



## CREATING AND MAINTAINING A STUDENT SAFE ENVIRONMENT

### PURPOSE:

#### Participation and Empowerment of Students.

Students often do not report abuse because they:

- Feel uncomfortable doing so;
- Do not recognise behaviours as abuse or grooming; and
- Do not know who to raise their concerns or make a report to.

Ballarat Grammar recognises that in order to achieve a student safe environment at the School which meets students' intellectual, physical, social, emotional and moral needs, students need to be involved in the creation and maintenance of such an environment. This includes during the school day, but also out of hours activities including the boarding community, camps and extra-curricular activities.

It is our policy that we have simple and accessible processes in place to assist students (including those from diverse cultural backgrounds and those with diverse needs) to develop appropriate knowledge and skills to identify and communicate when they do not feel safe.

This document should be read in conjunction with all of the School's student safety strategies, policies and procedures and not independently.

### DETAIL:

#### Part 1- Creating and Maintaining a Student Safe Environment

1. In accordance with the School's mission below, all those who are engaged in the life of the School are required to ensure the safety of all students at all times. As a School with a diverse population, this includes students with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
2. Our regional Anglican School fosters academic aspiration, trust, opportunity and engagement, resilience, and social and environmental justice within the search for faith and meaning.
3. As an educational community the School recognises that all members of our community are learners and we need to continue to learn and improve our practices and procedures, especially to facilitate and acknowledge our diverse community including students with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

#### Part 2- Our Mission

1. Ballarat Grammar aims to empower its students with:
  - 1.1 An understanding of, and learning from, Christian faith and Christian spirituality;
  - 1.2 Academic confidence and a passion for learning;
  - 1.3 An understanding of the obligations of community, both local and international;
  - 1.4 Social competence, the capacity for leadership and genuine compassion for others
  - 1.5 A desire for involvement in the arts, sports and co-curricular activities; and
  - 1.6 Good physical and emotional health.
2. We aim to provide for staff:
  - 2.1 A safe, supportive and challenging professional environment;
  - 2.2 Strategic professional development and career promotion; and
  - 2.3 Advanced facilities and teaching technologies.





3. We expect of staff:
  - 3.1 The highest professional standards and a commitment to professional growth and;
  - 3.2 Personal and professional conduct which reflects the values of the School.
4. We aim to give parents the assurance that their young people are:
  - 4.1 Being properly valued and protected; and
  - 4.2 Being appropriately challenged and extended.

### Part 3- Our Values

1. *From those to whom much is given will much be required* – Luke 12:48  
In line with its Christian ethos and liberal heritage, the School seeks to promote the following values through all its endeavours:
  - 1.1 Integrity: We act morally and ethically, seeking truth and treating others with consideration and respect;
  - 1.2 Aspiration: We pursue excellence, in learning and in life;
  - 1.3 Courage: We seek justice and the common good, leading with humility and persevering in adversity;
  - 1.4 Compassion: We show kindness and embrace diversity, committing to global awareness and understanding;
  - 1.5 Responsibility: We take responsibility for our actions, serving our communities and acting as stewards of the environment; and
  - 1.6 Hope: We share times of joy and live with hope in life's challenges, ever grateful for the richness of human experience.
2. Student safety comes from strong leadership and direction and is supported and enacted by the Board, Senior Management, our staff and our governing authority. We foster a culture of openness, inclusiveness and awareness. Children and adults know what to do if they observe or are subject to abuse or inappropriate behaviour.
3. All staff and volunteers must consider the safety of all students and recognise the importance of cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the safety of children with a disability.
4. We take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to student safety issues. The safety and wellbeing of students at Ballarat Grammar is of paramount importance when developing activities, policies and management practices.
5. All students have a voice, and a right to be heard. Our community must listen to students and take them seriously, particularly if they are disclosing abuse or concerns for their safety or the safety of other students.
6. All concerns about student safety will be treated by the Student Safeguarding Officers as serious and staff are required to abide by all legal requirements, including reporting suspicions of child abuse to police and/or student safety. *If you believe a student is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.*
7. The School's risk register is used to identify potential risks, and this is updated as a part of an annual review process. Our communication to internal and external members of the community clearly indicate that the School has zero tolerance of child abuse in any form.
8. Student safety is a standing item for discussion at staff meetings in all areas, Committee meetings and of the Board of Directors.





9. Student safety strategies will continue to be developed, refined, taught and implemented as part of our ongoing education program for all members of our School community from students to staff, parents and others and we will continue to ensure all those who engage with our students are well briefed and educated.
10. Our reporting procedure is clearly defined and accessible for all staff.
11. The School's recruitment policy clearly outlines the expectations of those who work with our students and new staff are inducted on the importance of student safety and the processes they are required to follow when dealing with our students.
12. Student safety is reported on annually in the School's Annual Report.
13. Ballarat Grammar has adopted a number of key strategies as controls for identifying and removing student safety risks and to promote the participation and empowerment of students. These are as follows:
  - 13.1 Encouraging an open, honest and collaborative community where students are encouraged to communicate with those around them.
  - 13.2 Educating student regarding the strategies in place to keep them safe and listening to their perspectives.
  - 13.3 Providing professional development and allowing staff time and resources to expand their knowledge and understanding in their relevant fields on Student Safety issues, including resources provided by the Department of Education and Training (DET) such as [Protecting children: Mandatory reporting and other obligations | Victorian Government \(www.vic.gov.au\)](https://www.vic.gov.au/protecting-children-mandatory-reporting-and-other-obligations)
  - 13.4 Online Environments –
    - 13.4.1 Education and Training-
      - 13.4.1.1 Providing advice and guidance to parents and/or carers on how to best support and care for their children online, this includes but is not limited to reading materials, webinars and trusted resources.
      - 13.4.1.2 Encouraging and educating students to be safe and responsible when online and to be positive contributors.
      - 13.4.1.3 Providing up-to-date advice on issues relating to the use of internet-connected devices, such as:
        - 13.4.1.3.1 Cyberbullying;
        - 13.4.1.3.2 Pornography;
        - 13.4.1.3.3 Sexting;
        - 13.4.1.3.4 Time online;
        - 13.4.1.3.5 Online Gaming; and
        - 13.4.1.3.6 Unwanted contact/grooming.
    - 13.4.2 Device Restrictions-
      - 13.4.2.1 On Campus:
        - 13.4.2.1.1 Configuring web browsers to use “safe search”.
        - 13.4.2.1.2 Applying granular controls to restrict/prevent access to and the use of inappropriate applications and websites.
      - 13.4.2.2 Off Campus:
        - 13.4.2.2.1 Applying limited controls to restrict/prevent access to and the use of inappropriate applications and websites.
    - 13.4.3 Monitoring-
      - 13.4.3.1 Monitoring student's use of applications or web browsing activities while connected to the School's network.





## 13.5 Wellbeing –

- 13.5.1 Providing a variety of resources and educational tools through onsite learning, incursions and excursions.
- 13.5.2 Using mentor groups, homerooms and classroom teaching to develop positive relationships.
- 13.5.3 Having clear expectations and straight-forward information regarding School-related documentation such as bullying and harassment policies and ensuring students and parents sign off on thee to acknowledge mutual understanding.
- 13.5.4 Implementation and monitoring of a strong wellbeing program delivered in mentor groups regarding the 6 Ways of Wellbeing:
  - 13.5.4.1 Care;
  - 13.5.4.2 Move;
  - 13.5.4.3 Learn;
  - 13.5.4.4 Give;
  - 13.5.4.5 Connect; and
  - 13.5.4.6 Notice.
- 13.5.5 Providing opportunities for students to engage in broad extracurricular activities which encourages participation but also challenges and provides extension for those seeking it.
- 13.5.6 Providing varied and extensive service opportunities for students to engage with the community.
- 13.5.7 Empowering students to suggest and drive extracurricular and service opportunities, by encouraging an open dialogue, listening to their suggestions and providing support and guidance to enable their ideas to be actioned.
- 13.5.8 Having clear expectations from students' initial interview stage regarding participation and communication.
- 13.5.9 Integrating sexual abuse prevention programs, other relevant programs and age-appropriate information throughout the curriculum during the student's progression. This includes but is not limited to the following:
  - 13.5.9.1 The CEEd incorporating body awareness skills into its curriculum including 'Zones of Regulation' and 'Boss of my Body';
  - 13.5.9.2 The Junior School utilising the Bounce Back! Program (see Annexure A, below);
  - 13.5.9.3 Years 7-9 having a designated health curriculum;
  - 13.5.9.4 Year 10 focusing on Respectful Relationships; and
  - 13.5.9.5 Years 11-12 utilising external resources such as Elephant Ed presentations and Ballarat Community Health.
- 13.5.10 Having a strong Wellbeing Department and onsite Health Centre including fully qualified nursing staff and trained psychologists and councillors to answer questions and provide support as required.

## 13.6 Boarding Community –

- 13.6.1 Promoting inter-House and intra-House mentoring and buddy systems to encompass and expand upon the School's House Mentor system.
- 13.6.2 Holding daily House meetings to provide a regular forum for communication between staff and students.
- 13.6.3 Fostering student involvement in extracurricular activities to provide age-appropriate interactions in the wider community.
- 13.6.4 Use of Reach Duty Reports to enable staff communication and flagging of any potential student safety situations, including student wellbeing and behaviour.
- 13.6.5 Ensuring regular correspondence with the boarding community including:
  - 13.6.5.1 Weekly correspondence from Heads of House;
  - 13.6.5.2 Fortnightly newsletter from the Director of Boarding;





- 13.6.5.3 Welcome Letter and Term Summary from Director of Boarding at the commencement and conclusion of each term; and
- 13.6.5.4 Regular correspondence from the Headmaster, Heads of School, etc. throughout the school year.
- 13.6.6 Promoting collaboration with the School's Indigenous Program and International Program to provide additional support for Indigenous and Torres Strait Islander students and students from culturally and linguistically diverse cultures.
- 13.6.7 Enabling staff to undertake further training specific to residential student care.
- 13.6.8 Collaborating with the Human Resources department to ensure a culturally and linguistically diverse selection of staff work across all Boarding Houses.
- 13.7 Corrective Action
  - 13.7.1 In conjunction with the School's area-based policies the School has adopted the following four step action plan for dealing with racism, discrimination and/or bullying:
    - (1) Disciplinary measures
    - (2) Education
    - (3) Action
    - (4) Apology
- 13.8 Appointing designated positions of responsibility to engage the community and promote cultural awareness for staff and volunteers.
- 13.9 Establishing student-run committees supported by staff to collaborate on diversity and culture including but not limited to promoting their area and educating staff and the broader community on improvements.
- 13.10 Promoting a culture of everyone always learning and aspiring.
- 13.11 Encouraging appropriate behaviour and interactions within areas such as bathrooms and changing rooms across the School's campuses and when in the wider community.
- 13.12 Providing guidance and supervision to students involved in Performing Arts activities, including selection of appropriate works, and age-appropriate activities and levels of involvement.
- 13.13 Living the School's values in all areas of the School community.
- 13.14 Developing and implementing student safe Human Resources practices including but not limited to:
  - 13.14.1 Student Safe recruitment practices;
  - 13.14.2 Working with Children Checks (WWC Checks) and National Criminal Record Checks;
  - 13.14.3 Student Safety training; and
  - 13.14.4 Our Student Safe culture.
- 13.15 Providing links to external services and organisations via NEXUS, student planners and Student ID cards, for example:





## Support for times of crises

**Lifeline (24/7): 13 11 14**

**Lifeline text (12pm to 2am): 0477 13 11 14**

**Lifeline online chat (12pm to 2am): <https://www.lifeline.org.au/crisis-chat/>**

**Kids Helpline (24/7): 1800 551 800**

**Kids Helpline online webchat (24/7): <https://kidshelpline.com.au/get-help/webchat-counselling>**

**Beyond Blue: 1300 224 636**

**Beyond Blue online chat (11am – 12am): <https://online.beyondblue.org.au/#/chat/start>**

**Headspace: 1800 650 890**

**eheadspace: <https://headspace.org.au/eheadspace/>**

**Butterfly Foundation (8am to 12am): 1800 33 4673**

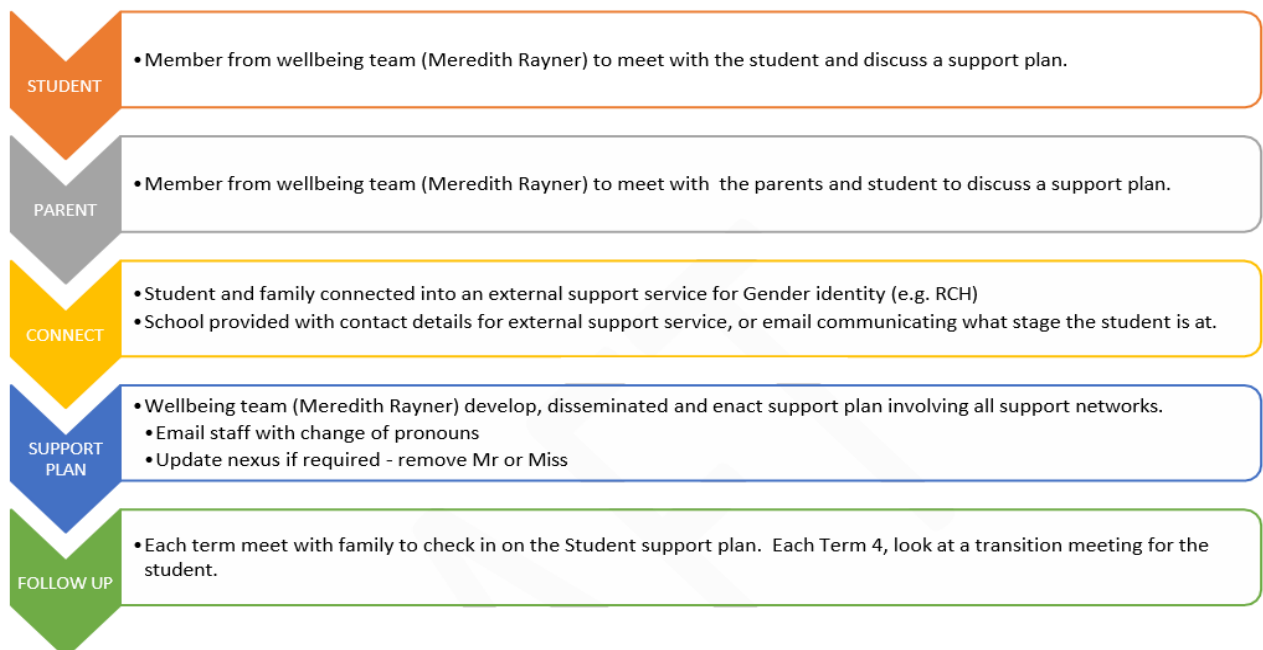
**Butterfly Foundation online chat (8am to 12am): <https://butterfly.org.au/get-support/chat-online/>**

**1800 RESPECT: 1800 737 732**

**1800 RESPECT online chat: <https://chat.1800respect.org.au/#/welcome>**

13.16 Providing relevant and clear resources for our community which combine resources and our approach into one easy-to-use document such as the following:

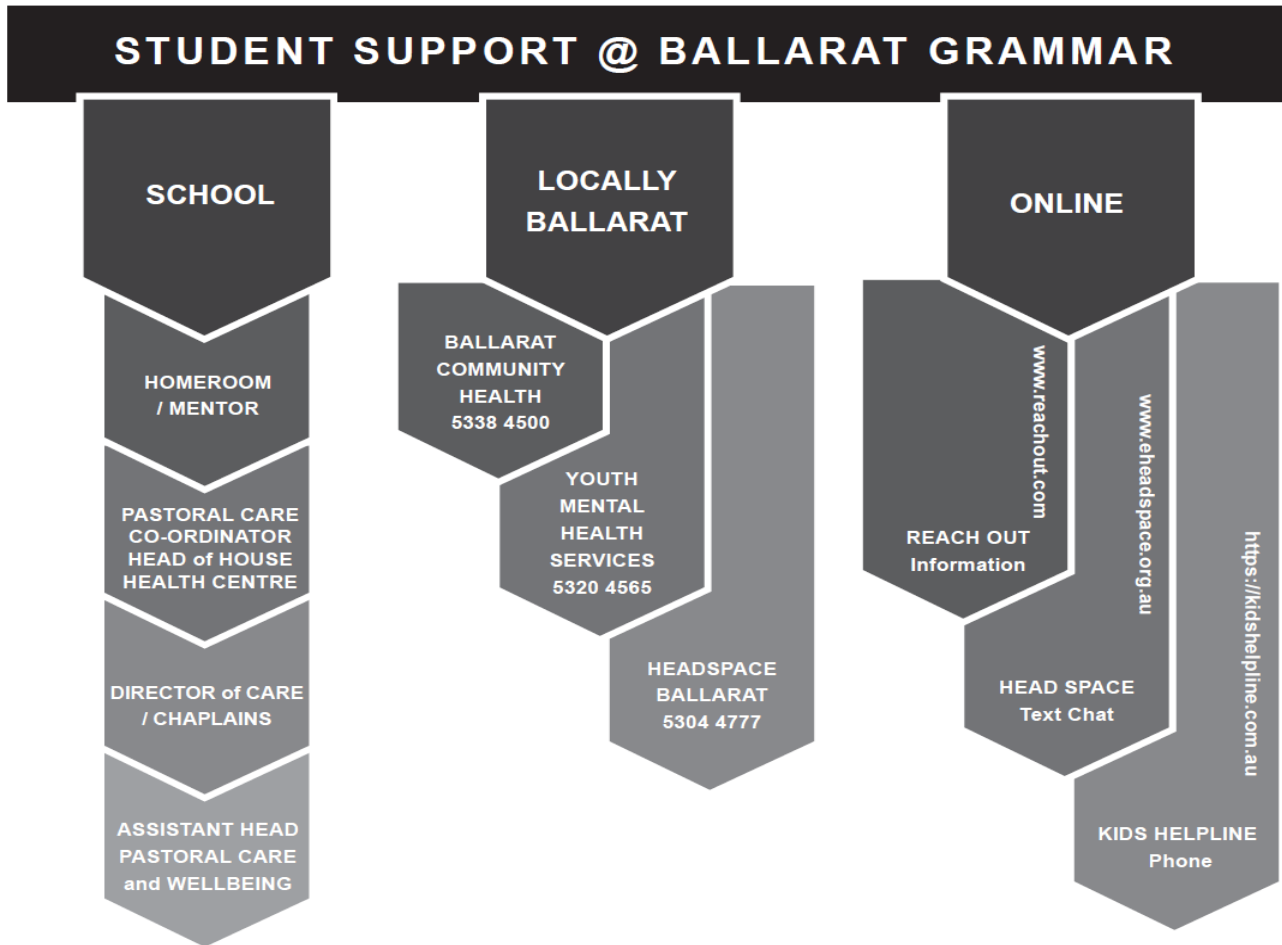
### 13.16.1 Gender identity flowchart-







## 13.15.2. Student Support flowchart-





#### **Part 4- Implementation**

1. It is our policy that relevant staff members and volunteers are trained on methods of empowering students and encouraging their participation.
2. This is done through various work systems, practices, policies and procedures. These strategies include but are not limited to:
  - 2.1. Pastoral Care – Student Safety and Wellbeing;
  - 2.2. Education and its implementation through curriculum;
  - 2.3. Boarding Service;
  - 2.4. Practical Support and Guidance; and
  - 2.5. An open and collaborative communicative approach between staff, volunteers and students.

#### **Part 5- Review**

1. Ballarat Grammar is committed to the continuous review and improvement of all its operations, including this policy.
2. It is the responsibility of the Senior Student Safeguarding Officer to regularly monitor and annually review the effectiveness of the Student Safety policies to ensure they are working in practice and revise the policy when required.
3. It is the responsibility of the Senior Student Safeguarding Officer along with the Safety & Risk Officer to engage with students, parents and the broader community in relation to the review of the School's Student Safety policies.

#### **Part 6- Breach of Policy**

1. All staff, volunteers and those engaged by Ballarat Grammar are expected to enact this policy in support of student and community learning, health, safety and wellbeing.
2. Any breach of a Student Safety policy will be taken seriously and immediately actioned and followed up by the School, this includes any necessary advice and/or notification to external bodies.







## **Annexure A**

At Ballarat Grammar, the Junior School runs the Bounce Back! Program which has been designed to provide evidence-informed teaching strategies for integration into all curriculum areas thus promoting positive mental health, wellbeing and resilience within both students and teachers in addition to building safe and supportive class and school learning environments. It is multi-component, universal program which aims to provide consistent messaging to the whole-school community and is thus a cornerstone within a positive school climate. The program consists of ten curriculum units and each unit provides students with learning engagements to develop a deep understanding of core concepts and skills while simultaneously providing opportunities for students to apply this learning through practical, everyday interactions and experiences.

### **A brief description of the units:**

**1 and 2: Core values and Social Values:** These units focus on developing pro-social values including values related to ethical and intercultural understanding.

**3: People Bouncing Back:** This unit focuses on developing self-management strategies for coping and bouncing back.

**4: Courage:** This unit focuses on strategies to find and act with courage in both everyday life and difficult circumstances.

**5: Looking on the Bright Side:** This unit focuses on teaching optimistic thinking, positive tracking, being appreciative and expressing gratitude.

**6: Emotions:** This unit focuses on strategies for developing & boosting positive emotions and managing negative emotions.

**7: Relationships:** This unit focuses on explicitly teaching social skills for building relationships and maintaining friendships.

**8: Humour:** This unit focuses on the use of humour as a coping skill.

**9: Being Safe:** This unit focuses on strategies and skills for creating a safe class and school environment and discouraging and managing bullying incidents.

**10: Success:** This unit focuses on skills and attitudes for identifying & applying character and ability strengths, setting goals, planning, persevering (grit & the development of a growth mindset), overcoming mistakes and obstacles and being successful in achieving personal and learning goals.

