

BALLARAT ASSOCIATED SCHOOLS (BAS)

CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT



Safeguarding Children and Young People at BAS Events and Activities

It is the purpose of Ballarat Associated Schools (BAS) to provide structured competition for the member schools to maximise the opportunities for students to participate in organised sport.

The purposes of the Association are:

- 1. To be a group of like-minded schools in the Ballarat region who associate for the purposes of sporting, cultural and social inter-change in a mutually supportive manner for the benefit of the students of the schools.*
- 2. To arrange and enter into inter-school activities in order to cultivate friendship, goodwill and a spirit of fair play and comradeship.*
- 3. To promote a spirit of co-operation, generosity, courtesy, consideration and healthy competition amongst member schools at all times.*

(Please see BAS Handbook for a complete list of purposes of BAS)

Commitment to the Safety of Children and Young People

Ballarat Associated Schools Incorporated (BAS) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. All children participating at and involved in BAS events have the right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of our children and young people will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

BAS has zero tolerance for child abuse.

BAS is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety, feel empowered and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our policies, procedures, strategies and practices in relation to children and young people will be inclusive to the needs of all students including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities, students who are vulnerable, LGBTQI+ students and international students.

Every person involved with BAS has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

It is the responsibility of all member schools to ensure they are compliant with Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises, and further that they have implemented robust policies and procedures for their workers, students and the broader community.

In its planning, decision-making and operations BAS will:

1. Provide children and young people with positive and nurturing experiences and take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children and young people to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children and young people;
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping the safety of all children and young people paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children and young people;

6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
7. Ensure children and young people know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe,
8. and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
9. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
10. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk;
11. Value the input of and communicate honestly and openly with families and carers. The views of staff, contractors, officials, children, young people and families are taken seriously and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner; and
12. Systematically and continually identify and assess risks to child safety and will eliminate, where possible, or reduce all potential sources of harm.

Adapted from Our Community (2016) Child Protection Toolkit: The Department of Education and Training

Purpose of this Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at BAS Events and Activities against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes, as well as the policies and procedures of each member school.

All staff, volunteers, officials, contractors, and board/school council members at BAS are expected to actively contribute to a school sporting association culture that respects all members and affirms the values of care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe and enact child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below. All staff, volunteers and contractors are responsible for promoting the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children. The prevention and reporting of abuse is vital.

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, officials, contractors, visitors, parents/guardians and board/school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children within our association by:

- Adhering to the *BAS Child Safety Policy* and upholding the associations commitment to child safety at all times;
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect the young people at our events from abuse;
- Reporting any conflicts of interest (such as an outside relationship with a child) that may affect my ability to perform my role;
- Treating everyone in the BAS community with respect, modelling positive and respectful relationships and acting in manner that sustain a safe and positive environment, including listening to and valuing the ideas and opinions of children and young people;
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people;
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of young people with a disability, who are vulnerable, LGBTQI+ students and international students, all students with culturally and /or linguistically diverse backgrounds and respecting cultural, religious and political differences and acting in a culturally sensitive way, particularly when interacting with children who are Aboriginal or otherwise culturally or linguistically diverse;
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of young people with a disability;
- Listening to children and young people and responding to them appropriately;
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child;
- Reporting and acting on any breaches of this Code of Conduct, complaints or concerns appropriately and treat them seriously and with respect;

- If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the young person/people are safe in accordance with the BAS Child Safety Policy;
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's concerned Child Safety Champion and/or the BAS Executive Officer. Please note that this does not remove any external reporting obligations you may have.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic);
- Respecting the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know;
- Ensuring that this Code of Conduct is followed in any interactions with students from every associated member school of BAS when attending any BAS events or activities.

Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors, parents/guardians and board/school council members must NOT:

- Put young people at risk of abuse;
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of young people;
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of young people;
- Express personal views on culture, race or sexuality in the presence of young people;
- Discriminate against any young person on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability;
- Tolerate racism in any form;
- Exhibit behaviours with young people which may be construed as unnecessarily physical;
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a young person or do things of a personal nature that a young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes;
- Develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children);
- Consume alcohol or take illicit drugs under any circumstances at an event where students are present;
- Work with any young person while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or personal email addresses with a young person;
- Have any online contact with a child or their family (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc.), unless necessary i.e. by providing families with information relevant to their involvement and participation in BAS events and activities;
- Use any personal communication channels/devices such as a personal email account to contact a child or their family unless necessary i.e. by providing families with information relevant to their involvement and participation in BAS events and activities.

Responsibilities in matters of Child Safety:

All staff, volunteers, officials, contractors, visitors, parents/guardians and board/school are responsible for:

- Listening and responding to concerns of young people; particularly if they are telling you that they or another young person have been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another young person;
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse as outlined in the *BAS Child Protection – Reporting Obligations*;
- Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) and as contained in the *BAS Child Safety Policy*;
- Reporting any child safety concerns as outlined in the *BAS Child Protection – Reporting Obligations*;
- Ensuring child safety protocols at all BAS events and venues are implemented;
- Ensuring risk assessments at all BAS events and venues incorporate child safety;

- Completing all training provided by BAS in a timely manner;
- Take any and all complaints seriously and follow BAS's Complaints Handling process.

Not following standards of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour is a breach of this Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action. Some behaviours on their own may not be a serious breach of the Code of Conduct but together may indicate a concerning pattern of behaviour that poses a risk to the safety of children. Matters requiring disciplinary action will be referred to the school concerned. Alternatively, matters will be referred to the Chair of BAS Inc. to action accordingly.

Some breaches of this Code of Conduct may need to be reported to the Victorian Police, or to the Commission for Children and Young People.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to BAS Executive Officer; Sharyn Canny: sharyn@bas.vic.edu.au

Please list any BAS Event/s where you will have interactions with students from the association's 8 member colleges:

I, _____, confirm I have been provided with a copy of the above BAS Code of Conduct and have listed any known interactions I will have with students from its member colleges. I will update this list when/if necessary.

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it at all times.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Date: Last reviewed: 1 July 2022

Next review date: 1 July 2024

Responsible officer: BAS Executive Officer; Child Safety Person