



# SNAKE MANAGEMENT POLICY

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Authorised by:  
**Principal**

Consultation:  
**School Council and school community**

Approved by School Council:  
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## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Horsham College.

## Purpose

Horsham College is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for the community. This policy aims to define the risk of snakes at the College, procedures for preventing snake bite and the appropriate response for dealing with a snake sighting and a possible bite.

This policy applies to students, parents/guardians, staff, contractors, volunteers, and visitors to the College.

## Key responsibilities

Position/Roles	Responsibilities
<b>School Council</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>review and endorse policy</li> </ul>
<b>Leadership Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop and maintain a safe and healthy environment for students, staff, and volunteers</li> <li>develop and implement College policy and procedures</li> <li>provide resources and support for staff in undertaking their responsibility in this area</li> </ul>
<b>All staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be aware of the Snake Management Policy and procedures</li> <li>educate students, parents, contractors, and visitors on minimising the risk of snake bite</li> <li>take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their work or actions</li> <li>report hazards and accidents/incidents in accordance with the College OHS procedures</li> </ul>
<b>All students, parents, and visitors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>be aware of the Snake Policy and Procedures and follow instructions from staff</li> <li>take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of others affected by their actions.</li> </ul>

## **Setting and possibility of snakes at Horsham College**

Horsham College's multiple settings are located in rural locations which are known to be native habitats for snakes. Several species of snakes exist in the Wimmera. They are most prevalent in the warmer months (September to April) but could be encountered on a sunny day at any time of the year.

Unprovoked, snakes rarely attack humans and are generally shy, timid animals that will avoid conflict if given the opportunity. It is recommended that particular care be taken in warm weather, near long grass or hollow logs, near water or near rocks in sunny positions. Snakes are protected under the Wildlife Act 1975 and should not be harmed or killed. Bites can occur if people try to kill snakes. Only trained licenced snake controller should be used to manage snakes.

Care should also be taken on school camps and excursions where this policy applies.

## **Implementation of Policy**

- first aid kits are available to administer first aid in response to snake bites
- staff are trained in first aid
- follow all procedures as set out in this policy.

## **Snake bite prevention behaviours**

- leave snakes alone
- wear adequate clothing and protective shoes (not sandals/thongs) when walking in long grass
- never put hands in hollow logs, holes, or thick grass without prior inspection
- when stepping over logs, carefully inspect the ground on the other side
- remind students on a regular basis that if they encounter a snake, to move away quietly and report the sighting immediately to a teacher
- yard duty teachers to inspect yard for snakes
- keep grass mown and minimise piles of paving, building supplies and debris
- reduce mice populations.

## **What to do if you see a snake at Horsham College**

- calmly move students away from the snake
- staff must not attempt to touch or harm the snake
- contact a member of the Leadership Team who will gain expert advice from the listed contacts
- administer first aid in the event of a snake bite.

## **First aid for snakebite**

- stay calm and call or send someone to the Office for help - in a critical situation phone for an ambulance
- reassure the patient and encourage them to remain calm and still - do not move the patient
- do not attempt to catch or kill the snake
- DO NOT WASH the bite - traces of venom that are left on the skin can be used to identify the snake
- the most effective first aid for snakebite is the pressure-immobilisation technique. Refer to [Snake Bite First Aid Tips | St John Vic](#) for instructions on the application of this technique. The principle is to minimise the movement of the venom around the body until the victim is in a hospital by applying a firm bandage (or suitable alternative) to the bitten area and limb, and to immobilise the victim.

## **Assistance with snakes**

### Online reporting

<https://www.wildlifevictoria.org.au/wildlife-information/report-a-wildlife-emergency>

### Wildlife Victoria Emergency Response Line

(03) 8400 7300 – 24 hours a day, seven days a week

### Department of Environment Land, Water and Planning

136 186 - 8.00am to 6.00pm Monday to Friday

### Wildlife Officers

Belinda Cant - [belinda.cant@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:belinda.cant@delwp.vic.gov.au) – 5355 0522

Trevor Alderson - [trevor.alderson@delwp.vic.gov.au](mailto:trevor.alderson@delwp.vic.gov.au) – 0436 696 021

## **Communication**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- available publicly on school website
- hard copy available from school administration upon request.

## **Review cycle and evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle.



# First aid fact sheet

## Snake bite



All known or suspected snake bites must be treated as potentially life-threatening, and medical aid should be sought urgently.

### Signs and symptoms

Signs of a snake bite are not always visible. In some cases, the patient may not have felt anything. Symptoms may not appear for an hour or more after the person has been bitten.

Depending on the type of snake, signs and symptoms may include some or all of the following:

- Immediate or delayed pain at the bite site
- swelling, bruising or local bleeding
- bite marks (usually on a limb) that may vary from obvious puncture wounds to scratches that may be almost invisible
- swollen and tender glands in the groin or armpit of the bitten limb
- faintness, dizziness
- nausea and vomiting
- headache
- abdominal pain
- oozing of blood from the bite site or gums
- double or blurred vision
- drooping eyelids
- difficulty in speaking or swallowing
- limb weakness or paralysis
- difficulty in breathing
- occasionally, initial collapse or confusion followed by partial or complete recovery.

### What to do

#### Pressure bandage & immobilise

- 1 Follow DRSABCD.
- 2 Call triple zero (000) for an ambulance.
- 3 Lie the patient down and ask them to keep still. Reassure the patient.
- 4 If on a limb, apply an elasticised roller bandage (10–15 cm wide) over the bite site as soon as possible.
- 5 Apply a further elasticised roller bandage (10–15 cm wide), starting just above the fingers or toes and moving upwards on the bitten limb as far as can be reached.
  - Use clothing or other material if an elasticised roller bandage is not available.
  - Apply the bandage as firmly as possible to the limb. You should be unable to easily slide a finger between the bandage and the skin.
- 6 Immobilise the bandaged limb using splints.
- 7 Keep the patient lying down and completely still (immobilised).
- 8 Write down the time of the bite and when the bandage was applied. If possible, mark the location of the bite site (if known) on the skin with a pen, or photograph the site. Do not wash venom off the skin or clothes because it may assist identification.
- 9 Stay with the patient until medical aid arrives.



**In a medical emergency call Triple Zero (000)**

**DRSABCD** Danger ▶ Response ▶ Send for help ▶ Airway ▶ Breathing ▶ CPR ▶ Defibrillation

You could save a life with first aid training • [www.stjohn.org.au](http://www.stjohn.org.au) • 1300 360 455

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