



Snake Policy

BLACKALL RANGE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL

Snake Policy

PURPOSE OF THE POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to set out the policies and procedures in relation to the incidence of personnel at Blackall Range Independent School (B.R.I.S.) discovering a snake in the school environment.

Scope

The policy covers all procedures to be followed in the event of a snake discovery.

Responsibility

Principal

Point of Contact

Principal

DEFINITIONS

DERM is The Department of Environment and Resource Management-
DERM Hotline number is 1300 130 372

POLICY

As B.R.I.S. is in a semi-rural area it is likely we will have snake encounters around the school from time to time. Snakes are most active during the day in Spring, Summer and Autumn. However they can even be active on warm winter days and during warm nights.

Course of Action when Snake is seen:

If a snake is seen in or around the buildings or grounds by either parent or child they are to:

- Assume it to be venomous.
- Immediately tell any nearby people to stay uphill and well away from the snake while someone alerts a teacher they have seen a snake. If there is no teacher the student will tell one of the teacher's aids or a responsible adult.
- The adult informed should immediately inspect the site of the snake sighting from a safe distance. If the snake is not visible anymore don't try to flush it out. No adult or child should try to kill or catch the snake. Snakes can move quickly and it is paramount to ensure your safety and the safety of nearby children. Treat the snake as venomous until it is identified by an expert on snake identification..
- After a quick assessment is made, the informed adult is to ensure all children are kept safely away.
- As soon as the safety of children and adults is established the notified adult will immediately contact by phone the Department of Environment and Resource Management to report the snake sighting. The **DERM Hotline number is 1300 130 372**, transfer through to the wildlife area. The DERM will then advise further course of action.

B.R.I.S. students, parents or staff should not run through long grass or thick ground cover at school: and especially not in bare feet. The greatest risk of snake-bite from venomous snakes the greatest risk of snake-bite is by people trying to kill or handle them. This is why no child or non-expert should even

Disclaimer: The information contained in this policy is to the best of our knowledge and belief correct at the date of publication. However, no warranty or guarantee is or can be given by Blackall Range Independent School or any member of its staff, and no liability is or can be accepted for any loss or damage resulting from any person relying on or using the information contained in this policy.



contemplate the handling of a snake at B.R.I.S. Even snakes squashed on a roadway and appearing dead have been known to “come alive” and bite the inquisitive hand.

Remember all snakes are protected by law and only venomous snakes that are life threatening may be killed. There is no reason why we can't live in harmony with them provided we respect their presence and take all reasonable precautions when the more venomous of their kind are encountered.

First aid for snake bites

If you or another person are bitten:-

Assume ALL snakes are venomous, and take the following action:

- **Do not panic.** Try to remain calm, lie down and immobilise the bitten area. It is unlikely that the bite will be life-threatening.
- **Have another member of staff ring 000 and seek medical help while you do the following-**
- **Apply a bandage but do not block circulation.** Take a broad bandage and bind along the limb starting at the bite area, at the same pressure as for a sprain. Then bandage down the limb and continue back up the entire limb over and above the bite area. This will help prevent the spread of the venom through the body. Do not remove the bandage. It is often easier to go over the top of clothing such as jeans rather than remove clothing. In an emergency, strips of clothing or pantyhose can be used instead of a bandage.
- **Immobilise the limb with a splint.** Lie down and keep the limb completely still until help arrives. Do not elevate the limb or attempt to walk or run. Movement will encourage the spread of the venom through the body.
- **Do not attempt to catch the snake.** All too often, the snake will bite again if an attempt is made to catch it. Identification of the snake species can be obtained through samples of the patient's blood or urine, and from venom around the bite area. If the species of snake still remains uncertain, a poly-antivenene may be used, which is suitable for treatment of all venomous snake bites.
- **Do not wash the wound.** Venom left on the skin will help doctors identify the snake and administer the appropriate antivenene.
- **Do not cut the wound.** This will spread the venom into the bloodstream and can cause more serious injuries than the snake bite itself.
- **Seek medical help.** An antivenene may be required.

POLICY RELEASE DETAILS

Date of Policy

Reviewed- September 2010

Approved by

School Executive Board

Signature:

Date:

Review Date

Annually