

 <p>DONCASTER SECONDARY COLLEGE</p>	<p>INTERNATIONAL STUDENT SAFETY & WELFARE COMPLAINTS POLICY & PROCEDURES</p> <p>HOMESTAY & SCHOOL RELATED MATTERS</p>
<p>College council will review this policy every three years or as directed by DET</p>	<p>Date approved: June 2016</p>
	<p>Date of next review: 2019</p>

RATIONALE

Under current legislation, the education provider/school is the entity responsible to the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs for ensuring welfare and accommodation support service for students. A quality Homestay experience is a crucial factor in determining a student's successful orientation, academic and social progress and in monitoring a student's overall well-being. From time to time, situations where conflict arises may occur e.g. between a student, parents, Homestay host, off/on shore educational agent or appointed welfare support person. Such conflict may involve concerns about food, payments, quality of accommodation or house rules. It is, therefore, necessary and a requirement (*International Student Handbook, Section 4.4.2 Welfare and Accommodation Program Policy p46*), that a process be developed for the prevention, monitoring and resolution of these complaints.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Ensure high quality welfare and accommodation services are provided to international students;
- To ensure processes are in place to minimise issues of concern or conflict arising in relation to accommodation and welfare services provided for international students;
- Provide an efficient, responsive and fair process for students and others (Homestay host, parents, welfare support person) so that issues of concern or conflict can be resolved;
- To ensure processes are in place for monitoring the resolution of the conflict

GUIDELINES

1. Preventative Measures taken by the College:

- Where the College has undertaken to provide for Homestay and welfare arrangements for an international student, the International Coordinator will:
 - Interview students periodically regarding their welfare and maintain written record of interviews;
 - Will proactively monitor academic, welfare, behaviour and attendance records in order to gauge if students may be encountering problems
- Students who are aged 18 years or over will be provided with outside of school hour's welfare support commensurate with their age.
- Strategies followed by students:
 - Being safe, and what to do if something doesn't feel right
 - You have the right to be safe and free from abuse at school and in your homestay
 - Doncaster Secondary College must follow 'Child Safe Standards' and laws to protect you from child abuse

What is child abuse?

Child abuse includes:

- sexual or grooming offences
- physical violence
- serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect

Who can I talk to about this?

If you are worried about child abuse, for you or someone you know, there are people you can talk to. At school you can speak to any member of the Principal Class Team, Student Welfare Co-ordinator, Chaplain, International Student Co-ordinator, Head of Sub-School, Level Co-ordinator or in fact any staff member in the College or if you wish you may contact the police (000) or one of the organisations listed below.

It's a good idea to talk to an adult you trust about any concerns you have. That might be a parent or relative, a teacher, or someone who works at your school. You may want to talk to more than one person about your concerns.

Useful links

There are services that you can contact to access more information, and in some cases, to speak to somebody about your concerns.

[National Child Abuse Helpline \(Child Wise\)](https://kidshelpline.com.au/)

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Tel: 1800 55 1800

Provides access to expert advice from trained counsellors and an opportunity to speak up about child abuse.

[Kids Helpline](https://kidshelpline.com.au/)

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Tel: 1800 55 1800

For any time and for any reason – free, private and confidential telephone and online counselling 24 hrs a day 7 days a week.

[Headspace \(National Youth Mental Health Foundation\)](http://headspace.org.au/)

<http://headspace.org.au/>

Tel: 1800 650 890

Headspace can help if you are aged 12 or over and you are going through a tough time. You can talk to someone at Headspace on the phone, online or in person. They also have a lot of information on their website.

[Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault](http://www.casa.org.au/survivors-and-friends/)

<http://www.casa.org.au/survivors-and-friends/>

Tel: 1800 737 732

Victorian Centres Against Sexual Assault provides services to child and adult victims/survivors of sexual assault. The assault may have occurred recently or in the past.

[Create Foundation](http://create.org.au/)

<http://create.org.au/>

Tel: 1800 655 105

Creating a better life for children and young people in care.

[Youthlaw](http://youthlaw.asn.au/)

<http://youthlaw.asn.au/>

Tel: 9611 2412

2. Conflict Resolution

Where a conflict relating to accommodation, welfare arrangements or in relation to College matters for an international student arises, the following procedures will be implemented:

- the International Student Coordinator will keep the Assistant Principal with responsibility for overseeing the International Student Program informed of issues relating to student accommodation and welfare;
- the complainant will be asked to submit a complaint, preferably in writing, to the International Student Coordinator
- the student will be offered ongoing counselling in seeking a resolution to the issue;
- the student's immediate well-being/safety will be of paramount consideration when deciding upon a course of action relating to accommodation. In an at-risk situation relating to Homestay accommodation, following consultation with the Principal and parents, the student will be immediately removed from the Homestay and placed in interim accommodation;
- the International Student Coordinator will investigate the matter, which will usually involve contacting and interviewing all parties, and will work with the parties in reaching a resolution;
- an interpreter will be used as required;
- contact will be made with the student's parents and International Student Program Unit, as appropriate
- where matters cannot be resolved through initial discussion between the International Student Coordinator and the parties, the matter will be referred to the relevant Assistant Principal or Principal;
- new accommodation arrangements will be made for the student in the event a satisfactory resolution is not found;
- in relation to college-based complaints timetable changes may be implemented and / or other arrangements as required;
- full documentation of discussions and outcomes will be kept in the student's file;
- the International Student Coordinator will, for a reasonable period, continue to closely monitor the student's welfare, following a resolution;
- If the conflict/complaint cannot be resolved within the College, the matter will be referred to the region and the International Program Unit.