



# **Student Safeguarding Manual**

# Overview

Oxygen College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of our students, staff, contractors and volunteers. This manual will facilitate and promote inclusion, cultural appreciation and child protection. All policies/ procedures developed are open for review, discussion, and feedback by staff, contractors, volunteers, students, and the wider community. To have your say please email [alycia@oxygencollege.com.au](mailto:alycia@oxygencollege.com.au) or, complete the have your say form - <https://www.oxygencollege.com.au/inclusion-and-well-being/>.

## Acknowledgement to country

*'We live, learn and work on the land of the Wadawurrung people of the Kulin nation and the Bunurong People of the South-Eastern Kulin Nation. We recognise their continuing connection to land, waters, and culture as the Traditional Owners of this land. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures; and to Elders past, present and emerging'.*

Oxygen College is committed to providing a culturally safe environment for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander participants and associated family members. We encourage and support their creative expression and recognise the cultural rights of everyone.

## Equity and inclusion

We uphold high standards for equity and inclusion, and respect all students, including those with diverse circumstances. We promote a learning environment that is free of discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

## Children under the age of 18

Oxygen College provides a child safe environment for students under the age of 18. We highly encourage parents/ guardians to participate in decisions affecting their children. Oxygen College invites parents to engage in each step of the application process as well as their child's academic journey.

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# 1. Policy overview

## 1.1 Purpose

The purpose of this safeguarding policy is to outline the policies and procedures developed in accordance with the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)*, ensuring that we maintain a safe environment where all students, particularly those under the age of 18, are protected from abuse and harm.

## 1.2 Scope

This policy applies to all staff, students, and stakeholders, with the goal of fostering a culture where student safety and wellbeing are embedded in every aspect of our operations, ensuring it remains a top priority at all times.

## 1.3 Definitions

Child abuse, the foundation of these standards, covers a wide range of harmful behaviours and conduct including;

- I. Sexual abuse – When a person uses power or authority over a child to involve them in a sexual activity. Sexual abuse covers:
  - a. Grooming – manipulative and controlling techniques to build trust or normalise sexual harmful behaviour.
  - b. Sexual misconduct – This can include inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature, comments that express a desire or behaviours that cross a professional boundary.
- II. Physical violence - refers to *‘intentionally or recklessly uses physical force against, with or in the presence of a child, which causes, or could cause, the child harm’*.  
Physical violence includes words or gestures that cause a child to believe they are in physical harm.
- III. Emotional or psychological harm – Arises from a result of sexual offences, sexual misconduct, physical violence, or neglect. It can occur in circumstances of coercive, manipulation, humiliation and belittlement resulting in students feeling worthless.
- IV. Neglect – refers to *‘failure to meet the basic needs of a child’*. This includes supervisory, physical, educational, and emotional neglect.

## 1.4 Core principles of safety

The child safety standards refer to a 'Trauma-informed approach', for managing students who have experienced a traumatic event. These are managed through the four core principles of safety (trust, choice, collaboration, and empowerment).

*"Children who have experienced trauma are more likely to display challenging behaviours, like poor impulse control, hyperactivity or disruptive behaviours" – Child safety standards.*

The four principles can be applied by:

- Setting a physical, emotional, and culturally safe environment within the classroom, lunchrooms, and administrative meeting rooms and all other college facilities. A culturally safe environment should be extended to any student undertakings offsite.
- Building **trust** with the student which includes being clear with behavioural and educational expectations. Setting clear boundaries within the learning environment, being consistent and reliable, staying calm when challenging behaviours arise and finally be reassuring.
- Allowing the student to have a **choice** in relation to their academic journey. For example, a student has been disengaging from studies, not attending, or breaching the code of conduct. The student may be presented a set of choices to improve on the areas identified.
- **Collaborating** with children and allowing the student time and space for decisions.
- **Empowering** students to be confident to speak about how they feel and reassuring them that their feelings matter.

In situations where a student has experienced a traumatic event, the students may use anger, offensive language, silences, isolation, acting out of character for their age, refer to alcohol and or drugs as coping mechanisms.

## 1.5 What are the child safety standards?

The child safe standards comprise of 11 standards which aim to protect and prevent children and young people from abuse. A summary of each standard is provided below:

**Standard 1** – Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.

**Standard 2** – Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

**Standard 3** – Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

**Standard 4** – Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

**Standard 5** – Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

**Standard 6** – People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

**Standard 7** – Processes for complaints and concerns are child focussed.

**Standard 8** – Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.

**Standard 9** – Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

**Standard 10** – Implementation of the child safe standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

**Standard 11** – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

## 2. Policy

### Purpose

Oxygen College is fully committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment where the wellbeing and safety of children and young people are the top priority. This policy establishes a framework that aligns with the *Child Safe Standards* to ensure that all students, particularly those under 18 years of age, are safeguarded from harm, abuse, and neglect.

### 2.1 Commitment to Child Safety

#### 1. Student Wellbeing and Safety

Oxygen College prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all students. We are dedicated to fostering an environment that ensures students feel safe, supported, and empowered to speak up if they experience harm or feel unsafe.

#### 2. Student Participation in Decision-Making

Oxygen College is committed to ensuring that students have the right to participate in decisions that affect them. Management, employees, contractors, and volunteers encourage young people to express their opinions and provide suggestions, particularly on matters that directly impact them. The College actively promotes opportunities for students to "have a say" about the things that matter to them.

Oxygen College ensures student participation through the following mechanisms:

- Engaging both students and their parents/guardians at every stage of the application process to ensure course alignment with students' outcomes.
- Requiring students to attend all meetings that involve their engagement, including disciplinary actions.
- Ensuring students receive accurate, up-to-date information relevant to their academic journey directly from the College.

#### 3. Safety of All Students and Participants

The safety and wellbeing of all students is paramount at Oxygen College. This includes students from diverse backgrounds, such as those who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, are from Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities, or identify as part of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex, Queer + (LGBTIQ+) and Non-binary communities, as well as those living with disabilities. We recognize that these groups may require tailored and sensitive approaches to meet their specific safety and wellbeing needs.

#### 4. Safety of Students and Participants Under 18

The College is committed to safeguarding students and participants under the age of 18, regardless of their enrolment status, and complies with the Victorian *Child Safe Standards*,

the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015 (Vic)*, and the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*. Oxygen College adopts a ZERO TOLERANCE approach to any form of abuse against students or participants under the age of 18 and follows the best interest principle outlined in Section 10 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*.

#### 5. **Online and Digital Safety**

Oxygen College is committed to safeguarding students across all platforms, including physical premises and digital spaces. This includes ensuring that all communication and interactions on platforms such as Microsoft Teams, the OXYHUB learning management system, and social media groups managed by the College are safe and secure.

#### 6. **Responding to External Risks**

While Oxygen College manages its own platforms, we will act on any reports of child harm occurring outside our controlled environments. We rely on students and staff to report any such incidents so that appropriate actions can be taken.

#### 7. **Public Commitment to Child Safety**

Oxygen College publicly commits to maintaining a child-safe environment. Our policies and practices reflect our dedication to child protection, and child safety will always be a core principle in our operations.

#### 8. **Empowering Staff to Protect Children**

All staff, contractors, and volunteers will be trained and equipped with the necessary knowledge and resources to:

- Identify signs of child harm and abuse.
- Provide a supportive space for students to voice their concerns.
- Implement the core principles of child safety.
- Report and respond to any instances of child harm in a timely and appropriate manner.

### **2.2 Child Protection Measures**

Oxygen College enforces the following child protection measures:

#### 1. **Alignment with Values and Code of Conduct**

Our practices reflect Oxygen College's values, ethics, and codes of conduct for management, staff, students, families, and volunteers. All individuals interacting with children must promote a safe environment and respect child safety standards.



## **2. Procedures for Child Protection**

Clear procedures are established to handle child protection matters, including identifying, documenting, reporting, and managing concerns or incidents of harm.

## **3. Procedural Fairness and Natural Justice**

All actions regarding child safety and protection are carried out with fairness, transparency, and respect for all parties involved.

## **4. Promoting Safe Behaviors**

Protective behaviors are outlined to ensure that all individuals who access Oxygen College premises and participate in programs adhere to safe and respectful conduct.

## **5. Compliance with Legislation**

Oxygen College ensures that all policies and practices comply with relevant federal and state child protection legislation.

## **6. Addressing Incidents of Harm**

Detailed procedures are in place for responding when harm occurs between adults and children, children harming other children, or incidents involving adults harming other adults within the College.

## **7. Complaint and Grievance Procedures**

Clear channels are available for addressing complaints and grievances related to child safety, ensuring swift resolution and support for affected parties.

## **8. Ongoing Professional Development**

Oxygen College commits to continuous professional development for staff, contractors, and volunteers on best practices in child safety.

## **9. Support Services**

Support and counselling services will be offered to all stakeholders involved in child safety matters, including staff, students, and families. The College will also develop media strategies to manage communication around child safety incidents.

## **10. Legal Compliance**

All actions taken by Oxygen College in relation to child safety will be in full compliance with relevant legal requirements and child protection standards.

## **2.3 Responsibilities for Child Safety**

### **1. Board of Directors and Senior Management**

The Board and Senior Management bear ultimate responsibility for implementing,

reviewing, and improving child safety policies. They ensure that these policies reflect best practices and are effectively enforced throughout the College.

## **2. Collective Responsibility**

Promoting a child-safe culture is a collective responsibility shared by all staff, contractors, and volunteers. Every member of Oxygen College must actively contribute to creating a secure environment where child safety is embedded in everyday practices.

## **3. Adherence to Code of Conduct**

All staff, contractors, volunteers, and management must adhere to the College's code of conduct, which enshrines the commitment to child safety and the protection of vulnerable students.

## **2.4 Strategies to Manage Risk**

### **1. Risk Management Plans**

Oxygen College has developed a risk management plan to identify, evaluate, and plan strategies for minimizing the risk of harm to children. This includes potential harm by parents, staff, contractors, volunteers, or other children. The risk management plan is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure its ongoing effectiveness.

### **2. Feedback and Continuous Improvement**

Oxygen College actively seeks feedback from students, staff, families, and service providers to ensure best practices in child safety. Regular consultation is conducted, and policies and procedures are monitored and reviewed to respond to emerging concerns or issues.

### **3. Code of Conduct**

All staff, contractors, and volunteers are expected to act in accordance with Oxygen College's code of conduct, which outlines appropriate behaviors, language, and expectations for ensuring a safe environment for children.

### **4. Mandatory Training**

All staff, contractors, and volunteers must complete mandatory child safety training, including modules on inclusivity and acceptable workplace behavior. This training is required before commencing work and as part of ongoing professional development. Training is provided through the College's learning management system and external programs such as the Child Safety Commission and SBS Inclusion Program.

## 2.5 Breaches in Child Safety

Oxygen College has a ZERO TOLERANCE policy towards any breaches of child safety by staff, contractors, volunteers, or students. Any acts that violate child safety policies will be promptly investigated, with appropriate consequences applied as necessary, including referrals to relevant authorities.

### 1. Reporting Breaches

Child safety concerns are a collective responsibility. All staff, contractors, and volunteers are encouraged to raise concerns in accordance with Oxygen College's procedures. The College ensures adherence to confidentiality and privacy regulations when managing child safety concerns.

### 2. Investigation and Response

Oxygen College recognizes that dealing with breaches in child safety requires a sensitive, transparent, and just approach. The College's policies are designed to ensure that all incidents are managed with support for all parties involved. By fostering a culture of proactive child safety, the College aims to create an environment where young people can learn and grow in safety.

## 2.6 Governance Framework for Child Safety

### 1. Stakeholder Engagement

Oxygen College will engage key stakeholders—including staff, students, families, and community members—in discussions on child safety to inform policy implementation and gather feedback for continual improvement.

### 2. Policy Development and Review

Senior Management will lead the development of child safety policies and ensure they are informed by stakeholder feedback. Department Managers will review draft policies before presenting them for broader stakeholder consultation.

### 3. Approval Process

After review by Department Managers, the policy will be distributed to key stakeholders for further input. Final recommendations will be implemented by Senior Management before the policy is formally approved by the Governance Board.

### 4. Policy Accessibility

Child safety policies will be made publicly accessible via:

- Internal servers
- College website

- SharePoint
- aXcelerate
- Employment Hero

#### 5. **Ongoing Review and Improvement**

The child safety policy will be regularly reviewed in response to feedback, complaints, audits, or risk management practices. Senior Management and Department Managers will oversee all policy reviews and endorse necessary changes before implementation.

#### 6. **Continuous Monitoring**

Oxygen College will continuously monitor child safety practices to ensure alignment with the *Child Safe Standards* and commit to immediate action where risks are identified.

### 3. Expected Behaviors Regarding Student Safety

Oxygen College is committed to providing a learning environment that prioritizes student safety, well-being, and inclusion. All staff are expected to adhere to professional standards that promote a space free from discrimination, harassment, abuse (physical, sexual, emotional), and neglect. These expectations are outlined in the Oxygen College Staff Code of Conduct, which serves as a guide for maintaining student safety and welfare.

#### 1. Communication Standards with Students

Oxygen College encourages open, respectful communication between staff and students, placing value on student feedback and ensuring their voices are heard. Staff must engage in communication that is clear, respectful, and inclusive, acknowledging the diverse backgrounds of the student body. All communication with students must:

- Be relevant to the educational context.
- Avoid causing harm, distress, or discomfort.
- Exclude personal matters unrelated to the learning environment.
- Occur within reasonable hours linked to educational activities.
- Avoid personal social media interaction, especially with students under 18.
- Never involve unauthorized or inappropriate contact outside the learning environment.
- Not involve requests for students to keep communication secret.

#### 2. Promoting Safety and Empowerment

Staff are expected to act in ways that enhance student safety, participation, and empowerment in line with College policies and legal standards. Maintaining professional boundaries is crucial, and staff should refrain from engaging in activities that fall outside their professional role. This includes:

- Restricting communication to educational matters.
- Avoiding sharing personal information with students.
- Maintaining a professional demeanor at all times.
- Ensuring students understand and respect boundaries.

Physical contact with students should only occur when directly related to educational activities and must respect the individual needs of the student. It should never:

- Cause harm or be intended as physical punishment.
- Be sexual or inappropriate in nature.

- Involve excessive or unnecessary physical interaction (e.g., tickling or roughhousing).

Staff must never engage in grooming or sexual conduct with a student, regardless of age or consent. Awareness of the inherent power imbalance between staff and students is essential, and all behaviors that exploit this imbalance must be avoided.

### **3. Creating a Safe and Inclusive Environment**

Oxygen College is dedicated to the continuous assessment and management of risks to ensure a safe learning environment, both in-person and online. Staff receive training and resources to effectively manage risks, especially when working with students under the age of 18.

Risk management strategies apply to all student interactions, including transportation and off-campus activities, which must follow College guidelines and receive management approval. Staff are prohibited from transporting students in private vehicles. Overnight excursions require formal approval and consent from parents/guardians, with all necessary medical information provided in advance.

In online learning environments, staff are responsible for monitoring student behavior and implementing risk management strategies, addressing safety concerns or misconduct in accordance with Oxygen College's Student Misconduct Policy.

### **4. Responding to Student Safety Concerns**

Oxygen College treats all concerns about student safety with the utmost seriousness. Staff are responsible for identifying, reporting, and responding to disclosures, allegations, or suspicions of abuse. Reports involving students under 18 are handled in accordance with College policies and, when necessary, referred to external authorities.

Any reasonable suspicion of harm or abuse, particularly involving students under 18, must be reported to Child Protection or the police as required by law. This includes any cases of sexual abuse or serious harm. Oxygen College fosters a culture of vigilance, encouraging staff to report any concerns, regardless of their source.

### **5. Privacy and Confidentiality**

Student information is collected and managed in line with privacy laws and Oxygen College's Privacy Policy. Special care is taken with sensitive information related to students under 18,

ensuring their privacy and vulnerability are respected. Staff may only collect, store, or share student images when:

- Informed consent has been obtained from both the student and their parent/guardian (if under 18).
- The images are appropriate and relevant to the educational context.

## 4. Expectations of Students

Oxygen College is committed to creating a learning environment that is safe, respectful, and conducive to the academic and personal growth of all students. The behaviors expected of students are outlined in the **Student Code of Conduct**, which serves as a guide to promote positive interactions and ensure the safety and well-being of the College community, especially for students under the age of 18.

### 1. Contribution to a Safe and Respectful Environment

Students are expected to contribute actively to maintaining a safe and respectful atmosphere. This includes:

- Treating fellow students, staff, and visitors with respect, dignity, and consideration.
- Ensuring that their actions do not harm, threaten, or intimidate others, either physically or emotionally.
- Demonstrating inclusivity by valuing the diverse backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives of their peers.
- Reporting any concerns related to safety, bullying, harassment, or abuse to a member of staff or management.

### 2. Responsibility Towards Minors

In recognition of the presence of students under the age of 18, all students have a responsibility to contribute to their protection and well-being. This includes:

- Avoiding any behavior that could cause harm, discomfort, or distress to younger students.
- Refraining from engaging in inappropriate relationships or communications with minors.
- Reporting any concerns or suspicions regarding the safety of underage students to a staff member or the College's administration.

### 3. Adherence to College Policies

Students must adhere to all Oxygen College policies, including but not limited to:

- **Anti-Discrimination and Harassment Policies:** Students are required to avoid discriminatory language or behavior based on race, gender, sexuality, disability, religion, or other protected characteristics. Harassment, bullying, or abusive behavior towards others will not be tolerated.
- **Academic Integrity Policies:** Students must maintain honesty and integrity in all academic activities, ensuring that their work is their own and properly cited, and refraining from cheating or plagiarism.
- **Attendance and Participation:** Students are expected to attend classes regularly, actively participate in their learning, and meet all course requirements and deadlines. Disruptive behavior that hinders the learning of others is not acceptable.

### 4. Digital Conduct and Online Safety

With the growing use of online learning platforms, students are also expected to uphold appropriate standards of behavior in digital environments. This includes:

- Engaging respectfully in online discussions, forums, and collaborative tasks.
- Ensuring their online conduct mirrors the professional and respectful behavior expected in face-to-face settings.
- Refraining from sharing personal or private information about themselves or others in online platforms.
- Avoiding cyberbullying, inappropriate language, or behavior that undermines the safety of others.

### 5. Health and Well-being

Students should prioritize their own health and well-being, ensuring that they seek support from College services if needed. They are also expected to:

- Be mindful of the well-being of their peers, offering support where appropriate, and seeking help when they recognize someone in distress.
- Avoid engaging in behaviors that could endanger themselves or others, such as substance abuse, violence, or reckless actions.



## 6. Student Code of Conduct Accessibility and Communication

The College will ensure that the **Student Code of Conduct** is accessible to all students. It will be made available during the enrollment process, on the College's website, and through other communication channels. In addition, students will receive ongoing guidance to ensure they understand the Code and the behavioral expectations it sets.

## 7. Consequences of Breaching the Student Code of Conduct

Any breach of the Student Code of Conduct will result in an investigation, conducted in line with Oxygen College's policies and procedures. Disciplinary actions may include:

- Warnings (verbal or written)
- Termination of enrolment, depending on the severity of the breach

In cases where the safety or well-being of students or staff is compromised, immediate actions may be taken, including the temporary suspension of the student pending further investigation. All actions will be consistent with the College's **Student Misconduct Policy** and the principles of natural justice.

## 5. Information sharing

While Oxygen College is not authorised under Part 6A of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 as an information-sharing organisation, both the college and adults associated with it are legally obligated to report any instances of sexual offenses committed against children under the age of 16 by an adult.

## 6. Rights empowerment

Oxygen College is committed to fostering an empowering culture that values the rights of children. Staff, contractor, and volunteers will take the following measures to ensure that students' views, concerns, feedback, and general wellbeing are heard and acted upon appropriately:

- a. Listen actively to students and act upon areas where appropriate, including their views and beliefs, concerns, feedback, general wellbeing, and academic progression.
- b. Provide a safe environment that is free from bias, discrimination, and abuse.
- c. Celebrate diversity and cultural differences among students.

- d. Ensure that preferred names and pronouns are used and understood by all staff, contractor, and volunteers.
- e. Offer students a choice when making decisions about their academic journey.
- f. Provide clear information to students regarding safety, information, and participation in all aspects of college life.
- g. Foster a culture of friendship and supportive peer relationships
- h. Ensure that staff, contractors, and volunteers are knowledgeable about the signs of harm and how to access resources to support students.
- i. Create a child-friendly approach to making complaints that prioritises listening to students.

All staff, contractors and volunteers are expected to adhere to this policy and contribute to creating an empowering and inclusive environment for students. Any concerns or issues related to this policy should be reported to the Director of Operations.

*‘Culture is the system of shared assumptions, values and beliefs that influence the way people behave in an organisation. Ultimately the decisions and behaviours of all adults in an organisation contribute to its culture’.*

*Commission for child safety, a guide for organisations working with children and young people.*

## **6.1 Family and community engagement**

Family and community engagement is essential for the academic and personal development of students and to safeguard them against abuse and harm. This policy aims to promote and encourage parental and community involvement in the learning journey of students at Oxygen College.

### **1. Parental involvement in pre-enrolment stage**

- 1.1 Oxygen College requires parental attendance at each pre-enrolment stage to ensure that the program/facility is the most appropriate avenue for the applicant.
- 1.2 It is critical for the applicant and family to be aware of the learning environment, assessment activities, and the level of supervision within the programs.
- 1.3 Students will be exposed to supervised and unsupervised environments such as studio rehearsal rooms, art studios, recording rooms, and live music venues.

### **2. Community involvement in events**

- 2.1 Families/communities are highly encouraged to attend and support students in the following events: live music events at local wineries and music venues, exhibitions, and graduations.

### **3. Communication with parents/guardians**

- 3.1 Oxygen College will notify parents/guardians of any student progression, welfare, and/or disciplinary issues that have arisen.
- 3.2 The student engagement officer will ensure that clear and concise information is provided to both the student and the parent/guardian, and that both parties have the opportunity to discuss concerns and provide solutions and/or make decisions relating to their studies.

### **4. General community engagement**

- 4.1 Oxygen College is the only purpose-built creative arts facility for students in Regional Victoria, and feedback from the community is vital to ensure the services offered promote and encourage the safety and inclusion of all.
- 4.2 Oxygen College encourages community members to provide feedback and suggestions through the "have your say" platform on the College website.

## 7. Recruitment and induction

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Oxygen College employs the best possible staff or contractor and provides a comprehensive induction process to safeguard the welfare of children and young people in our care.

### 1. Recruitment of Staff, contractors, or volunteers

- 1.1 Oxygen College will ensure that staff, contractors, and volunteers are recruited in a fair, transparent, and non-discriminatory manner.
- 1.2 All staff, contractors and volunteers who work with children or young people will be required to hold a current Working with Children Check before commencing employment and, provide a police check.
- 1.3 Recruitment processes will include an assessment of the candidate's skills, experience, and qualifications, as well as their understanding of child safety principles and the college's commitment to child safety.
- 1.4 Referees will be contacted to verify the candidate's suitability for working with children or young people.

### 2. Induction of Staff, contractors, or volunteers

- 2.1 All new staff, contractors and volunteers will receive a comprehensive induction that includes information on child safety policies and procedures, and their responsibilities in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- 2.2 The induction will include training on identifying and responding to child abuse or harm, including how to report concerns or allegations of child abuse or harm.
- 2.3 All staff, contractors and volunteers will be required to sign a code of conduct that includes a commitment to child safety and adherence to child safety policies and procedures.
- 2.4 Regular refresher training will be provided to ensure staff, contractors and volunteers remain up to date with child safety policies and procedures.

### 3. Supervision of Staff, contractors, or volunteers

- 3.1 All staff, contractors and volunteers will be appropriately supervised to ensure that they are providing a safe and supportive environment for children and young people.
- 3.2 Any concerns or allegations of child abuse or harm will be taken seriously and investigated promptly, and appropriate action will be taken to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

3.3 Staff, contractors and volunteers who breach child safety policies and procedures may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### **4. Record Keeping**

4.1 Oxygen College will maintain accurate and up-to-date records of all staff, contractors and volunteers working with children or young people.

4.2 Staff, contractors, and volunteers are required to have Oxygen College listed as an organisation to ensure updated information to provided immediately by the Department of Government Services.

4.3 Records obtained by the College will include Working with Children Checks, and training on child safety policies and procedures.

4.4 Records will be securely stored and kept confidential, in accordance with relevant privacy laws and regulations.

4.5 Oxygen College will retain records for a minimum of seven years following the termination of an employee or volunteer's engagement with the college.

4.6 The Director of Operations or their delegate will be responsible for ensuring that records are kept up-to-date and securely stored, and that they are made available for inspection by relevant regulatory bodies.

## 7.1 Training and education

1. Oxygen College is fully committed to ensuring the safety of children within its premises. In order to make this commitment public, the college has identified several communication tools that must include a reference to child safety. These tools include the college's website, email footers, information booklets, job advertisements, student handbook, post-enrolment information, posters within classrooms and lunch areas, and student orientation/induction power-points. Each of these communication tools will clearly state the college's commitment to providing a child safe environment for students under the age of 18, and will emphasise the importance of the safety, wellbeing, and participation of all children within the college.
2. Oxygen College recognises that providing education and resources around child safety is crucial for ensuring a safe environment for children. To prioritise this, the college has established a training program for its staff, contractors, and volunteers to ensure they have the necessary skills and knowledge to maintain a child safe environment. This program includes the 'appropriate workplace behaviour, First Nations and LGBTQIA+' program facilitated by the SBS inclusion program, as well as in-house training modules such as 'Child Safety Standards Introduction' and 'Child Safety Standards Discussion'. Upon successful completion of these training programs, staff, contractors, and volunteers will receive certificates which will be stored in their HR files.

## 8. Complaints process

### 1. Purpose –

- 1.1 Oxygen College is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people in its care.
- 1.2 This policy outlines the procedures that Oxygen College will follow when handling complaints related to allegations of abuse and harm to children by an adult or other children. It also describes the assistance that will be provided to the complainant, outlines how risks to children will be managed when a complaint is raised, and covers record keeping and reporting obligations.

### 2. Principles

- 2.1 Oxygen College is committed to promoting a culture of openness, accountability, and respect for the rights and wellbeing of all children and young people.
- 2.2 All complaints will be taken seriously and investigated in a timely, fair, and impartial manner.
- 2.3 Oxygen College will provide appropriate support and assistance to complainants throughout the complaints process.
- 2.4 All complaints will be handled in a culturally respectful manner, and Oxygen College will take into account the diversity of children, staff, volunteers, families, and communities when handling complaints.

### 3. Making a Complaint

- 3.1 Any person who has a concern or complaint about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person in Oxygen College's care may make a complaint.
- 3.2 Complaints can be made:
  - In person,
  - In writing via the website <https://www.oxygencollege.com.au/complaints-appeals-form/>
  - by phone – 1300 195 303
  - By email:
    - General Manager – [luke@oxygencollege.com.au](mailto:luke@oxygencollege.com.au)
    - Director of Operations – [alycia@oxygencollege.com.au](mailto:alycia@oxygencollege.com.au)
- 3.3 Complainants will be provided with information about the complaints process and the support available to them.

#### **4. Investigation**

- 4.1 All complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and impartially.
- 4.2 The investigation will be conducted by a person who has appropriate skills and experience in handling complaints and has not been involved in the matter being investigated.
- 4.3 Oxygen College will take steps to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of the child or young person is not compromised during the investigation and will assess any risks associated with the process.
- 4.4 Where appropriate, Oxygen College will notify the relevant authorities, such as the police or child protection services, and cooperate with any investigations.

#### **5. Support and Assistance**

- 5.1 Oxygen College will provide appropriate support and assistance to complainants throughout the complaints process.
- 5.2 Complainants will be provided with information about support services available to them, including counselling, advocacy, and legal support.
- 5.3 Oxygen College will take steps to ensure that complainants and witnesses are protected from victimisation and retaliation.

#### **6. Record Keeping**

- 6.1 Oxygen College will keep accurate and up-to-date records of all complaints and their outcomes.
- 6.2 Records will include details of the complaint, the investigation, any disciplinary actions taken, and any support or assistance provided to the complainant.
- 6.3 Records will be securely stored and kept confidential, in accordance with relevant privacy laws and regulations.
- 6.4 Oxygen College will retain records for a minimum of seven years following the resolution of the complaint.

#### **7. Breach of Policies and Procedures**

- 7.1 Oxygen College takes all breaches of its policies and procedures, including the Child Safe Code of Conduct, seriously.
- 7.2 Any person who breaches Oxygen College's policies and procedures may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of their employment or engagement with the college.



- 7.3 Oxygen College will take steps to ensure that staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of their obligations to act in accordance with Oxygen College's policies and procedures and the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

## **8. Reporting to Authorities**

- 8.1 Oxygen College will report any allegations of abuse or harm to children to the relevant authorities, including the police and child protection services, as required by law.
- 8.2 Oxygen College will cooperate with any investigations by the relevant authorities and provide any information or assistance required.

## **9. Review**

Oxygen College is committed to the implementation and review of child safety practices and will undertake the following:

### **1. Analysis of Systemic Failures**

- 1.1 Oxygen College will conduct an analysis of systemic failures identified through the complaints process.
- 1.2 The analysis will be conducted by a designated staff member who has appropriate expertise in child safety and welfare.
- 1.3 The analysis will include a review of relevant policies, procedures, and practices that may have contributed to the failure.
- 1.4 The analysis will also consider any individual factors or circumstances that may have contributed to the failure.
- 1.5 The analysis will identify any gaps or weaknesses in the College's child safe practices.

### **2. Evaluation and Improvement of Child Safe Practices**

- 2.1 Following the analysis, Oxygen College will evaluate and improve its child safe practices.
- 2.2 The evaluation will involve a review of existing policies, procedures, and practices and the development of new policies, procedures, or practices where necessary.
- 2.3 The evaluation will be conducted by a designated staff member who has appropriate expertise in child safety and welfare.
- 2.4 The evaluation will consider the effectiveness of current child safe practices and identify opportunities for improvement.
- 2.5 The evaluation will involve consultation with staff, students, families, and the wider community.

2.6 The College will prioritise and implement improvements based on the outcomes of the evaluation.

### **3. Communication with Staff**

3.1 Oxygen College will communicate with staff, contractors and volunteers regarding management decisions and changes in policies and practices resulting from the analysis and evaluation process.

3.2 Communication will be conducted through appropriate channels, such as staff meetings, or email.

3.3 Staff will be provided with clear instructions on any changes to policies or practices and any new responsibilities they may have as a result.

### **4. Communication of Outcomes**

4.1 Oxygen College will communicate relevant outcomes to students, families, and the wider community as appropriate.

4.2 Communication will be conducted through appropriate channels, such as the College's website, email or public forums.

4.3 Communication will be provided in a way that is culturally respectful and accessible to the full diversity of students, families, and the wider community.

### **5. Record Keeping**

5.1 Oxygen College will keep records of any systemic failures identified, the outcomes of the analysis and evaluation process, and any improvements made to child safe practices.

5.2 Records will be kept in accordance with relevant legislation, such as privacy and freedom of information laws.

5.3 Records will be kept for a minimum of 7 years, or as required by law.

## **10. Key Aligned documents**

[COMP219 Culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander policy](#)

[Student safety code of conduct – Staff](#)

*Student code of conduct – Student responsibilities*

*COMP163 Complaints and appeals procedure*