# 2023 Parkville College Duty of Care Policy

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## Purpose

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

## 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 a unique context that means at our Parkville and Malmsbury campuses we have a shared duty of care with the Department of Justice and Community Safety (DJCS), and at our Ascot Vale and Maribyrnong campuses we have a shared duty of care with the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH). At these campuses we rely on the respective Departments’ procedures to manage common risks in the environment, including:

* On-site supervision
* First aid
* Student medical conditions (including Asthma management)
* Managing and distributing medicine
* Emergency management
* Restrictive interventions
* Visitors and volunteers
* Anaphylaxis Management
* Emergency bushfire management
* Buildings, facilities and grounds
* Behaviour management
* Digital Learning (Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices)

If our staff identify a risk relating to our students in these areas, they will take reasonable steps to reduce that risk. These steps will be in accordance with any relevant policy or procedure and will typically include informing relevant Department (i.e. DJCS or DFFH) staff of the issue or incident for appropriate follow up action. Follow up will occur via the stakeholder governance structures as outlined in the MOUs.

At our Flexible Learning Centre campus, the duty of care in the above areas is not shared with the other Departments and our school has developed procedures to manage these common risks. In addition, we have developed policies and procedures to manage common risks in all our school environments, including:

* Yard Duty and Supervision
* Bullying Prevention
* Camps and Excursions
* First Aid
* Child Safe Standards
* Emergency Management
* Volunteers
* Visitors
* Working with Children and Suitability Checks
* Mandatory Reporting
* Occupational Health and Safety
* Student Wellbeing and Engagement
* Digital Learning (Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices)

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, at the Flexible Learning Centre campus, 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.

## 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 school administration upon request

## Further Information and Resources

* the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Duty of Care](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/duty-of-care/policy)
* the Department’s Policy and Advisory Library (PAL): [Structured Workplace Learning](https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/structured-workplace-learning/policy)
* [Bullying Prevention](https://www.parkvillecollege.vic.edu.au/s/2022-Parkville-College-Bullying-Prevention-Policy.docx)
* [Camps and Excursions Policy](https://www.parkvillecollege.vic.edu.au/s/2021-FLC-Excursions-Policy.docx)
* [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](https://www.parkvillecollege.vic.edu.au/s/2022-Parkville-College-Child-Safety-and-Wellbeing-Policy.docx)
* [Visitors Policy](https://www.parkvillecollege.vic.edu.au/s/2022-Parkville-College-FLC-Campus-Visitors-Policy.docx)
* [Volunteers Policy](https://www.parkvillecollege.vic.edu.au/s/2022-Parkville-College-FLC-Campus-Volunteer-Policy.docx)
* [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy](https://www.parkvillecollege.vic.edu.au/s/2022-Parkville-College-Child-Safety-Responding-and-Reporting-Olbigations.docx)
* Occupational Health and Safety
* [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](https://www.parkvillecollege.vic.edu.au/s/2022-Parkville-College-Student-Wellbeing-and-Engagement-Policy.docx)
* [Digital Learning (Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices) Policy](https://www.parkvillecollege.vic.edu.au/s/2022-Parkville-College-Digital-Learning-Policy.docx)

## Policy evaluation and review

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 3 years. The review will include input from students, parents/carers and the school community.

This policy was last updated April 2023 and is scheduled for review in April 2026.