



GEELONG GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Child Safety Policy

If anyone believes a child is in immediate risk of abuse or harm, please call emergency services on 000.

1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to embed a culture of **zero tolerance to child abuse**. All students aged 18 years and older, School Employees and School Community Members who perform child connected work are required to comply with this Policy and sign and comply with the associated Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- 1.2 This Policy has been endorsed by the School Council.

2. Commitment to Child Safety

- 2.1 We:
 - 2.1.1 are committed to the safety and wellbeing of Students and have a zero tolerance of Child abuse;
 - 2.1.2 treat all allegations and safety concerns seriously and consistently, in line with the School's policies and procedures;
 - 2.1.3 want Students to be safe, happy and empowered, and actively listen to what Students have to say;
 - 2.1.4 are committed to the cultural safety of Indigenous Students, Students from diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for Students with a disability;
 - 2.1.5 have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when there is a concern regarding a Student's safety;
 - 2.1.6 have prevention strategies in place and robust policies to guide the School in exercising its obligations and achieving its Child safety commitments; and
 - 2.1.7 ensure compliance with Ministerial Order No.870 and the Child Safe Standards.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

- 3.1 Child safety is a shared responsibility.
- 3.2 Students can approach any School Employee to discuss child safety concerns. We have appointed Child Safety Officers at each Campus (appointments are listed on the Portal) who are trained to be the first point of contact and to provide advice and support to Students, parents, School Employees regarding the safety and wellbeing of Students at the School.
- 3.3 Our Principal and School Council are responsible for developing strategies that embed an organisational culture of child safety at the School and to ensure adherence to this Policy. Those strategies include:
 - 3.3.1 ensuring that child safety is a recurring agenda item at School Council meetings and is given the highest priority;
 - 3.3.2 requiring the Principal and other responsible School Employees to report regularly to the School Council on all child safety related matters; and
 - 3.3.3 consideration of areas for continual improvement across the School.

4. Students aged 18 years and older

- 4.1 Students aged 18 years and older must report any concerns regarding the safety of Students to a School Employee they trust. This could include a Head of House, tutor, teacher, Child Safety Officer, Head of Campus, Vice Principal or Principal.

5. School Employees

- 5.1 All School Employees must report any concerns regarding the safety of Students to a Child Safety Officer, Head of Campus, Vice Principal or Principal and should follow up with the person to whom such concerns were reported to ensure their report has been actioned.

6. Training and Supervision

- 6.1 We educate Students aged 18 years and older about their child abuse reporting obligations. We educate and support Students aged 18 years and older to speak up and report any concerns about child safety to a School Employee.
- 6.2 We train and support School Employees to identify, assess, and minimise the risk of Child Abuse and to detect potential signs of Child Abuse.
- 6.3 We provide training for School Employees to promote inclusion, cultural safety, respect of diversity and an appreciation of the needs of Students with disabilities.
- 6.4 New School Employees must complete an induction process so that they recognise our commitment to child safety. School Employees are supervised regularly to ensure that their behaviour towards all Students is safe and appropriate, as detailed in the Child Safety Code of Conduct.



7. Recruitment

- 7.1 The School values diversity and as such actively encourages applications from, without limitation, Indigenous people and people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with disabilities.
- 7.2 We engage only the most suitable people to work with our Students and have high quality employee and volunteer supervision and professional development.
- 7.3 We ensure that the recruitment process, including selection criteria and assessment activity, promotes an awareness of the School's social, moral and legislative responsibilities. As a part of the recruitment process, the School carries out reference checks which include mandatory questions regarding suitability for working in a school environment and/or directly with Students.
- 7.4 All School Employees engaged by the School and its registered boarding premises, excluding teachers who hold a current VIT registration, are required to have obtained a valid WWCC and must provide evidence of this as a condition of employment.

8. Fair procedures for school employees

- 8.1 The safety and wellbeing of Students is our primary concern. The School also has a responsibility to be fair and just to School Employees. In accordance with the Guidelines for Recruitment and Reference Checks and the Staff Discipline and Misconduct Policy, when recruiting, assessing incidents, and undertaking disciplinary action, we ensure the process will always be thorough, transparent, and evidence based.
- 8.2 We maintain detailed, accurate and confidential records of safety concerns, allegations of abuse and the subsequent investigations in line with our relevant policies.

9. Non-employee campus residents

- 9.1 We require that the family members (and/or friends) of School Employees, who permanently reside in campus properties, who are aged 18 years or over, must hold a valid WWCC or VIT registration. The obligation applies to, without limitation, partners and adult Student of School Employees.
- 9.2 We require that any adult family members (and/or friends) of School Employees, who reside in a Campus property for more than three (3) consecutive days or more than seven (7) days within a four (4) week period during term time to hold a Valid WWCC.
- 9.3 Overseas or interstate visitors who perform child related work during school term time and are not a VIT registered teacher or do not hold a Valid WWCC are required to comply with the Procedure for Overseas and Interstate Visitors before their visit. The School Employee hosting the visitor is responsible for compliance with this clause.
- 9.4 Any overseas or interstate visitors either residing with a family on Campus for more than three (3) consecutive days or more than seven (7) days within a four (4) week period during term time or residing in the School provided accommodation and not with a host family during term time must comply with the procedure for Overseas and Interstate Visitors.

10. Our Volunteers

- 10.1 All School volunteers are required to hold a valid WWCC and must provide evidence of this prior to their engagement with the School.
- 10.2 Volunteers are required to comply with this Policy and acknowledge and sign the associated Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- 10.3 Volunteers will be screened, trained and monitored to ensure that their behaviour towards Students is safe and appropriate, as detailed in the Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- 10.4 School Employees who engage volunteers must comply with the Volunteer WWCC Procedure for Child Connected Work procedure prior to the volunteer commencing at the School.

11. Our Third Party Providers and Contractors

- 11.1 Third party providers and contractors will be child safe screened, trained and monitored. Staff of any third-party providers or contractors to the School are required to hold a VIT registration or valid WWCC in order to attend and perform services at the School. These persons must provide evidence of this prior to the commencement of the performance of services at the School.
- 11.2 Third party providers and contractors will receive information regarding this Policy and their obligations relating to Child Safety as part of their induction process. They will also be required to acknowledge and sign the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

12. School Community Members

- 12.1 We have procedures and policies in place for responding to concerns raised by parents, legal guardians and other members of the broader the School community.
- 12.2 All reports of risk to the safety of Students will be thoroughly investigated in line with these policies.
- 12.3 School Community Members should direct all concerns to the Child Safety Officers, appropriate Head of Campus, Vice Principal or Principal and should follow up with the person to whom such concerns were reported to ensure their report has been actioned.

13. Privacy

- 13.1 The School adheres to the APPs contained in the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).



13.2 All personal information considered or recorded will respect the privacy of the individuals involved, whether they be School Employees, volunteers, parents or Students. The School has safeguards and practices in place, in accordance with its Privacy Policy, to ensure any personal information is protected and stored in accordance with the APPs.

14. Allegations, Concerns and Complaints

- 14.1 We take all allegations of child abuse seriously and have practices in place to investigate them thoroughly and expediently.
- 14.2 School Employees are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.
- 14.3 It is the responsibility of all School Employees and School Community Members to ensure that allegations or concerns of child abuse are:
 - 14.3.1 reported to the Head of Campus, Vice Principal or Principal (who will make a report to Victoria Police if required); and/ or
 - 14.3.2 reported to the Chair of Council; and/or
 - 14.3.3 reported to the Director of Corporate Services; and/or
 - 14.3.4 reported to the Risk Manager; and/or
 - 14.3.5 reported to a Child Safety Officer; and/or
 - 14.3.6 reported to a School Counsellor; and/or
 - 14.3.7 reported directly to Victoria Police.
- 14.4 Any inappropriate behaviour by any School Employee will be reported through appropriate channels, including to the Commission for Children and Young People, Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria Police and the Victorian Institute of Teaching, depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

15. Supporting Students who disclose or are linked to child abuse

- 15.1 We are committed to supporting Students who are the victim of, or are otherwise involved in, Child Abuse by:
 - 15.1.1 ensuring their immediate and ongoing safety;
 - 15.1.2 ensuring that their disclosure is handled rigorously, sensitively and recorded accurately;
 - 15.1.3 ensuring that Students understand the legal obligations upon adults to report abuse and the conditions under which confidentiality cannot be maintained; and
 - 15.1.4 ensuring that Students are linked to appropriate support structures and services which may include parents, family, legal guardians, Head of House, trusted School Employees, counselling services and medical staff (for example, nurses, doctors, psychologists).
- 15.2 Students and parents / legal guardians can refer to **Appendix 1** – explanatory notes for frequently asked questions regarding this Policy.

16. Non-compliance

- 16.1 Any non-compliance with this Policy will be regarded as a serious matter. Appropriate action will be taken, which depending on the severity, may include termination of employment if it relates to a School Employee. It may also include:
 - 16.1.1 a breach of employment obligations (which depending on the nature of the breach, may result in termination of employment or engagement with the School);
 - 16.1.2 serious misconduct;
 - 16.1.3 a criminal offence; or
 - 16.1.4 exposure to legal liability.

17. Regular review

This policy will be reviewed annually and following significant incidents involving Child safety.

18. Definitions

APPs	means the Australian Privacy Principles
Child Abuse	includes – 1. any act committed against a Child involving a sexual offence or grooming; 2. the infliction on a Child of physical abuse or violence, or serious emotional or psychological harm; and 3. serious neglect of a Child
Child Safety Officer	means a School Employee who is trained to receive and manage a Child Abuse allegation
DH	means the Department of Health
the School	means Geelong Grammar School including its registered boarding premises
School Employee	means, for the purposes of this Policy means an employee of the School
Student/s	means, for the purposes of this Policy, any student enrolled at the School, regardless of whether they are under 18 years of age or over 18 years of age
valid WWCC	means a current Victorian Working with Student Clearance (employee or volunteer check depending on the position)
VIT	means Victoria Institute of Teaching



19. Review and circulation

Responsible Department:	<input type="checkbox"/> Academic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Corporate Services and Risk <input type="checkbox"/> Finance and Operations <input type="checkbox"/> Head of Campus <input type="checkbox"/> Human Resources <input type="checkbox"/> Medical <input type="checkbox"/> Vice Principal
Version:	3
Approved by:	<input type="checkbox"/> Principal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Council
Effective Date:	04.08.2021
Review Date:	04.08.2022
Location:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School wide <input type="checkbox"/> Bostock House <input type="checkbox"/> Corio <input type="checkbox"/> Timbertop <input type="checkbox"/> Toorak
Audience:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> School Community <input type="checkbox"/> Students <input type="checkbox"/> Parents <input type="checkbox"/> School Employees

20. Document History

Version	Date Published	Remarks
1	08.10.2019	Update current style and format
2	05.05.2021	Annual update and approved by Council
3	04.08.2021	Update definition of School to align with boarding premises registration Update definition of Working with Children Clearance as required by <i>Worker Screening Act 2020</i> (Vic) Add document history table to policy



Appendix 1 – Explanatory Notes

1. What does this policy mean?

1.1 Students have the right to be safe at school. Child abuse, which includes physical and sexual abuse of a Student, will not be tolerated and support structures are in place to assist if a Student has been the victim of such abuse. Students also have a responsibility to ensure they are not involved in the abuse, including physical or sexual abuse, of another Student. Students also have a responsibility to report abuse of another Student if they have knowledge of it.

2. What is physical abuse?

2.1 Physical abuse is any form of intentional and unwanted contact with a person's body or in close proximity to their body. Examples include hitting, pinching, biting, slapping, punching, pushing, tripping, kicking, strangling etc. By law, no-one is allowed physically to assault or abuse another person.

3. What is sexual abuse?

3.1 Sexual abuse is the unwanted sexual behaviour of one person upon another person. Examples include kissing, touching of genital areas, breasts or any area of the body with a sexual connotation, oral sex and sexual penetration with a penis or another object, grooming for the purpose of sexual activity.

4. What should happen if a Student feels they have been the victim of child abuse?

4.1 They should try to inform an adult whom they trust. This may be a family member or School Employee. They will guide the Student to the appropriate support services and ensure they are safe.

5. What should you do if you know of a Student who is being subjected to child abuse?

5.1 If you see something that is not right, inform a School Employee. This can be done with the consent of the victim or without; the safety of the victim is paramount and while they may be embarrassed or afraid to inform an adult, it is the only way their ongoing safety can be assured.

6. Do you have to be sure child abuse has occurred before speaking to a School Employee or trusted adult?

6.1 No. If a Student believes that someone is at risk of harm, or has been harmed, it is always best to notify an adult who can then investigate the matter further.

7. If you inform a School Employee, do they have to tell anyone else?

7.1 In all situations where a Student has been subject to child abuse, including physical or sexual abuse, the School Employee the student informs must report the incident to either the Child Safety Officers, Head of Campus, Vice Principal or Principal. Child Safety Officer appointments are found on the School Portal.

7.2 Teachers, doctors and nurses are all required by law to notify the DH if a Student is at risk of physical or sexual abuse.

7.3 Sexual abuse committed by an adult on a child under the age of 16 must be reported to Victoria Police. This is also required of any sexual relationship between a teacher or other School Employee in a position of power, and a student.

7.4 If a Student is 16 years or older and they are sexually abused by an adult (who is not in a position of power) then they may have the right to request that the matter is not reported to Victoria Police, although the School will actively encourage and assist the Student to do so. This request will be elevated to the Principal who, on the basis of the information provided, may still report the matter to Victoria Police.

7.5 There may also be circumstances where the School considers it is obliged to report the matter to Victoria Police, for instance, because of the identity of the abuser. Further, a mandatory report to DH may be made if the adult considers the Student is at risk of ongoing harm. Any reports will be handled confidentially and sensitively by the School Employee involved. The Student will be kept informed during the process, kept safe from harm and will be linked to the support services they wish to use.

8. What will happen to a student if they are the perpetrator abusing another child?

8.1 The School has a zero-tolerance approach to Child Abuse, including physical and sexual abuse of a Student.

8.2 A Student who is found to be involved in abuse of another Student is likely to face serious consequences, including, but not limited to, suspension or expulsion.

8.3 If a suspension is deemed to be appropriate, it is likely the Student will also be required to agree to a number of other measures upon their return to the School, to ensure that the same behaviour does not occur in the future.

8.4 Any questions or concerns regarding the matters covered by this Policy should be directed to the Head of House, Head of Campus, Vice Principal or Child Safety Officer at your campus. Child Safety Officer Appointments are found on the School Intranet.