standard of care
- this breach or failure was a cause of the injury.

The fact that a duty of care exists does not of itself mean that a school will be liable for an injury sustained by a student. In order for the student to succeed in a negligence claim, all of these elements must be established.

2.2 Standard of care required by staff

All staff at Bendigo SDS are accountable to a high standard of care in relation to students. The duty requires that all staff take all reasonable steps to reduce risk, including the:

- provision of suitable and safe premises
- provision of an adequate system of supervision
- implementation of strategies to prevent bullying
- ensuring that medical assistance is provided to a sick or injured student.

The duty is *non-delegable*, meaning that it cannot be assigned to another party.

Whenever a teacher-student relationship exists, teachers have a special duty of care. This has been expressed as: “a teacher is to take such measures as are reasonable in the circumstances to protect a student under the teacher’s charge from risks of injury that the teacher should reasonably have foreseen.” (*Richards v State of Victoria*).

The nature and extent of the duty will vary according to the circumstances. For example, the standard of care required will be higher when taking a group of primary student’s for swimming lessons than when teaching in the Later Years.

The important issue in all cases that Bendigo SDS will take into account will be what precautions the school could reasonably be expected to have taken to prevent the injury from occurring. This will involve consideration of the following factors:

- the probability that the harm would occur if care were not taken
- the likely seriousness of the harm
- the burden of taking precautions to avoid the risk of harm
- the social utility of the activity that creates the risk of harm.

3. Staff Employment

3.1 Guiding Principles

As part of the process for maintaining high standards of conduct and professionalism in the workplace, at Bendigo SDS the Principal will ensure that the Department's procedures for criminal record checks are implemented.

Verification of a satisfactory criminal record is achieved by ensuring the employment of new employees and engagement of volunteers proceeds in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development policy (for Victorian Public Servants), and legislative obligations pursuant to the Working with Children Act 2005 (for school based non-teaching employees and volunteers), and to the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 Part 2.6 Victorian Institute of Teaching (for principals and teachers).

The Department has developed procedures for the conduct of criminal records checks for all school based and non-school based employees, including arrangements that allow for the acceptance of the criminal records check conducted by the Victorian Institute of Teaching and Working with Children Checks to meet the Department's pre-employment suitability for employment requirements.

These procedures apply to:

- persons employed under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- persons employed under the Public Administration Act 2004
- volunteers
- casual employees including casual relief teachers
- student teachers and interns
- contractors
- home-stay families

3.2 VIT Registration

At Bendigo SDS, each year, upon renewal of their VIT (Victorian Institute of Teaching) registration, all teachers will provide a copy of their renewed registration card to the Administration Team of the school. This copy is to be kept on the teacher's personal file and a register of all VIT registrations is to be kept by the Administrative Team in the Office.

3.3 Working With Children's Check (WWC Check)

At Bendigo SDS all Education Support staff, CRTs, volunteers and contractors will provide a copy of their renewed registration card to the Administration Team of the school. This copy is to be kept on file and a register of all WWC Checks are to be kept by the Administrative Team in the Office.

3.4 Reference Check

Pursuant to the changes in the Working with Children Act 2005 effective as of 26 October 2014, Bendigo SDS understands that having a WWC Check does not assess a person's suitability to work with children as this is the role of the school. As such, Bendigo SDS will undertake

reference checks for all staff and volunteers to determine their suitability to work with the students at Bendigo SDS.

3.5 Advertising positions

All advertised positions at Bendigo SDS will include the following requirement.

‘Applicants must have a strong commitment to and understanding of student safety and be aware of their duty of care responsibilities to all students. They must also have a current police check/Working with Children Check and be deemed suitable, by reference, to work with students at Bendigo SDS.’

4. On Site supervision

4.1 Guiding Principles

At Bendigo SDS, the supervision rates will be determined by the Leadership Team and ultimately the Principal.

To ensure appropriate and effective levels of supervision, planning will take into account:

- the experience, qualifications and skills of staff (including teachers, ES, volunteers, instructors, etc)
- the age, maturity, individual needs and characteristics and gender of students
- the ability and experience of the students
- the size of the group
- the activities to be undertaken

4.2 Supervision responsibilities before and after school

This table identifies supervision responsibilities across all DET schools and will be implemented at Bendigo SDS.

Who	Are responsible for
Parents/ guardians	the care and supervision of students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • travelling to and from school • outside the times of school supervision before and after school
Principal	ensuring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • school supervision is provided for a minimum of 10 minutes before and after school • parents/guardians are regularly informed about supervision available before and after school • sufficient teachers are available to supervise the departure of students at the end of the school day • teachers supervising departures are not called away for other duties without alternate supervision being arranged

	<p>Note: More supervision may be required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• before or after school, based on local circumstances• for primary students, particularly students in their first few years of schooling
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4.3 Supervision responsibilities

At Bendigo SDS, a teacher will oversee the supervision of students at all times. This means that they may authorise an Education Support member to supervise a small number of students for a specific period of time, under the direction of the teacher.

Student teachers and volunteers are at no stage to supervise students.

5. Parent and Caregiver Interaction

5.1 Guiding Principles

Bendigo SDS welcomes parent and care giver involvement in our school and recognise the essential partnership that parents and caregivers play in the education of the each student. We welcome and encourage parent involvement at our school whilst recognising the need to ensure that student safety is maintained during interaction with other student's families.

5.2 Signing in During School Hours

All visitors to the school must sign in at the office, including parents and caregivers. During school hours, parents and caregivers are not to go straight to their child's class and are to seek assistance at the office first. Anyone who is walking around the school and does not have a visitor's pass on will be challenged by staff and asked to go to the office or speak to the Principal.

5.3 Student Collection

At Bendigo SDS, a record is maintained by the office that identifies who students will be dismissed to at the end of each school day. Students can be

- escorted to the bus to then transfer supervision to the bus chaperone
- collected by their parents or caregivers
- collected by a person nominated by their parents or caregivers i.e taxi

Parents and caregivers must notify the school, either by written communication or phone call, if there is to be a change in the collection circumstance for a student. If a person who has been nominated to collect a student is not known to school staff, they will be asked to produce some form of identification such as a driver's license, to confirm their identity.

5.4 Parent and Caregiver Helpers

Parents and care giver who wish to act as volunteers in Bendigo SDS are required to have a WWC and police check. Consideration will also be given to their skills and suitability as to the activities that they support the students with.

6. Excursions and Camps

6.1 Guiding Principles

At Bendigo SDS, excursions and camps are considered an important aspect of the curriculum and all excursions and camp planning will be undertaken so as to ensure all students are able to participate.

All excursions and camps must be approved at School Council, and this to be documented on school council minutes. No approval will be given for excursions or camps without the completion of the local excursion planner and camp planner as found in Appendix A and B of this policy.

The excursion planning and approval process should take into account the following considerations:

- the educational purpose of the excursion and its contribution to the curriculum
- maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process
- venue selection:
 - the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion
- safety, emergency and risk management:
 - assessment of excursion risks
 - procedures in the event of an emergency
 - arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions)
 - completion of an online notification of school activity form three weeks prior to the activity
 - first aid requirements
 - any other measures necessary for student and staff safety and welfare.
- staffing and supervision:
 - there are sufficient staff to provide appropriate and effective supervision
 - the experience, qualifications and skills of each staff member (including volunteers, instructors, etc) will allow them to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities (as applicable)
 - there are appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and students involved.
- informed consent from parents or carers
- adequate student and staff medical information
- student preparation and behaviour
- requirements for any adventure activities
- transportation requirements, noting that:
 - public transport should be used if practicable, where transport authorities should be consulted as to appropriate travel times and at least a fortnight's notice of travel provided
 - excursions that run late, failing to meet times agreed to with private bus operators, are likely to incur significant costs
 - information on student concession cards if available
- communication requirements
- that staff and students have appropriate clothing and personal equipment
- that group or technical equipment is in good condition and suitable for the activities undertaken

- that continuous instruction is provided for students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying the excursion
- any information which has been provided by specialists in the activities proposed
- requirements for interstate or overseas excursions
- that the excursion meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures.

6.2 Written consent

Bendigo SDS will obtain written consent (Indemnity form) from parents or caregivers for the school to take the student on local one day excursions. This written consent will be sought when the child first enrolls in the school and will be current for the duration of their enrolment. Parents and care givers, can, however, withdraw their consent or have the student in its care after normal school hours on an overnight excursion.

This written consent will:

- obtain parent or caregiver authorisation:
 - for the financial costs of the excursion
 - for any adventure activities that may be undertaken during the excursion
 - for the return of the student to school if the staff deem it necessary
 - that if needed the school can consent to emergency medical treatment
- enable the parent or caregiver to alert the school to any medical conditions or allergies.

6.3 Requirements for informed consent

Bendigo SDS will:

- give parents or caregivers, who are to sign consent forms, sufficient information about the excursion to enable them to make an informed decision
- tell the parent or carer the
 - nature of the proposed activity
 - degree of supervision
 - risks involved
- keep the consent forms at the school
- ensure that the teacher in charge of the excursion takes a copy of each consent form on the excursion, for excursions requiring school council approval.

6.4 Student Medical Information

As part of the excursion or camp planning, a confidential medical information form:

- must be completed by parents or carers before each approved excursion
- provide parents or carers with the opportunity to vary any information previously given to the school.

Bendigo SDS will:

- ensure that the teacher-in-charge takes the medical information forms on the excursion
- ensure these forms are available to other excursion staff in emergency situations
- keep copies of the forms at the school.

6.5 Excursion staff

Excursion staff must be approved by the Principal and may include:

- teachers employed by the Department or School Council
- other adults on a volunteer or paid basis such as:
 - parents or carers
 - education support class officers
 - community members
 - trainee teachers
 - campsite staff
 - specialist instructors for excursion activities.

Other school students who may attend, for example, students on work experience, may not be used as excursion staff.

Excursion staff who will provide supervision of students and who are not registered teachers must have a Working with Children check.

Where approved excursion staff who are not teachers employed by the Department or School Council are in attendance they can be included in the staff-student ratio:

- for the duration of a specific activity for which they have a designated supervisory responsibility; or
- for the overall staff-student for the program, where they are on duty and available on the same basis as other staff (usually a 24 hour basis).

In these instances, specific roles and responsibilities of each staff member (teachers, instructors, campsite staff, volunteers, etc) must be clarified and understood by all staff and students prior to the commencement of the excursion.

6.6 Adventure Activities

An adventure activity is an activity that involves greater than normal risk which may include:

- travel into a relatively undeveloped area of the country in which vehicle contact is difficult and/or uncertain
- confrontation with natural environmental challenges requiring greater reliance upon personal resources than would normally be required in day-to-day life
- less than normal contact by person or by telephone, with medical and other public services available in normal day-to-day life
- exposure to the natural elements with less than the normal physical protection provided in day-to-day life
- activities listed in the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors such as:
 - abseiling
 - artificial climbing and abseiling walls
 - bush walking
 - canoeing/kayaking
 - challenge ropes courses
 - cross country skiing
 - cycling

- downhill skiing and snowboarding
- horse riding
- overnight camping
- rafting
- recreational swimming
- rock climbing
- sailing
- scuba diving
- sea kayaking
- snorkelling
- surfing
- water skiing
- windsurfing.
- orienteering

6.7 Requirements for adventure activities

Bendigo SDS staff planning a camp or excursion involving and adventure activity should consult the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors for the specific activity on the DET SPAG (School Policy & Advisory Guide) website and incorporate these requirements into the planning documents in appendix A and B of this document. Information provided by community groups and organisations that specialise in the relevant adventure activities should also be included in the planning documents.

All adventure activities:

- are to be treated as excursions regardless of whether they occur on school grounds or not
- require the approval of the Principal and the completion of the local excursion and/or camp planner as per appendix A and B
- must also be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors, which includes a planning and risk management process as well as specific activity guidelines.

6.8 Flying foxes

Flying Foxes may be erected at school camps provided that:

- safety precautions are taken in its construction and maintenance
- it can be locked or have the carriage removed when not in use
- all students are carefully briefed on its use and associated dangers
- staff supervise all use
- a safety harness is always used.

6.9 Safety, Emergency and Risk Management

The emergency management planning in at Bendigo SDS extends to and incorporates school excursions.

All excursion staff and where appropriate, students, must be familiar with emergency procedures for each excursion as per the Emergency Management Plan.

Planning must cover arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions).

When staying at a residential campsite emergency procedures should be explained as soon as practicable after arrival and a trial evacuation exercise should be carried out immediately to ensure that procedures are appropriate and staff and students are familiar with them.

6.10 Communications

Parents or carers should be advised of the telephone numbers (both during and outside school hours) for the designated school contact person in the event of an emergency.

Arrangements for communicating with parents in the event of an emergency, cancellation or recall of the excursion must be made.

Consent forms must remain at the school with the designated school contact person and copies of each form must be taken on the excursion by the teacher in charge.

In the event of an emergency, accident or injury:

- staff on the excursion should:
 - take emergency action
 - immediately notify the school principal.
- the Principal should make arrangements for the Department's Security Services Unit to be telephoned on 9589 6266.

6.11 Fire danger or ban

Principals may need to cancel excursions at short notice on days of extreme fire danger or total fire ban. On such days, the Security Services Unit liaises with fire authorities to obtain up to date information for communication to schools that may be affected by wildfire, including schools who may have students attending camps or other venues in areas affected by wildfire. If an excursion is not cancelled, special fire safety precautions will be required.

When required, Bendigo SDS staff and students must follow the Department's emergency management (bushfires) procedures for off-site activities for all excursions.

6.12 First aid

At least one staff member responsible for each group of students must have a first aid qualification.

Staff must also have a first aid kit appropriate to the excursion location and activities undertaken.

6.13 Residential campsites

Bendigo SDS will only use residential campsites for overnight camping that are accredited campsites, to ensure these venues meet minimum criteria regarding safety and suitability.

The Department recognises three accreditation providers:

- Australian Camps Association's Campsite and Outdoor Activity Provider program see: [ACA Accredited Camps](#)
- Australian Tourism Accreditation Program (ATAP) see: [ATAP Accredited Businesses](#) (select Accredited Camp and Adventure Activity Provider)
- National Accommodation, Recreation and Tourism Accreditation (NARTA) program see: [NARTA Accredited Camps](#)

Other venues that may be included in an excursion include:

- overnight campsites and venues that only provide accommodation such as caravan parks, hotels/motels or ski lodges
- Victorian government residential schools (for example: Rubicon Outdoor Centre or Bogong Outdoor Education Centre)
- interstate camps or excursions
- overseas venues.

6.14 Inspection on arrival

The teacher-in-charge must check the excursion venue on arrival to assess apparent dangers and hazards and prepare contingency plans if required.

7. Mandatory Reporting.

7.1 Guiding Principles

Bendigo SDS 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 it is mandated by law that staff must take immediate action.

In the case of a child who may be in need of protection or therapeutic treatment, or where there are significant concerns about the wellbeing of a child, teachers can discharge this duty of care by reporting their concerns. Education Support Staff can notify their teacher or a member of the school leadership of their concerns.

A professional development session will be conducted annually to ensure staff are trained to understand

- a. individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse;
- b. child abuse risks in the school environment; and
- c. the school's current child safety policy

7.2 Types of child abuse and indicators of harm

Child abuse can have a significant effect on a child's physical or emotional health, development and wellbeing. The younger a child the more vulnerable he or she is and the more serious the consequences are likely to be.

Types of child abuse include:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse
- neglect
- medical neglect
- family violence.

Other reports to DHHS Child Protection may be needed for:

- risk-taking behavior
- female genital mutilation
- an unborn child
- a child or young person exhibiting sexually-abusive behaviors.

There are many indicators of child abuse and neglect. The presence of a single indicator, or even several indicators, does not prove that abuse or neglect has occurred. However, the repeated occurrence of an indicator, or the occurrence of several indicators together, should alert teachers to the possibility of child abuse and neglect.

7.3 Legal Obligations

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 school staff who believe on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of:

- protection are encouraged to report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.
- therapeutic treatment are encouraged to report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection.

If staff have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child or young person they are encouraged to report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection or Child FIRST.

In cases where staff have made a mandatory report or have concerns about a child or young person, they should discuss their concerns with the principal or a member of the school leadership team.. In doing so, this does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

Legal obligations:

Types 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 	<p>DHHS Child Protection</p>

<p><i>Child in need of protection</i></p> <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. <p>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.</p>	<p>Any person</p>	<p>DHHS Child Protection Victoria Police</p>
<p><i>Child in need of therapeutic treatment</i></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>Any person</p>	
<p><i>Significant concerns about wellbeing of a child</i></p> <p>Any person may make a report if they have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child.</p>	<p>Any person</p>	<p>DHHS Child Protection Child FIRST</p>

Duty of care:

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 it is important to take immediate action.

In the case of a child who may be in need of protection or therapeutic treatment, or where there are significant concerns about the wellbeing of a child, school staff can discharge this duty of care by taking action which includes the following:

- Reporting their concerns to the DHHS Child Protection or another appropriate agency (as identified above)
- Notifying the Principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.

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 of 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 judgment 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.

Staff Training:

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

Failure to report:

A failure by mandated professionals and staff members to report to 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.

Types of child abuse and indicators of harm:

Child abuse can have a significant effect on a child's physical or emotional health, development and wellbeing. The younger a child the more vulnerable he/she is and the more serious the consequences are likely to be.

Types of child abuse include:

- physical abuse
- sexual abuse
- emotional abuse

- neglect
- medical neglect
- family violence

Other reports to DHHS Child Protection may be needed for:

- risk-taking behaviour
- female genital mutilation
- unborn child
- child or young person exhibiting sexually-abusive behaviours.

There are many indicators of child abuse and neglect. The presence of a single indicator, or even several indicators, does not prove that abuse or neglect has occurred. However, the repeated occurrence of an indicator, or the occurrence of several indicators together, should alert teachers to the possibility of child abuse and neglect.

Note: For full definitions for all of the types of child abuse and a comprehensive list of the indicators of harm, see: *Appendix 2. Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people* within- [Department resources](#).

7.5 Making a report

This table describes how to make a mandatory report.

Step	Description
1	<p>School staff should keep comprehensive notes that are dated and include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the concerns (e.g. physical injuries, student behaviour) • Source of those concerns (e.g. observation, report from child or another person) • Actions taken as a result of the concerns (e.g. consultation with principal, report to DHHS Child Protection etc).
2	<p>School staff should discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with the principal or a member of the school leadership team. The individual staff member should then make their own assessment about whether they must or may make a report about the child or young person.</p>
3	<p>School staff should gather the relevant information necessary to make the report. This should include the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full name, date of birth, and residential address of the child or young person • Details of the concerns and the reasons for those concerns • The individual staff member's involvement with the child and young person • Details of any other agencies who may be involved with the child or young person
4	<p>Make a report to the relevant agency.</p>

5	<p>Make a written record of the report which includes the following information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The date and time of the report and a summary of what was reported • The name and position of: the person who made the report the person who received the report.
6	<p>Notify relevant school staff and/or Departmental staff of the report.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School staff should advise the principal or a member of the leadership team if they have made a report. • 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. • In the case of Koorie students, the principal must notify the Regional Office to ensure that the regional Koorie support officer can arrange appropriate support for the student.
7	<p>Notify the Victoria Police if there is concern that a criminal offence may have been committed.</p>

7.6 Potential consequences of making a report

This table describes the potential consequences of making a report.

Potential consequence	Description
Confidentiality	<p>The identity of a reporter must remain confidential unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the reporter chooses to inform the child, young person or parent of the report. • the reporter consents in writing to their identity being disclosed. • a Court or Tribunal decides that it 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 provide evidence.
Professional Protection	<p>If a report is made in good faith:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
Interviews	<p>DHHS Child Protection and/or Victoria Police may conduct interviews of children and young people at the school without the parent's knowledge or consent.</p> <p>Interviewing children and young people at school should only occur in exceptional circumstances and if it is in the best interests of the child to</p>

	<p>proceed in this manner.</p> <p>DHHS Child Protection and/or Victoria Police will notify the principal or a member of the leadership team of their intention to interview the child or young person on the school premises.</p> <p>When DHHS Child Protection practitioners/Victoria Police officers come to the school premises, the principal or a member of the leadership team should request to see identification before permitting them to have access to the child or young person.</p> <p>When a child or young person is being interviewed by DHHS Child Protection and/or Victoria Police, school staff must arrange to have a supportive adult present with the child or young person.</p>
<p>Support for the child or young person</p>	<p>The roles and responsibilities of staff members in supporting children who are involved with DHHS Child Protection may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as a support person for the child or young person. • Attending DHHS Child Protection case planning meetings. • Observing and monitoring the child’s behaviour. • Liaising with professionals.
<p>Requests for Information</p>	<p>DHHS Child Protection and/or Child FIRST and/or Victoria Police may request information about the child or family for the purpose of investigating a report and assessing the risk to the child or young person.</p> <p>In certain circumstances, DHHS Child Protection can also direct school staff and Department staff to provide information or documents about the protection or development of the child. Such directions should be in writing and only be made by authorised persons within DHHS Child Protection</p>
<p>Witness Summons</p>	<p>If DHHS Child Protection makes a Protection Application in the Children’s Court of Victoria, any party to the application may issue a Witness Summons to produce documents and/or to give evidence in the proceedings</p>

8. Critical Incidents

8.1 Guiding Principles

It is important that all staff have a consistent understanding of how to respond to a critical incident. This consistency ensures that appropriate actions are taken to ensure that both students and staff are kept safe.

A critical incident is defined as an occurrence that is sudden, urgent, and usually unexpected, or an occasion requiring immediate action. This includes a behaviour that is of such intensity, frequency, or duration that the physical safety of the student or others is likely to be placed in serious jeopardy.

8.2 Procedure in the event of a critical incident

In the event of a critical incident, intervening staff are directed to undertake the following procedure:

1. Call 000 immediately to report any incident threatening life or property, emergency services on this number are:
 - police for crime, injury that may not be accidental or assault
 - ambulance for injury and medical assistance.
 - fire brigade for fires and incidents involving hazardous and dangerous materials (report all fires, regardless of state and size, even if extinguished).
2. Contact a member of the Leadership Team to respond and coordinate response.
3. Call appropriate code if necessary.
4. DO NOT contact local emergency services directly. To do so increases response times as these calls are redirected to 000 wasting valuable time in an emergency.
5. Notify the Security Services Unit after contacting 000, telephone: (03) 9589-6266.
6. Arrange for contact of parents / carers of children involved describing briefly reason they need to attend.

The following table outlines the basic defusing strategies that should be undertaken in the event of an extreme behaviour incident (if available, follow Student Safety Plan)

Basic defusing strategies	Action by staff members
Avoid escalating the problem behaviour	Avoid the following behaviours <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shouting at students • Cornering the student • Moving into the student’s space • Touching or grabbing the student • Sudden responses • Sarcasm • Becoming defensive • Communicating anger and frustration through body language
Maintain calmness, respect and detachment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model the behaviour you want students to adopt • Stay calm and controlled • Use a serious measured tone • Choose your language carefully • Avoid humiliating the student • Be matter of fact and avoid responding emotionally
Approach the student in a non-threatening manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move slowly and deliberately toward the problem situation • Speak privately to the student/s where possible • Speak calmly and respectfully • Minimise body language • Keep a reasonable distance • Establish eye level position

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be brief, stay with the agenda • Acknowledge cooperation • Withdraw if the situation escalates
Follow through	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the student starts displaying the appropriate behaviour briefly acknowledge their choice and re-direct other students' attention towards their usual work/activity. • If the student continues with the problem behaviour then remind them of the expected school behaviour and identify consequences of continued unacceptable behaviour
Debrief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help the student to identify the sequence of events that led to the unacceptable behaviour • Pinpoint decision moments during the sequence of events • Evaluate decisions made • Identify acceptable decision options for future situations

8.3 Physical Intervention

Appropriate physical intervention may be used to ensure that Bendigo SDS's duty of care to protect students and staff from foreseeable risks of injury is met. The use of physical intervention is only considered appropriate where the immediate safety of others is threatened and the strategy is used to prevent injury. Physical intervention, if not used in accordance with these guidelines, may breach the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006* for the student involved.

Staff may make legitimate use of physical intervention if all non-physical interventions have been exhausted and a student is:

- physically assaulting another student or staff member
- posing an immediate danger to themselves or to others.

No obligation exists for staff to implement this strategy despite the existence of circumstances that would make it appropriate and legitimate. Staff members' decisions on this matter are supported by the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*.

Physical intervention can involve

- coming between students
- blocking a student's path
- leading a student by the hand/arm
- shepherding a student by placing a hand in the centre of the upper back
- removing potentially dangerous objects and,
- in extreme situations, using more forceful restraint.

It is important that all staff understand:

- physical intervention cannot be used as a form of punishment

- physical intervention must not be used when a less severe response can effectively resolve the situation
- the underlying function of the behaviour for the student

Physical intervention is not to be used as a response to:

- property destruction
- school disruption
- refusal to comply
- verbal threats
- a need to maintain good order
- leaving a classroom or the school, unless student safety is clearly threatened.

Any physical intervention made must:

- be reasonable in the particular circumstances,
- be in proportion to the circumstances of the incident
- always be the minimum force needed to achieve the desired result, and
- take into account the age, stature, disability, understanding and gender of the student.

8.4 Record keeping

Each instance involving the use of physical intervention must be formally documented. The incident must be logged onto the STAR.

8.5 Debriefing

Responding to and being involved in a critical incident or an extreme behaviour incident with a student can be unsettling for staff and students alike. Debriefing the situation is recognised as being a beneficial process in reducing any ill effects from the extreme behaviour incident. The goals of debriefing are to:

- Reverse or minimise the negative effects of the extreme behaviour incident
- Identify lessons learnt from the experience
- Prevent the future use of physical intervention
- Address any organisational issues and make appropriate changes

Staff members are able to access the following in school supports, if they feel concerned about an extreme behaviour incident:

- Discussion(s) with the Principal
- Discussion(s) with the Assistant Principal
- Discussion(s) with the Unit Co-ordinator
- Discussion(s) in the Teaching and Learning Team, which can provide mutual support and build effective strategies within the school.
- Discussion(s) with the School Councillor

Additionally, external supports may be accessed, such as a private councillor, DET SSSO support staff or agencies such as Headspace and Standby.

It may also be possible for staff members affected to access professional support, however, it is additionally important for school staff to link into their personal support systems. These can be:

- Family members: Sustaining affection, care and positive two-way bond in family life contributes in major ways to the wellbeing of all family members.
- Friends: Sharing your concerns and having open communication, trust and connection with friends can provide further support.
- Peers: Respect and sharing mutual concerns with colleagues can strengthen personal resilience

9. Cyber Safety

9.1 Guiding Principles

Bendigo SDS believes that all students need to use digital technologies as an integral component of their learning as this will form essential skills for their engagement in society. A key component of the use of digital technologies is learning how to use the programs safely and responsibly.

9.2 Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It includes

- Teasing and being made fun of
- Spreading of rumours online
- Sending unwanted messages
- Defamation

Cyber bullying can happen to anyone and the bully can act anonymously if they want. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text or images (photos, drawings)

It is important for Bendigo SDS to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from cyber bullying and/or harassment under the *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act 1984* and the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act 2010*.

The effects of harassment or bullying including cyber bullying include

- poor health – anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced academic performance
- social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

Extreme forms of harassment, including sexual harassment and cyber bullying can lead to criminal prosecution.

If a staff member or student feels that they are being harassed or bullied, they should:

- Tell the person harassing or bullying them that they don't like what they are doing and they want them to stop.
- Discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher/coordinator that they feel comfortable with.

If they feel the matter has not been resolved after taking these steps, then the staff member or student can make an appointment to discuss it with the Principal or Assistant Principal. Under the legislation, all concerns will be taken seriously and all complaints will be treated confidentially.

Staff and students at Bendigo SDS will also be expected to

- upon becoming aware of a cyber-bullying incident towards a person, tell the person being targeted that they are aware of the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person
- let the person who is carrying out an incidence of cyber-bullying know that their behaviour is unacceptable
- not be a 'bystander' because those who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

To continually build a culture of high expectations in responding to cyber bullying, the following undertakings will be carried out for staff:

- Ongoing professional development in the area of cyber bullying both in the workplace and in the student body
- Online DET training regarding bullying and harassment
- An open door policy with leadership
- Professional Development in resources available to teach and support students about cyber bullying
- Ongoing discussions in Teaching and Learning Teams

Students will undertake the following educational programs:

- Explicit instruction on definitions and examples of cyber bullying
- Circle Time classroom activities
- Whole school connectedness activities
- Buddy Programs
- Explicit Social Skills Programs
- Explicit Cyber Bullying Programs

Refer to the following policies:

- Step-by-Step Guide: Removing Inappropriate Content from Websites or Social Media Sites
- Step-by-Step Guide: Online Incidents of Concern Affecting DEECD Employees
- Step-by-Step Guide: Online Incidents of Inappropriate Behaviour Affecting Students

9.3 Social Media

Bendigo SDS staff should be aware that the DET provide a practical online guide to support Department employees in schools understand and meet employee obligations and recommended standards of behaviors and guidelines when using social media tools for personal or professional purposes.

This resource is called *Using Social Media: Guide for DET Employees in Schools* and is available on the DET website. This table lists the key components of the using Social Media Guide.

Item	Description
Definition of social media	<p>Provides definitions of social media including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn, Myspace) • Video and photo sharing web sites (e.g. Flickr, YouTube) • Blogs, including corporate blogs and personal blogs • Micro-blogs (e.g. Twitter, Snapchat, Instagram) • Forums, discussion boards and groups (e.g. Google groups, Whirlpool) • Wikis (e.g. Wikipedia) • Vod and podcasts • Video conferences and web conferences • e-mail and instant messaging. <p>Social media also includes all other emerging electronic/digital communication applications.</p>
Scope	<p>This <i>Guide</i> applies to all Department employees who work in an educational setting. It also includes all contractors and volunteers engaged by the Department, school councils, schools, regional offices or district offices.</p>
Policies, Instruments and Guidelines	<p>Provides extracts from the policies, instruments and guidelines below that are relevant to Department employees in education settings when using social media tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Public Administrations Act 2004 (Vic)</i> and the VPS Code of Conduct made under that Act, which applies to the public sector • Part 2.4 of the <i>Education Training and Reform Act 2006</i> and any relevant Ministerial Order made under that Act which applies to the teaching service • <i>Information Privacy Act 2000</i> • Acceptable Use Policy for the Department's ICT Resources • Professional Codes of Conduct.
Appropriate Use Case Studies	<p>Provides real-life case studies demonstrating social media tools being used appropriately with a clear educational context.</p>
Inappropriate Use Case Studies	<p>Provides real-life case studies demonstrating social media tools being used inappropriately. These case studies are designed to engage Department employees in schools, both as individuals and as a group, in furthering their learning by considering the implications of using social media.</p>
Step-by-step Guides	<p>Provide practical steps and actions that will further support Department employees in educational settings to protect, respond to or manage an online incident of concern:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Step-by-step Guide for Responding to Online Incidents of Inappropriate Behaviour by Students 2. Step-by-step Guide for Removing Inappropriate Content from a web site, Facebook or other Social Media Site 3. Step-by-step Guide for DET Employees to Access Legal and

	Wellbeing Support for Online Incidents of Concern.
Misuse and legal consequences	Recognising the seriousness of misusing social media tools, this section describes what misuse may involve and the potential legal consequences for such misuse.
Things to consider when setting up a social media profile	Provides basic information about the functionality and related considerations that Department employees in schools should familiarise themselves with. Features include privacy options, site terms and conditions, sharing images, digital content and subscribing to groups.

[Appendix A:](#)

Camps and Excursions - Planning and Approvals

When undertaking excursion planning, principals, teachers, school councillors and others involved in school excursions (including camps and adventure activities), must anticipate the possibility of litigation following an incident or injury. They must be prepared for a detailed examination of their planning, actions and the curriculum role of any activity.

The excursion planning and approval process should take into account the following considerations:

- the educational purpose of the excursion and its contribution to the curriculum
- maintenance of full records, including documentation of the planning process
- venue selection



planningquestions.doc

- the suitability of the environment and/or venue for the excursion

Safety, emergency and risk management:

- assessment of excursion risks
- procedures in the event of an emergency
- arrangements if the excursion needs to be cancelled or recalled (for example, due to forecast severe weather conditions)
- completion of an online notification of school activity form three weeks prior to the activity
- first aid requirements
- any other measures necessary for student and staff safety and welfare.



riskregistertemplate.doc

Staffing and supervision:

- there are sufficient staff to provide appropriate and effective supervision
- the experience, qualifications and skills of each staff member (including volunteers, instructors, etc) will allow them to provide effective supervision in general and for planned activities (as applicable)
- there are appropriate levels of supervision in view of the activities undertaken and students involved

- informed consent from parents or carers
- adequate student and staff medical information

Student preparation and behaviour requirements for any adventure activities

Transportation requirements, noting that:

- public transport should be used if practicable, where transport authorities should be consulted as to appropriate travel times and at least a fortnight’s notice of travel provided
- excursions that run late, failing to meet times agreed to with private bus operators, are likely to incur significant costs
- information on student concession cards is available at: [Metlink](#)

Communication requirements

- that staff and students have appropriate clothing and personal equipment
- that group or technical equipment is in good condition and suitable for the activities undertaken
- that continuous instruction is provided for students remaining at the school during the absence of staff accompanying the excursion
- any information which has been provided by specialists in the activities proposed
- requirements for interstate or overseas excursions that the excursion meets the requirements of any school-level policy or procedures.

Who approves the excursion?

Excursion type	Then it must be approved by
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • overnight excursions • camps • interstate and international visits • excursions requiring sea or air travel • excursions involving weekends or vacations • adventure activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the School Council, or • both school councils when it is a joint activity involving another school and • the Safety Guidelines for Education Outdoors must be followed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • day excursions (other than those referred to above that must be approved by the school council). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Principal, or both principals when it is a joint activity involving another school.



approvalform.doc



teacherchecklist.doc



principalchecklist.doc



schoolcouncilchecklist.doc

Refer to Camp/Excursion folder for exemplar

Once approved by School C-/
ouncil

- copy and distribute to parents/carers 'Parent Consent' and 'Confidential Medical+ Information' Forms.



Parent Consent
form.doc



Medical Information
form.doc

Three weeks prior to the excursion teachers must also submit ONLINE a Notification of School Activity form (secret website – DET user name PIN and password required) The website address is: <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/forms/school/sal/enteractivity.asp>

Review

Date implemented	August 2016
Author	Rosie Critchley
Approved By	Consultative, School Council
Approval Authority (signature & date)	
Date reviewed	August 2016
Responsible for Review	Assistant Principal
Review date	August 2017
References	As listed