



Billanook College

International Student Homestay Policy Handbook 2019



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WELCOME TO OUR HOMESTAY PROGRAM

Billanook College welcomes students from a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, both for the relatively short term student exchange experience and as full time, fee paying members of our College community.

It is our firm belief that International Students gain most from this educational opportunity when they are able to live with, and be under the care of, an Australian family. In rare circumstances, where the student may have an approved adult relative living within close proximity of the College, consideration may be given to the student residing with that relative as long as they, as host family, agree to accept all terms and conditions of the Homestay Program.

Occasionally the Student Recruitment Agent, who is often the primary source of enrolment, will choose to organise accommodation for the student on a fee for service basis with College approval. This accommodation must be within suitable proximity to the College.

In most cases Billanook College will select an appropriate homestay family for International Students once their enrolment at the College is confirmed. Where possible, the wishes of the International Student and their parents are sought and considered in the matching of the student to a specific homestay family. Prospective homestay families are carefully sourced and selected on a range of criteria including

- motivation for undertaking this important function
- previous experience with young people of different cultures
- family structure
- the level of care and supervision able to be offered
- suitability of the homestay location and facilities
- the time and effort the homestay family members may be able to devote to this role

Ideally the homestay families become a wonderful source of support for the International Student, as they adjust to our cultural differences, way of life and the educational system in Australia. Homestay accommodation is co-ordinated by the College in the interests of providing safety, security and stability for international students undertaking studies with us, and in accordance with all student welfare regulations imposed by law.

As Billanook College issues the Confirmation of Approved Accommodation and Welfare for the vast majority of International Students under the age of 18, please note that the College accepts full responsibility for monitoring such arrangements in the interests of the welfare of the student. International Students are **not** permitted to make their own accommodation and welfare arrangements. It is a Condition of Enrolment that such arrangements remain in place for the full duration of enrolment regardless of the student's age.

Billanook College strictly adheres to VRQA Guidelines and, as such, will not place an International Student under the age of 13 years in Homestay Accommodation. While Billanook College does have CRICOS registration for students younger than 13 years of age, such students must live with a Department of Home Affairs (DHA) approved parent or relative. As a general rule Billanook College seeks to enrol International Students from Year 9-12, with a minimum age of 14 years at enrolment.



WELCOME TO OUR HOMESTAY PROGRAM

This booklet outlines the Homestay Policy of the Billanook College Homestay Program. We trust that this information will be a great support as the International Student and the homestay family commence the process of forming a mutually rewarding relationship throughout their homestay arrangement.

Please do not hesitate to direct questions relating to any homestay or College matter to the Manager, International Programs or the Homestay Officer.

Finally, we wish all parties of the homestay arrangement well - the student, their parents and the homestay family members - as they reap the benefits to be gained from this experience.

Mission

As a School in the tradition of the Uniting Church in Australia, our Mission is to develop a dynamic, caring, learning community which fosters the growth of the whole being of each girl and boy - in body, mind and spirit; providing a range of pathways to life-long learning through and beyond academic excellence.



COLLEGE CONTACTS



Roger Oates
Principal
9724 1179
registrar@billanook.vic.edu.au



Steven Lingard
Manager, International Programs
9724 1166
0421 993 571
steven.lingard@billanook.vic.edu.au

Charlotte Dew
International Program Registrar
9724 4248
Internationalprograms@billanook.vic.edu.au

Debra Kane
International Student Programs Officer
0409 331 380
debra.kane@billanook.vic.edu.au

Linhong Xie
Bi-lingual Local Support Person
0409 106 939
international.support@billanook.vic.edu.au

Belinda Vertriest
Deputy Principal and Head of Senior School
9724 1115
secsnr@billanook.vic.edu.au

Nick Owen
Head of Middle School
9724 1136
secmid@billanook.vic.edu.au

Homestay Officer
0407 543 338
homestayofficer@billanook.vic.edu.au

Absence Lines

Senior School, 9724 4224

Middle School, 9724 4225



TERM DATES 2019

Term 1

Staff commence	Monday 21 January
Year 7 commence	Thursday 24 January
Australia Day Holiday	Monday 28 January
Term 1 commences	Tuesday 29 January
Labour Day Holiday	Monday 11 March
EXIT Week - Years 8 to 11 students	Monday 1 to Friday 5 April
Term 1 concludes	Friday 5 April

Term 2

Term 2 commences	Tuesday 23 April
ANZAC Day Holiday	Thursday 25 April
Student Free Day - Staff Report Writing Day	Friday 7 June
Queen's Birthday Holiday	Monday 10 June
Term 2 concludes	Friday 28 June

Semester 2, Terms 3 and 4 Dates 2019

Term 3

Staff PD Week	Monday 15 - Friday 19 July
Classes commence for whole school	Monday 22 July
EXIT Week - Years 10 and 11 students	Monday 16 to Friday 20 September
Term 3 concludes	Friday 20 September

Term 4

Staff and students commence	Monday 7 October
Cup Exeat (holiday)	Monday 4 November
Melbourne Cup Day	Tuesday 5 November
EXIT Week - Years 10 and 11 Students	Monday 18 to Friday 22 November
Valedictory Dinner	Friday 22 November
Student Free Day - Staff Report Writing Day	Monday 25 November
Term 4 concludes	Wednesday 11 December



IMPORTANT TERM BREAK INFORMATION

Year 12 Students are **strongly advised** not to return to their home country during the academic year so that continuity of VCE study progress can be maintained during term breaks. The **only exception** to this for Year 12 students should be in the first two weeks of the mid-year term break in July if necessary. The final date for Year 12 attendance is Friday 22 November, the date of the Valedictory Dinner.

Students in Years 7 – 11 may only return to their home country in the mid-year term break period between Saturday 29 June and Sunday 21 July. **All** Years 7 – 11 students continuing on with studies at Billanook College for 2020 must attend school until Wednesday 11 December.

Requests for students to return to their home country at any other time during the academic year must be made by applying for Special Leave.



TIMETABLE STRUCTURE AND AFTER SCHOOL TUITION

Period 1 8:40am to 9:40am

Changeover 9:40am to 9:45am

Period 2 9:45am to 10:45am

Recess 10:45am to 11:05am

Period 3 11:05am to 12:05pm

Changeover 12:05pm to 12:10pm

Period 4 12:10pm to 1:10pm

1:05pm finish for sport on Wednesdays for Seniors and Thursdays for Middle School Students

Lunch 1:10pm to 2:00pm

Period 5 2:00pm to 3:00pm

Homegroup 3:00pm to 3:15pm

Timetabled Physical Education Classes

- All Year 7 to 10 students take part in Physical Education as a mandatory subject. Homestay families are advised to become aware of the days in the student timetable when the students will need to access their laundered College Sports Uniform.
- Timetabled Sport Days' finish times will vary. Students are to check sport notices on MyConnect each week.
- Year 7 students **must** remember to bring College Sports Uniform with them on Mondays.
- Years 8 and 9 students **must** remember to bring College Sports Uniform with them on Thursdays.
- Years 10 and 11 students **must** remember to bring College Sports Uniform with them on Wednesdays.

NB.

Academic Support Program is available during Term Time Only

Wednesday afternoons 3:30pm to 6:45pm – VCE Chinese First Language Classes

Subject teachers at Billanook College may sometimes choose to run additional Academic Support Sessions after school for students during the academic year. Students are required to inform Homestay Parents in advance of such sessions. Homestay parents may contact the bilingual support persons or the International Student Program Officer to verify if necessary.



STUDENT TRANSPORTATION

Weekend Bus Drive Service

Many of our students now have both educational and recreational activities on weekends requiring train travel. In the interests of student welfare and in support of our Homestay families, Billanook College provides a *Weekend Driver Service* for students returning to Mooroolbark Station.

Transport is provided by a contracted and approved Driver in the College mini-bus within a time frame as follows:

Friday Evenings: 7.00pm – 10.00pm

Saturday Evenings: 7.00pm – 10.00pm

Students in Year 9 and 10 must return to Mooroolbark Station before **8.15pm** to access this service.

Students in Year 11 and 12 must return to Mooroolbark Station before **9.15pm** to access this service.

The College will strictly monitor these staggered return times in order to manage efficiently the number of students using this service. The College reserves the right to review the provision of this service at any time. The Homestay Officer will communicate any changes in the operation of this service.

Sunday Activities

International Students are strongly encouraged to use Sundays for Homestay activities and homework completion. When they do need to travel away from their Homestay on Sundays we require the student to make their own transport arrangements in negotiation with the Homestay family. All International Students are required to return to their homestay no later than 6.00pm on a Sunday.

Student Welfare: Safe Transport Policy

Billanook College undertakes to provide all International Students with training on Personal Safety Procedures when using various transport modes.

The College accepts that our students may need to take taxis and ride share facilities (Uber etc.) from time to time but, where possible, they should use the public transport system including buses, trains and the Weekend Driver Service.

Students are also encouraged to seek the assistance of Homestay families in providing transport, where convenient. Open communication on this matter will ensure that there is a clear understanding of reasonable expectations on this matter.

Homestay parents have a right to know the whereabouts of their students at all times. Should unexpected delays or disruptions arise regarding transport, it is the responsibility of the student to notify their Homestay Parent without delay.

Weekend Driver Service Providers are trained in Child Safe Standards by the Human Resources Manager on appointment. The Weekend Driver Service Providers are required to read and acknowledge the Billanook College Child Safety Policy, and to sign the Billanook College Code of Conduct. Ongoing monitoring of adherence to best practice in Child Safe Standards by Weekend Driver Service Providers is the responsibility of the Manager, International Programs. All appointed Weekend Driver Service Providers are required to have a current Working with Children Check.



HOMESTAY PROGRAM

The homestay arrangement, while facilitated by Billanook College, is an agreement between the International Student and their parent/bilingual Local Support Person with the homestay parent/s.

Terms and Conditions

Billanook College sets in place the Terms and Conditions of the Homestay Agreement as specified herein, and neither party is to attempt to introduce any change to these Terms and Conditions without the knowledge and consent of the Manager, International Programs or the Homestay Officer (refer to Page 15).

Full Board Provisions

Provision of full board is expected in return for the homestay fee payable by the student. This implies that

- all meals will be provided seven days per week for the student
- the student has relatively free access to household food supplies, for example fresh fruit and other snacks between meals as considered reasonable
- the homestay family supply all household consumables such as toilet paper and tissues (students may choose to provide their own toiletries)
- reasonable internet access is available, the cost of which is included in the homestay fee.

In the event the internet access is not considered adequate by the student, they should speak to the Homestay Officer.

To overcome any dietary preferences, ask the student to come shopping with you in the early stages of the homestay arrangement so that food likes and dislikes can be resolved. This will also help the student to gain an appreciation of the true cost of additional food provision.

International Students are generally accustomed to eating a hot lunch rather than sandwiches. Students have access to refrigeration and microwave ovens at the College to store and heat lunches provided by Homestay families.

As a guide, homestay families should expect to spend approximately 60% of the weekly homestay fee on additional food, household supplies and household energy consumption.



INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM ROLES

Role of the Homestay Officer

For the commencement of 2019 Billanook College has introduced a new structure of support for International Students and Homestay families.

The Homestay Officer reports to the International Student Programs Officer, Ms Debra Kane, and is responsible for the co-ordination and administration of the Homestay Program including

- sourcing, selecting and appointment of Homestay families
- communication and management of Homestay Policies
- receiving and responding to phone calls up to 9.00pm from Homestay families or students on **homestay policy** or **administrative matters** only
- investigating and resolving complaints by students and Homestay families in consultation with the bilingual Local Support Persons
- functioning as the initial arbiter on any matters of concern or dispute regarding the Homestay arrangement
- briefing the Manager, International Programs or College Principal in line with broader College policies
- facilitating and co-ordinating the relocation of a student to a new Homestay placement where necessary

Role of the Bilingual Local Support Persons

Bilingual Local Support Persons now replace the previous ISA Guardianship model with a new arrangement of two Staff being positioned at the College on an ongoing, job-sharing basis. These contracted Staff will be offering welfare support to students, and a communication channel with and for offshore and onshore parents. The bilingual Local Support Persons report to the International Student Programs Officer.

The Homestay Program Operational Roles of these Staff members include

- assisting the Homestay Officer to complete Homestay selection interviews
- assisting with initial Homestay placements and Homestay Orientation procedures
- regularly reviewing the success of the Homestay placement on a case by case basis, through phone contact, student interview or homestay visitation
- counseling the students on how to best manage their Homestay responsibilities.
- supporting and advising Homestay families.
- responding to and investigating any concerns raised by the student or their parents on Homestay matters
- responding to and investigating any concerns raised by Homestay families related to the functioning of the student in the Homestay setting or student welfare out of school hours. The bilingual Local Support Persons are the after hours Emergency Contact Officers on all International Student matters.
- regularly reporting to the Homestay Officer and the International Programs Officer.



INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM ROLES

Role of the Manager, International Programs

- Monitor the need for growth in our Homestay Program in light of future enrolments.
- Contribute to the development of the Billanook College Homestay policies and procedures.
- Consult with the Homestay Officer and International Student Programs Officer on current matters arising for students in Homestay placements, and for families as Homestay providers.
- Advise the Homestay Officer on resolution of disputes.

Ultimately all decisions regarding the accommodation and welfare of International Students rest with the Manager, International Programs in consultation with the College Principal.



HOMESTAY FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

It is policy that homestay families provide accommodation to no more than two International Students. Students must have their own bedroom and study facilities.

Many students are living away from home for the first time and learning to cope with independent living and study in Australia. Homestay families can assist students to become accustomed to life in Australia by

- including the student as a family member.
- guiding the student in community safety considerations, including use of public transport.
- taking an active interest in the student's academic progress, social life and interests.
- encouraging the students to enjoy a well-balanced life.
- ensuring the students are maintaining an acceptable diet and routines of eating.

Some specific requirements of Homestay parents include

- providing guidance to the student on effective study habits.
- monitoring the home based routines of the student and reporting any concerns to the Homestay Officer, particularly any overuse of recreational technology
- provision of three meals per day each day of the week and reasonable access for the student to healthy snacks such as fresh fruit between meals.
- assisting the student with transport where convenient to do so.
- training the student on safe and energy efficient use of all homestay appliances.
- ensuring the student complies with laundry routines of the home so as to ensure that the student always has access to laundered College uniform items
- reporting ANY instances of late arrival home by the student to the bilingual Local Support Persons without delay. Billanook College applies a Homestay curfew of 6.00pm on Sunday to Thursday evenings and 10.00pm on Friday and Saturday evenings
- reporting any extra-ordinary requests made by the students to the Local Support Person and Homestay Officer, such as
 - plans to attend a social gathering beyond curfew hours
 - plans to organise a social event/party at the Homestay or at a public venue
 - plans to stay overnight at the home of somebody else
- reporting **any** observed or suspected student behaviour of concern, particularly where the behavior may be damaging to the welfare of the student, to members of the Homestay family or to members of the College or wider community.
- monitoring emails for periodic updates on College events, key dates and other important information.
- reporting student absence due to illness.



HOMESTAY FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

- exercising strict adherence to the requirements of the Billanook College Child Safe Policy in terms of the student's privacy, and emotional and physical safety in the home. To view this policy, please see link below. Please also refer to Child Safety under the Terms and Conditions in this booklet

<http://www.billanook.vic.edu.au/child-safety/>

Please Note: Homestay families must advise the Homestay Officer of any additional adults who may be residing in the home, regardless of the brevity of stay.

Absence Due to Illness

It is a legal responsibility that the College accurately monitors and records the school attendance of International Students. We require Homestay families to assist the College in this function by reporting any known homestay student absence using the Attendance Line phone number by 10.00am on the day of absence.

In any circumstance where the International Student requires professional medical attention, the Homestay parent is advised to communicate directly with the bilingual Local Support Person to make arrangements. In the event of a medical emergency, Homestay parents should first utilise the 000 Emergency Service and then notify the bilingual Local Support Person.



EXPECTATION OF STUDENTS AS A MEMBER OF A HOMESTAY FAMILY

The only accommodation option for International Students enrolled at Billanook College is placement with a College approved Homestay Family. International Students must understand that it is a privilege to be able to reside with a local family, and as a result the College expects the very best effort of all International Students in adhering to the following expectations.

As a member of a Homestay Family, students agree to

- display respect for the Homestay family members and their home at all times.
- display respect for any Homestay Rules considered necessary for the smooth functioning of the specific Homestay family routines.
- communicate openly and honestly at all times with Homestay parents and be willing to ask questions when unsure of any matters of concern.
- maintain a co-operative and friendly manner toward other Homestay members at all times.
- accept and follow all Billanook College imposed International Student curfew times and to implement the Personal Safety - Safe Transport Practices at all times.
- only travel in private vehicles being driven by approved adults in each case.
- always have their mobile phone turned on and charged ready to receive calls from Homestay parents, bilingual Local Support Persons, Homestay Officer and other Billanook Staff. It is also a responsibility of the student to ensure they always have sufficient mobile phone credit to be able to make calls.
- notify the Homestay parent, bilingual Local Support Person and Homestay Officer of any change in their mobile phone contact details.
- inform the Homestay parent **in advance** if the student is not intending to be home for a meal.
- maintain an acceptable routine of personal hygiene – bathing/showering daily and accept responsibility for cleaning bathroom and toilet amenities after personal use.
- accept and adhere to the **open door policy** in study spaces so that Homestay parents are aware of appropriate use of technology by the student.
- seek permission from a Homestay parent, in advance, before inviting a friend or visitor to enter the Homestay residence.
- inform the Homestay parent if the International Student has any health related concerns, including informing the Homestay parent of any medications they may have in their possession in the Homestay residence.
- accept responsibility for maintaining a tidy bedroom, and follow directions from the Homestay parent on any routines associated with this matter.
- accept that they may be required to assist with some basic Homestay family chores.



EXPECTATION OF STUDENTS AS A MEMBER OF A HOMESTAY FAMILY

- report to the Homestay parent, without delay, any damage they may have caused to the Homestay property or amenities. International Students must understand that under no circumstances are they to attempt to remedy the damage without consulting the Homestay parent
- openly discuss with their Homestay parent, bilingual Local Support Person or Homestay Officer well in advance any plans for social gatherings such as parties regardless of the planned location of these activities. International Students are reminded of Australian laws regarding purchase, possession and / or consumption of alcohol, cigarettes and other tobacco products, and illegal and harmful drugs.
- communicate plans for return travel to their home country to the bilingual Local Support Person no later than six weeks prior to travel. This includes completing an on-line lodgement of copies of airline tickets via MyConnect.
- complete Homestay payments to the Homestay parent in the agreed manner always **one month** in advance. Should there be any reason that the International Student cannot make the Homestay payment on time this matter must be communicated to both the Homestay parent and the Homestay Officer for their consideration.
- raise any concerns they may have regarding their Homestay placement with their Homestay parent, the bilingual Local Support Person or the Homestay Officer for advice and assistance. This should be done as early as possible for prompt resolution of any difficulties
- contact the Homestay Officer to discuss a resolution of any issues they have with their Homestay family.

Overnight Stays

No International Student, regardless of age, is permitted to stay out overnight without the permission of the bilingual Local Support Person. Permission will only be granted when sufficient notice has been provided to allow the bilingual Local Support Person to undertake all necessary checks that appropriate adult care and supervision are in place for the student, in accordance with the Billanook College Confirmation of Approved Accommodation and Welfare. Breach of this may place the International Student's enrolment at the College and Student Visa status at risk of cancellation.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Accommodation Policy

Billanook College requires all International Students to be accommodated in College-approved homestay for the duration of their studies. The College chooses to manage and administer our own homestay program as opposed to outsourcing this function.

Billanook College, as facilitator of the Homestay Program, sets in place the base Terms and Conditions of the Homestay placement of each International Student. These Terms and Conditions may not be varied by the Homestay parent, the International Student or the parent without the prior knowledge and approval of Billanook College.

NB: If your student is required to be relocated to a new homestay for any reason, the first move will not incur a fee. Second and successive moves may incur a fee. This will be at the discretion of the Manager, International Programs.

Financial Arrangements

- Billanook College sets the Homestay Fee each year and advises the overseas parents of the amount that needs to be provided to their student, so that the International Student will self-manage Homestay payments in advance.
- The Homestay Fee as at 1 July 2018 is \$325 per week = \$1,408 per calendar month.
- Homestay Fees are to be paid by the student **in advance** on a monthly basis.
- It is preferable that Homestay Fee payments are made by electronic funds transfer directly by the student into the Homestay family bank account. In the event that both parties agree on payment of Homestay Fees in cash, the Homestay family must provide the student with a written receipt as proof of payment
- Billanook College will inform all parties at least two months in advance of any change to the Homestay Fee. As a general principle Homestay Fees are adjusted upwards on 1 July each year to offset increases in cost of living. You are hereby advised that the Homestay Fee will be increased to \$335 per week or \$1450 per calendar month on 1 July 2019.

Homestay Fee Adjustment in Periods of Student Absence

If the International Student wishes to take a vacation in the **mid-year term break**, they are entitled to a 50% discount of Homestay Fees for the period of absence, calculated per day, provided **no less than two weeks' notice** was provided to the College and to the Homestay family.

Most International Students return to their home country in the Australian summer holiday break (December/ January). If International Students are planning to return to their current Homestay family and are leaving some of their possessions at the Homestay residence then **a holding fee** of 10% of the scheduled Homestay Fee is due and payable before departure in December.

In the case of International Student absence as a result of published school camps, the student is entitled to a 50% discount/refund of the Homestay Fee for the number of days of absence. Rather than being a physical reimbursement of that sum, it is acceptable for the student to simply pay a lower Homestay Fee to reflect that discount in the next monthly Homestay payment.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Notice of Termination

Unless otherwise stated, homestay arrangements are in place for an on-going period of time. If either party wishes to terminate the Homestay Agreement, this can only occur with the knowledge and involvement of the Homestay Officer. In most circumstances, either party will require a minimum of two weeks' notice to terminate the Agreement. This period of notice may be waived at the discretion of the Manager, International Programs or the Homestay Officer, by negotiation and as deemed necessary in unusual or extreme circumstances.

Damage to Homestay Residence

In the event that damage is caused by the International Student to the property of the Homestay family it is important that this matter is brought to the attention of the College Homestay Officer as promptly as possible for further investigation. The College will require the Homestay parent to submit a Homestay Damages Claim Form:

- (a) As a general principle the student is liable to pay the reasonable cost of repair or replacement of Homestay property or amenities on a like for like basis. Exceptions to this rule apply in the case of damage caused by general wear and tear.
- (b) Billanook College agrees to mediate, in consultation with the International Students and / or parent, for the restoration of the property damage. The College will require the Homestay parent to provide documentary evidence of the reasonable cost of repair.
- (c) Homestay parents are advised to check their Home and Contents Insurance Policy to ensure that significant losses sustained through the actions of an International Student are recoverable under that policy.

Insurance of International Student Property

- (a) Homestay parents undertake to make every effort to maintain the security of student possessions within the Homestay residence.
- (b) International Students should make a list of all personal property items stored in the Homestay residence with a replacement value of more than \$500.
- (c) Photos of such possessions, receipts as proof of purchase, and records of serial numbers should be maintained by the student as proof of ownership.

It is recommended that Homestay parents discuss with their insurer the process involved in declaring such possessions on the Household Contents Insurance policy. Should there be an increase in Insurance Premium Cost to do this, payment of this additional premium by the student and/or their parents should then be negotiated through the Homestay Officer.



CHILD SAFETY

Billanook College is committed to child safety. All children at the College should feel safe, happy and empowered. The College has a zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns are treated consistently and very seriously.

In accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards schools are required to develop and implement codes of conduct for staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors working in all school environments. This includes homestay placements.

When selecting prospective families for inclusion in the Billanook College Homestay Program, the Homestay Officer or bilingual Local Support Person is required to provide adult members of the family with training on best practice in Child Safe Standards when engaging with International Students in the Homestay environment. This is an ideal opportunity for prospective homestay family members to ask questions. The Homestay Officer is able to assess the responses of the prospective Homestay family members and identify any possible risk factors.

Once approved as a Homestay provider for Billanook College, it is mandatory that at least one Homestay Parent from each Homestay family attends the Homestay Information Evening scheduled in mid-February each year. The evening will include updated training on Child Safe Standards in the homestay environment, in addition to updates on general Homestay Policies and procedures.

As a contracted provider to the College of Homestay accommodation, all Homestay parents are required to read and agree to abide by the Billanook College Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Statement of Commitment to Child Safety (see appendices).

If you form a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16 you must report that information to Police and the College Leadership Team. Failure to report the information is a criminal offence.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

Monitoring Child Safe Standards

In the case of appointed bilingual Local Support Persons the College is aware of and satisfied with training and induction provided by International Student Alliance (Guardianship & Welfare Services) on Child Safe Standards for all persons who will be engaged directly with International Students enrolled at Billanook College. To supplement that training and induction all appointed Local Support Persons, whether they be through ISA, through another Agency or through parent nomination, will be screened and interviewed prior to allowing such persons to be engaged in the role of Local Support Person. This screening will be conducted by the Manager, International Programs, and include training on Child Safe Standards on an annual basis, and it is a requirement that the Local Support Person sign the Acknowledgement that they have read and acknowledged the Statement of Commitment to Child Safety. Ongoing monitoring of adherence to best practice in Child Safe Standards by Local Support Persons is the responsibility of the Manager, International Programs. All bilingual Local Support Persons are required to have a current Working with Children Check.



Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

A safe and nurturing environment for all children and young people within the Billanook College community

Billanook College is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children, and to ensure that those people who care for our students act in their best interests and take all reasonable steps to provide a safe and secure school environment. We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

Everyone working at Billanook College is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse. The College has a duty of care to provide safe, open and supportive environments that protect our students, and where those who represent the College (staff, volunteers and contractors) work within the framework of our vision, mission and objectives. In particular we are committed to providing an environment where all of our students are protected from any form of abuse.

Creating child-safe school environments is a dynamic process that involves active participation and responsibility by the College, families and our community. It is marked by collaboration, vigilance and proactive approaches across policies, procedures, curriculum and practices.

Every person involved in the Billanook community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays 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.

Billanook College commits to providing a safe and nurturing environment, promoting and protecting the interests and safety of our students through:

1 Upholding the importance of the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children and young people in our school community will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with specific attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a safe and supportive environment, and to ensure we are able to protect the children under our care, the College will actively develop, review and modify our child protection policies, processes and practices.

2 Empowering families, children, young people and staff to participate in maintaining a culture of child safety.

The College, in partnership with our families, will ensure children and young people feel empowered to contribute to the school's understanding and treatment of child safety.

As such the views of staff, children, young people and families are taken seriously and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner. Children and young people are also provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to secure and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.

3 Employing rigorous risk-management and human resources practices.

The College will systematically and continually identify and assess risk to child safety and will work diligently to reduce potential sources of harm. Effective risk management will be embedded in College life through clear, effective, transparent, and accessible policies, procedures and practices.

The College will employ highly competent and professional staff who are trained and motivated to maintain the safety of all students. The high quality of staff appointments will be upheld through rigorous employment and staff review processes and practices.

Billanook College will stay abreast of current legislation and will meet its legislative duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in our care, including the Victorian Child Safe Standards; mandatory reporting; and the grooming, failure to disclose and failure to protect reporting requirements under the Crimes Act (Vic.).



Billanook College



 Billanook College	CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT
Approved: College Board	Date approved: 2 August 2016
Responsible Officer: The Principal	Policy Review Date: 12 January 2018

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRACTORS WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AT BILLANOOK COLLEGE

INTRODUCTION

All staff, volunteers, contractors and board members of Billanook College are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behavior towards and in the company of children, as noted below; and are required to abide by this code.

Billanook College adheres to the standards contained within the Victorian Government Ministerial Order 870 *Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools*, and promotes and maintains a zero tolerance stance to child abuse in all its forms.

This code does not replace any legislative or regulatory obligations or specific professional codes of conduct (e.g. *Victoria Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics*) that apply to staff at Billanook.

This code should be read in conjunction with the Billanook College Child Safety Policy.

CODE OF CONDUCT

Under the Principal, the College Leadership Team will:

- Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of students, staff and volunteers;
- Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards students, staff and volunteers; and
- Provide information, guidance and support to all staff, volunteers, children, young people and their carers regarding child protection matters.

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of Billanook College will:

- Work towards the achievement of the College's vision and mission;
- Operate within and adhere to the policies and guidelines of Billanook College, including the College's Child Safety Policy;
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and to maintain a child-safe environment (Note: Environment includes out of hours, off site, online – refer Child Safety Policy for full definition of school environments);
- Be fair, considerate, respectful and honest with everyone in the school community (this includes staff, volunteers, students, children, young people and parents);
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people;
- Promote the cultural safety, diversity, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable;
- Act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people;
- Set clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between adults and the children and young people they work with in the College;
- Be professional in their actions at all times;
- Maintain strict impartiality;
- Comply with specific organisational guidelines on physical contact with children (refer Staff Protocols in the Staff Handbook);
- Respect the privacy of children, their families and carers, and only disclose information to people who have a need to know – refer the College's Privacy Policy;



- Understand and comply with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (refer Mandatory Reporting Policy);
- Report any child safety concerns to the Principal or a member of the College Leadership Team;
- If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe; and
- Contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone 000).

No person shall:

- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
- Put children at risk of abuse;
- Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people;
- Unlawfully discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability;
- Engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them;
- Exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves (for example toileting and bathing arrangements, or changing clothes);
- Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily or without a valid context and for more than a very short time. It is recommended that a second staff member be present when personal counselling is involved;
- Show favouritism to a child through the provision or acceptance of gifts or inappropriate attention;
- Arrange personal communication or contact, including via written or electronic means (including but not limited to email, text messages, phone, social networks), with children or young people outside of the College's educational programs and activities; or without a valid context. Staff must not breach the boundaries of their profession;
- Photograph or video a child or young person without a valid educational context – refer the College's Privacy Policy;
- Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs (refer Staff Protocols);
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children;
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children;
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children; or
- Do anything in contravention of the College's policies, procedures or this Code of Conduct.

What happens if you breach this Code of Conduct

If you breach this Code of Conduct you will face disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment or cessation of engagement with the College.





Billanook College

All applications to be sent to the International Program Registrar

email: InternationalPrograms@billanook.vic.edu.au

Tel: +61 3 9724 4248

CRICOS 00131M

www.billanook.vic.edu.au