

## **Child Safe Code of Conduct**

A Child Safe Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships.

When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is educated about the Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the School environment becomes much more transparent and people are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safe Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm.

### **The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to:**

- All staff members, including non-teaching staff and temporary or casual staff
- Volunteers
- Parents and carers
- Third Party Contractors
- External Education Providers
- The Board of Directors
- Teaching students on placement at the School
- Visitors

The Child Safe Code of Conduct set out below is designed to stand alone. It can also be incorporated in whole or part into broader codes of conduct that are developed by the School.

Certain staff members, Volunteers and Third Party Contractors at the School may have professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate their profession or occupation. These codes of conduct must also be complied with. In the event that the staff member, Volunteer or Third Party Contractor considers that there is a conflict between these codes of conduct and the Child Safe Code of Conduct in a particular matter, the relevant staff member, Volunteer or Third Party Contractor must seek advice from their professional or occupational regulatory body and/or a Child Protection Officer, and must advise the Principal of their proposed course of action.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct is made available on our public website as well as on AGORA (the School's Learning Management System) for staff and current families.

### **Our Child Safe Code of Conduct**

This Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards students. The Code serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote child safety in the School environment.

It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. Where a staff member breaches the Code, the School may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal.

The School reviews the Child Safe Code of Conduct annually. The School's Board of Directors has endorsed this Child Safe Code of Conduct.

The School has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our school community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, the Board of Directors, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers and parents/carers.

**DO:**

- Behave as a positive role model to students.
- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- Use appropriate behaviours of affirmation between staff and students such as;
  - Handshakes
  - 'High-fives' and hand slapping and;
  - Verbal praise
- Be vigilant and proactive with regard to student safety and child protection issues.
- Provide age appropriate supervision for students.
- Comply with guidelines published by the School with respect to child protection.
- Treat all students with respect.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students.
- Use positive and affirming language towards students.
- Encourage students to 'have a say' and participate, and then listen to them with respect.
- Respect cultural, religious and political differences.
- Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact, and socialise.
- Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way.
- Report any breaches of this Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Report concerns about child safety to one of the School's Child Safety Officers and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met.
- Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe.
- Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety.
- Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

**DO NOT:**

- Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour.
- Engage in any unnecessary and/or inappropriate physical contact with students, including;
  - showing affection towards students in isolated areas, empty rooms, staff only rooms or other private rooms
  - patting students on the back, lower back or thighs.
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with students.
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on culture, race, ethnicity or disability.
- Engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of students.
- Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a student including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material.

- Engage in inappropriate or unnecessary physical conduct or behaviours including doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Engage in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriately rough physical play.
- Use physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student.
- Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm.
- Develop 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- Engage in undisclosed private meetings with a student that is not your own child.
- Engage in meetings with a child that is not your own, outside of school hours and without permission from the School and the child's parent.
- Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- Take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent.
- Post online any information about a student that may identify them such as their: full name; age; e-mail address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group they may attend.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

### **Agreement to Child Safe Code of Conduct**

A copy of the Child Safe Code of Conduct is provided to all Staff, Volunteers (Direct and Indirect) and Direct Contact Contractors at induction, or otherwise prior to them commencing work at the School. It is also communicated via refresher training at regular intervals for all Staff, as well as Volunteers.

All Staff, as well as Volunteers, must sign an agreement to adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct prior to commencing work or volunteering at the School.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct forms part of the contract between the School and any Direct Contact Contractors. Therefore, all Direct Contact Contractors are deemed to have agreed to adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct upon signing the contract or upon commencing work at the School.

### **Consequences for Breaching the Child Safe Code of Conduct**

Staff, including the leadership team and Principal, Volunteers and Contractors who breach the Child Safe Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary actions that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- the restriction of duties
- appointment to an alternate role
- suspension or
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement.

Where any other member of the School community breaches any obligation, duty or responsibility within the Child Safe Code of Conduct, Goulburn Valley Grammar School will take appropriate action.

## **Report any concerns**

The School's Child Safety Program also includes information for the Board of Directors, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers, as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our School's nominated Child Safety Officers.

It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, Indirect Contact Volunteers, students, parents/carers or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact one of the School's Child Safety Officers.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, the Police should be contacted on 000.

## **Relevant Policies**

Child Safety Policy – Version May 2025

Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Child Abuse – Version March 2025

Staff Code of Conduct – version May 2025

Parent Code of Conduct – version May 2025

Volunteer Code of Conduct – version February 2025

## **Document Version**

May, 2025