



Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Introduction

In 2024 the NT Government announced the requirement for all government and non-government schools to adopt and apply the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. This requirement forms part of the *Education Act 2015* (Section 4).

Haileybury Rendall School's core belief that 'every student matters every day' aligns with our commitment to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people in our care. We are committed to ensuring that our School ensures that our students are safe from physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse and neglect.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear expectations for all staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors regarding appropriate behaviour with children and young people in our School. The policy seeks to protect the young people in our care from harm, abuse, or neglect. It aims to embed the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations in all facets of our operations.

Scope

This policy addresses the specific requirements of the NT Education Act and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. It applies to all staff, including volunteers, contractors, School Board members whether or not they work in direct contact with students (herein referred collectively to as "staff"). It is applicable in all activities and locations where children are under the supervision or care of Haileybury Rendall School. This includes all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided by for a student's use (such as the boarding houses or school camp), and those provided through third-party providers.

This policy should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and codes.

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Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Haileybury Rendall School (HRS) is committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, processes and codes are inclusive of the needs of all children and students in our care. We view child safety as a fundamental and shared responsibility of every person in our school.

Haileybury Rendall School has zero tolerance for child abuse in any form and takes proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments. When child safety or wellbeing concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly. We promote respectful relationships between students and adults, and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on respect, honesty, kindness, trust and empathy.

In particular, we pay attention to the child safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer or asexual (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism, homophobia or transphobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with the appropriate processes and responses.

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Relevant Legislation, Standards and Codes

This policy relates to the NT Government *Education Act 2015* (Section 4), which requires schools to adopt the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, which are listed below:

Principle 1	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
Principle 2	Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously
Principle 3	Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing
Principle 4	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice
Principle 5	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice
Principle 6	Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused
Principle 7	Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training
Principle 8	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising opportunity for children and young people to be harmed
Principle 9	Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved
Principle 10	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

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Other relevant legislation

Criminal Code Act 1983 (NT)

Child Protection (Offender Reporting and Registration) Act 2004 (NT)

Care and Protection of Children Act 2007 (NT)

Child Protection (Offender Registration and Reporting) Act 2016 (NT)

AS 5725: Boarding Standard for Australian Schools and Residencies, 2015

Related Documents

Principle 10 – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related documents:

- Child Protection and Safety Policy
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Code of Conduct Community
- Complaints and Appeals Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- Cyber Safety Policy One Haileybury
- Drug and Alcohol Policy
- ICT Services Acceptable Use Policy
- Mobile Phone and Device Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Staff Student Professional Boundaries Policy
- Student Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Intervention Policy
- Visitor Management Procedure
- Volunteer Management Policy
- Boarding Operations Handbook
- Boarding Policies and Procedures
- Mandatory Reporting Flow Chart and Form 23
- Self-harm/suicide attempt response plans

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Responsibilities

Child Safety and Wellbeing Officers

Principle 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

While the responsibility for child safety falls on all staff at HRS, the School has designated personnel whose role includes providing guidance in child safety and wellbeing matters and overseeing investigations and reporting of concerns and issues. These officers are also the first point of contact for members of the community to raise child safety and protection concerns.

The senior Child Safety and Wellbeing Officers are:

- Deputy Principal – Wellbeing
- Director of Boarding
- Head of Indigenous Student Wellbeing
- Heads of School

Other groups

In addition, the following roles also hold key responsibility for guiding the processes used to uphold child safety:

- All members of the School Executive
- Wellbeing Leaders
- Heads of Departments/Learning Leaders
- Counsellors and Nurses
- Head of Inclusion and Support
- Heads of House in Boarding

Child Safety and Community Codes of Conduct

Our Child Safety and Community Codes of Conduct set the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours which model our child safe culture. They also clarify behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments. Staff are required to read and sign their agreement to follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct and Community Code of Conduct at the commencement of employment at HRS.

Through our Health and Wellbeing Framework and the related curriculum programs across all sub-schools, we ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in their lives, including those at school.

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Student Empowerment

Principle 2 – Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

Principle 3 -Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

To support child safety and wellbeing at Haileybury Rendall School, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities. Respectful relationships between students are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the School to ensure a sense of belonging.

Students are specifically informed of their rights through the health and wellbeing curriculum, and these subjects focus on ensuring all students are provided with the knowledge, skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families are encouraged to speak with their Year Level/Wellbeing Coordinator, Head of School, Homeroom/Tutor Group Teacher or the School Counsellors if they have any concerns. Haileybury Rendall School maintains a Student Complaints Procedure which is found on the students' learning management system.

Family Engagement and Communications

Our families and the School community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Haileybury Rendall School we are committed to providing families and the School community with accessible information about our school's child safety and wellbeing policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

Haileybury Rendall School communicates the School's child safety processes to the School community through:

- myHRS to inform the School community about any significant updates to our child safety and wellbeing policies or processes, and initiatives that we are taking to ensure student safety and wellbeing.
- Ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures are available on our website and School intranet, myHRS, for both students and parents to access.

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Diversity, Equity and a Culturally Safe Environment

Principle 4 – Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

At Haileybury Rendall School, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, values and practices are respected along with those of all children from culturally diverse backgrounds. As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful relationships and environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all. We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw upon, and that these attributes contribute positively to the School environment and the learning and experiences of others.

As a school community we endeavour to ensure that every student has a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, we recognise the link between culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for these students and their communities to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities. We have active and engaged Reconciliation Action Plan committees, at both staff and student level, who work to ensure our practices are culturally sensitive and appropriate. Our Boarding leadership and Head of Indigenous Wellbeing work directly with remote families and communities to further strengthen the relationships, communication, and approaches.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety and wellbeing strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- Children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Children and young people with disabilities
- Children and young people unable to live at home or impacted by family violence or other trauma
- International students
- Children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

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Employment and Induction Practices

Principle 5 – People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

At Haileybury Rendall School, our recruitment processes, including advertising, referee checks, interviews, and volunteer pre-engagement screening emphasise child safety and wellbeing principles. All relevant staff and volunteers are required to provide current Working With Children Clearance (Ochre Card) and other relevant background or criminal record checks.

Staff Recruitment

When recruiting staff, we follow standard recruitment policies and procedures, which include:

- Ensuring that all Position Descriptions include consistent requirements in relation to child safety and wellbeing
- Including standardised screening questions in all interview guides
- Undertaking reference checks which include suitability for working with children
- All employees at Haileybury Rendall School are required to hold a valid Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory (TRB) registration (teachers) or an Ochre Card
- Confirming the status of Teacher Registration Board of the Northern Territory (TRB) registration and/or Working with Children Clearance (Ochre Card) checks
- Providing and ensuring that all prospective employees have read and understood this policy and our Child Safety Code of Conduct

Staff Induction

All newly appointed staff are expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction. The induction includes:

- Becoming familiar with and understand the School's Child Safety and Wellbeing Program, including:
 - The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
 - The Child Safety Code of Conduct
 - The Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy
 - The Community Code of Conduct
 - The Mandatory Reporting compulsory module
 - Procedures for responding to and reporting a child suspected of being at risk of harm (Mandatory Reporting)
 - The Asthma and Anaphylaxis compulsory modules

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- How to access the School's policies and procedures
- The National Child Safe Principles modules as designated by the School for completion
- Any other child safety and wellbeing information or training that the School considers appropriate to the nature of the role

Suitability of Volunteers and Contractors

All volunteers and contractors, regardless of when or where on campus they are engaged, are required to comply with our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy which describes how we ascertain the suitability of prospective volunteers and contractors.

Expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction, training, supervision and management will be dependent on the role of the volunteer or contractors.

Training and Information for Staff

Principle 7 – Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

Ongoing Supervision and Management of Staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done through regular meetings with the Deputy Principals, Head of School or a line manager, classroom observations, annual child safety and wellbeing training, First Aid and Anaphylaxis training, and professional development supporting student wellbeing and respectful relationships and consent.

Child Safety Knowledge, Skills and Awareness

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

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Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- Our school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- Mandatory Reporting of Harm and Exploitation of Children
- Recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- Responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- How to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- Information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- How to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment
- Completing The National Child Safe Principles modules as designated by the School for completion

Staff are supported through the School's Professional Learning program and Reflection and Growth Cycle Program and are reminded of responsibilities during staff meetings, specific professional development and as part of the Wellbeing program.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

Complaints and Concerns

Principle 6 – Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused

At Haileybury Rendall School, we are committed to identifying and responding immediately to any concerns or complaints where child safety may be at risk. Students, parents, and staff are encouraged to raise matters of concern promptly. On receipt of a concern or complaint, School staff should refer to the Complaints and Appeals Policy and Complaints and Appeals Procedure.

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Managing Risks to Child Safety and Wellbeing

Principle 8 – Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising opportunity for children and young people to be harmed

At Haileybury Rendall School, we actively seek to identify, assess and control risks to child safety and wellbeing in all aspects of our physical and online operations and environments. The management of child safety and wellbeing risks occurs at all levels of the organisation and is reflected in the School's policies, procedures, codes and practices. The processes for identifying, assessing and controlling risks are implemented through our Haileybury Risk Management Policy.

Implementation and Review – National Child Safe Principles

Principle 9 – Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved

Haileybury Rendall School has established a Child Safe Committee responsible initially for the implementation of the National Child Safe Principles. This Committee will continue to ensure review and improvement of policies, practices, and procedures at the School and in Boarding to ensure best practice in the provision of a safe environment for all students.

This policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently if required by legislative requirements or operational demands.

Records Management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records accordingly, with SEQTA and Synergetic being the primary database.