

 <p>FOREST HILL COLLEGE</p>	<h2>CHILD SAFETY ENVIRONMENTS POLICY</h2>
<p><b>Issue Date: July 2016</b></p>	<p><b>Review Date: 2019</b></p>

## RATIONALE

- The Convention on the Rights of the Child state that children have the right to protection because of their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse.
- The core values of the College are established with the awareness that Forest Hill College is not a public place and as such, is to provide the maintenance of a safe and inclusive environment for all children including those with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors, whether they work directly with children or not.
- Every person involved in Forest Hill College has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all children at the College.

## PURPOSE

This policy aims to meet the child safety standards set out in Ministerial Order No. 870

This policy applies to all school environments, including school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events (inclusive of physical and online environments) and aims to achieve a **zero tolerance of child abuse**.

**The term** child abuse includes-

Any act committed against a child involving-

- a sexual offence; or
- an offence under section 498(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming);and

The infliction, on a child, of-

- physical violence; or
- serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- serious neglect of a child.

## GUIDELINES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

### Planning, prevention and Reporting

1. In the event of the school becoming aware of the prevalence of a breach of the standards, Forest Hill College will follow Mandatory Reporting processes.
2. Forest Hill College is committed to ensuring Mandatory Reporting training for all staff is current.
3. In planning, decision making and operations, Forest Hill College will
  - Take a proactive and preventative approach to child safety
  - Value and empower children to participate in decisions that effect them
  - Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
  - Provide documented guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children.
  - Engage only the most suitable people to work with children.

- Ensure children know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe.
- Value the input of and communicate with, family and carers.

### **Employment Processes**

1. Each job or category of jobs for school staff that involves child connected work must have a clear statement that sets out:

The job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety; and

The job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.

2. All applicants for jobs that involve child connected work for the school must be informed about the school's child safety practices (including the code of conduct).
3. In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:
  - i. Working with Children Check status, or similar check;
  - ii. proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications;
  - iii. the person's history of work involving children; and
  - iv. references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
4. The school need not comply with the requirements in step (3) above if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information set out in steps (3)(i) to (3)(iv), above about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.
5. The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:
  - i. the induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child connected work; and
  - ii. monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for child connected work.
6. The school must implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

### **Managing visitors to the College**

the purpose and/ or educational merit of visitors on the school grounds will be monitored.

Forest Hill College will

- ensure that visitors where required have the appropriate approvals to work with children
- require all visitors arriving and departing during school hours to use a visitors book to record their name, signature, the date and time, and the purpose of the visit.
- include procedures for assessment and verification of the suitability of visitors to be in a location where children freely move about, learn and play. The evidence required is generally a working with children check (WWC Check); however if a visitor's occupation exempts them from the requirement to have a WWC check e.g. police officers, teachers, they must provide evidence to support their claim to an exemption.

**Ratified by College Council August 2016**