# DUTY OF CARE POLICY

**Help for non-English speakers**

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school at the General Office.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to explain to our school community the non-delegable duty of care obligations that all staff at Yarrabing Secondary College owe to our students and members of the school community who visit and use the school premises.

## CONTEXT STATEMENT

Yarrabing Secondary College was established in 2024 and is located approximately 35 kilometres west of Melbourne. When fully established, the school will have 1200 students enrolled from Grade 7 to 12 and 130 school staff members including Wellbeing staff.

Our school grounds are very close to native bushland, and we are surrounded by a supportive community. Nearly all students that attend our school live locally and tend to walk or ride their bike to school. Yarrabing Secondary College has developed close ties to the local community and enjoys support from our local shops and community services.

Our school is culturally diverse with 60% of students having a language background other than English (LOTE) spoken in the family home, with the largest LOTE languages being Hindi and Punjabi. The school also has very small representation from the Koorie community. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.

## POLICY

"Duty of care" is a legal obligation that requires schools to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include personal injury (physical or psychological) or damage to property. The reasonable steps that our school may decide to take in response to a potential risk or hazard will depend on the circumstances of the risk.

Our school has developed policies and procedures to manage common risks in the school environment, including:

- Yard duty and Supervision
- Bullying Prevention
- Camps and Excursions
- First Aid
- Tree Maintenance
- Grounds Maintenance

- Student Private Property
- Child Safe Standards
- External Providers (including RTOS delivering VET)
- Emergency Management
- Volunteers
- Visitors
- Working with Children and Suitability Checks
- Mandatory Reporting
- Occupational Health and Safety

Our school acknowledges we are required to take reasonable precautions to prevent the abuse of a child by an individual associated with the organisation while the child is under the care, supervision or authority of the organisation.

Staff at our school understand that school activities involve different levels of risk and that particular care may need to be taken to support younger students or students with additional needs. Our school also understands that it is responsible for ensuring that the school premises are kept in good repair and will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of members of our community suffering injury or damage because of the state of the premises.

School staff, parents, carers and students are encouraged to speak to the principal to raise any concerns about risks or hazards at our school, or our duty of care obligations.

**External Providers**
Staff at our school acknowledge that, as our duty of care is non-delegable, we are also required to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm when external providers have been engaged to plan for or conduct an activity involving our students. Our Visitors Policy and Camps and Excursions Policy include information on the safety and care of our students when engaged with external providers.

Our school also takes steps to ensure student safety when they are engaging in off-site workplace learning programs with external providers, such as when students are participating in work experience, school-based apprenticeships and traineeships, structured workplace learning and any other workplace learning program involving external providers. Our School will follow all applicable Department of Education policy and guidelines in relation to off-site learning and will ensure that the safety and welfare of the students engaging in these activities is paramount. The Department's guidelines in relation to Workplace Learning are available at the following link: https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/structured-workplace-learning/policy

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:
- provided to staff at induction and included in staff handbook/manual
- discussed at staff meetings/briefings as required
- made available publicly on our school website
- included as annual reference in school newsletter
- made available in hard copy from the General Office upon request.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

- The Department's Policy and Advisory Library (PAL):
  - Duty of Care
  - Structured Workplace Learning

- Related Policies:
  - Bullying Prevention Policy
  - Camps and Excursions Policy
  - Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
  - Emergency Management Plan
  - First Aid Policy
  - Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures

- Occupational Health and Safety
- Volunteers Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Yard Duty and Supervision Policy

## POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

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| Policy last reviewed | November 2025 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | Before November 2028 |