

CHILD (STUDENT) SAFETY AND WELLBEING BRIEF OVERVIEW

At Hester Hornbrook Academy, student safety is our top priority. This brief overview explains how we keep every student safe, supported and included – at school, online, on excursions, and in any school-related space. It outlines everyone's responsibilities and shows how we meet the Victorian Child Safe Standards.

**SEE HESTER HORN BROOK'S FULL
'CHILD SAFETY POLICY' ON OUR
SCHOOL WEBSITE FOR FULL DETAILS**

Suitable Staff, Volunteers and Contractors Recruitment

Prior to anyone being employed by Hester Hornbrook preferred applicants must complete:

- An Australian Police checks,
 - An international Police checks (where relevant),
 - Provide a copy of their current Victorian Working With Children Checks (WWCC),
 - Provide current Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration (teaching staff), Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) registration (some allied health roles)
 - At minimum provide two professional reference checks,
 - Provide proof of qualifications
 - Provide further identity documentation
- Current staff have to renew VIT registration and complete updated Australian Police Checks and WWCC at required intervals.

Induction and Training

All staff, volunteers and contractors complete:

- Child safety induction
- Annual child safety training
- Ongoing learning related to wellbeing, inclusion, and trauma-informed practice.

Review of Child Safety Practices

We continuously improve by:

- Reviewing this policy at least every two years
- Reviewing risk registers annually
- Analysing incident trends
- Seeking feedback from students, families and staff

Hester Hornbrook Academy Related Policies

- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Mandatory Reporting Procedure
- Complaints Policy
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy
- Student Welfare Policy
- Duty of Care Policy

Child Safety Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct sets clear expectations for staff, volunteers, and contractors about appropriate and safe behaviour with students – both online and in person. This code of conduct is signed annually. See copy of Child Safety Code of Conduct on the school website.

Managing Risks to Child Safety and Wellbeing

Hester Hornbrook manages risks in the physical and online environment to ensure child safety for all students in several different ways. See full Child Safety Policy on the school website for more detail.

Learning and Monitoring

Hester Hornbrook has a Learning and Monitoring Action Plan embedded within the Child Safety Policy that details the key strategies Hester Hornbrook utilises to ensure ongoing learning and monitoring related to Child Safety.

Privacy and Information Sharing

We follow Victorian privacy laws and use information only for legitimate safety, learning and wellbeing purposes.

We adhere to Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS).

Records Management

We keep clear, accurate and secure records of:

- Concerns and incidents
- Reports and actions taken
- Student information and wellbeing notes.

The whole Hester Hornbrook community including (Hester Hornbrook Board, School Leaders, school staff, volunteers, contractors, students and families) have key responsibilities to ensure Child Safety is maintained. See the full policy for details.

For further information or if you have questions speak with allocated classroom team or campus leadership team

As a registered school Hester Hornbrook Academy is required to fulfill [Ministerial Order 1359](#) which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

Victorian 11 Child Safety Standards

- **Standard 1:** Establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
- **Standard 2:** Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in school leadership, governance and culture.
- **Standard 3:** Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- **Standard 4:** Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- **Standard 5:** Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- **Standard 6:** People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- **Standard 7:** Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.
- **Standard 8:** Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- **Standard 9:** Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- **Standard 10:** Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
- **Standard 11:** Policies and procedures document how the school is safe for children and young people.

Student Empowerment

We support students to understand their rights and feel confident raising concerns.

We do this through:

- Our Healing Orientated Program of Education (HOPE) framework. The four pillars of practice of HOPE include: Safe Environment, Student Agency, Positive Relationships and Engagement and Enjoyment.
- Supporting students develop their Personal and Social Capability through formal explicit session and 1:1 support.
- Weekly Health and Wellbeing sessions (including consent, respectful relationships).
- Strong, trusting relationships with staff.
- Clear information about who to talk to and how to make a complaint
- Opportunities for student voice include:
 - Student Leadership Program
 - Goal-setting and Individual Wellbeing and Learning Plans
 - Student surveys

Complaints and Reporting Processes

We encourage staff, students, families and volunteers to speak up.

We follow the below Hester Hornbrook Academy policies all located on the school website (www.hhacademy.vic.edu.au):

- Complaints Policy
- Child Safe and Mandatory Reporting Procedure
- PROTECT Four Critical Actions
- Reportable Conduct Scheme

All concerns are taken seriously and acted on promptly.

If students and families have thoughts on how our Child Safety Policy can be strengthened, please speak with your Head of Campus.

Establishing a Culturally Safe Environment

We are committed to cultural safety for First Nations students through:

- Implementing a Reconciliation Action Plan
- Supporting First Nations community engagement
- Cultural awareness training for staff
- Acknowledging significant days throughout the year
- Commencing all meetings with an Acknowledgement of Country
- Culturally respectful teaching practices

Diversity and Equity

We celebrate diversity and ensure equitable support for:

- First Nations students
- Students from different cultural or religious backgrounds
- Students with disability
- LGBTQIA+ students
- Students impacted by family violence
- Students experiencing trauma
- Young parents, pregnant students
- Students experiencing homelessness

We take a zero-tolerance approach to discrimination, racism, harassment or bullying at Hester Hornbrook.

Family Engagement

We work in partnership with families by:

- Facilitating regular communication (Welcome Back/Progress Meetings, phone calls, termly letters, website and social media)
- Facilitating annual parent surveys
- Ensuring a multidisciplinary team to support families including; Community Liaison Officers, Family Therapeutic Engagement Workers) and Leader of Inclusion and Leader of First Nations Community Engagement.