



# *Atlantis Beach Baptist College*

## **Snake Sighting Policy**

Title of Policy/Procedure	<b>Snake Sighting Policy</b>
Endorsed by	<b>Principal</b>
Reviewed	<b>November 2017</b>
Reviewed date	<b>November 2018</b>
To whom issued	<b>College staff and Community</b>

## **Snake Sighting Procedure**

Students need to be aware of the possible presence of snakes on the College grounds. Students need to be particularly vigilant during spring when snakes come out of hiding to bask in the sunlight. Also when bush land is cleared, snakes are likely to be active. Snakes may be found in any of the following locations, school oval, bushland, classrooms, under rocks, shrubs or trees, concrete or bituminised areas etc.

During this time students should take precautions and be aware of their surroundings in order to minimise the chance of a dangerous encounter with any snakes. Students should not leave their school bags outside rooms with the zip undone.

### **Most common snakes seen around Perth:**

- Tiger Snakes are most common in vegetation around wetland areas.
- Dugites are commonly found in drier bushland areas and are fast moving.
- Both types of snakes are active in the daytime.

### **Snake can be aggressive when cornered, or threatened.**

#### **Students sighting a snake should:**

- stay well away;
- do nothing that may cause the snake to strike out;
- watch the snake from a distance to see where it goes;
- advise a staff member immediately.

### **Snakes in/outside College Buildings or on Ovals**

#### **The Teacher/Staff member will:**

1. Ensure safety of students; clear them from any danger;
2. Cordon off the area;
3. If necessary, evacuate students to a safer location;
4. Notify the School Receptionist immediately of the sighting;
5. Receptionist will immediately advise the Property Manager and College Principal;
6. The Property Manager/Principal will cordon off the area if not already done and assess the location of the snake;
7. The Principal will advise should a lockdown be necessary;
8. The Property Manager/Principal will coordinate the removal and release of the snake by a trained snake handler. Advice can be provided by phoning the Department of Parks and Wildlife

On 08) 9219 9840.

## Dealing with snakes

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Dugite. Photo Ann Storrie

**In spring and summer, many reptiles emerge to bask in the sun. During this time you should take precautions to minimise the chance of encountering snakes.**

**Remember, snakes are an integral part of the natural environment and play an important role in wildlife ecosystems.**

### **Common snakes around Perth**

Dangerously venomous dugites and tiger snakes are common in the metropolitan area. Both species hunt small mammals, frogs and lizards, and are active during the day and at night in warm weather.

- Tiger snakes (*Notechis scutatus*) are most common in vegetation around wetland areas, but may be found well away from water. They are seen throughout the year sunning themselves in open areas.
- Dugites (*Pseudonaja affinis*) are most common in the drier bushland areas around Perth, especially grasslands. These fast-moving snakes are attracted to aviaries and other locations where mice can be found.

## Precautions

- Take care in bushland and grassy areas.
- Walk and/or cycle in cleared areas only, where you can see the ground.
- When bushwalking, wear long trousers and boots or other enclosed footwear that preferably cover the ankles.
- Keep a watchful eye on the ground about a metre ahead of where you are walking, and avoid entering areas of long grass, rushes and undergrowth.
- Around your home remove long grass and items lying on the ground such as corrugated iron, which may provide cover for snakes.
- Reduce mice numbers around the house.
- Learn the [correct treatment for snakebite](#). (*First aid information from St John.*)

## If you find a snake

Do not approach or aggravate it in any way. Most bites occur when people accidentally step on snakes, or while attempting to kill them. As the warmer days of spring approach, snakes become more active as they leave their winter retreats in search of a mate and food.

If you find a snake in a garden or a house, contact **Wildcare Helpline (08) 9474 9055** to be referred to a volunteer reptile remover. If volunteers are unavailable, there are commercial snake removal services. Advice can be provided by phoning the Department of Parks and Wildlife on **(08) 9219 9840**.

The department also has information about [keeping reptiles as pets](#). If you are interested in snakes and other reptiles, contact the [West Australian Herpetological Society](#).