

GEELONG GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Student Safeguarding Strategy

1. Scope and Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of the Student Safeguarding Strategy (the Strategy) is to embed a culture of zero tolerance to child abuse at Geelong Grammar School (the **School**).
- 1.2 It is a belief of the School that we all have a fundamental responsibility for student safeguarding.
- 1.3 The Strategy is the School's guiding document for compliance with the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act* (Vic) 2015. It applies to all School Employees, Third Party Contractors and Volunteers and Students at the School.

2. Clear Commitment to Student Safeguarding

- 2.1 All student safeguarding related policies, procedures, strategies and/or framework documents will clearly state that it is a belief of the School that we all have a fundamental responsibility for student safeguarding.

3. Child Safe Standards

- 3.1 The School acknowledges it has responsibility to create safe places for students to fully and actively participate in living and learning. The School recognises that the Child Safe Standards are a compulsory framework that supports the promotion of safety of children by requiring the implementation of policies which prevent, respond to and facilitate reporting of allegations of child abuse.
- 3.2 This Strategy is designed to embed a focus on student safeguarding by placing student rights and wellbeing at the forefront of the School's attention.
- 3.3 The School regards the safeguarding of all students as paramount; all students have the right to feel safe and to be safe.
- 3.4 When implementing the Child Safety Standards, the Strategy will also be guided by:
 - 3.4.1 the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children;
 - 3.4.2 the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
 - 3.4.3 the safety of children who self-identify as LGBTIQIA+; and
 - 3.4.4 the safety of children with a disability.

4. Governance and Leadership

- 4.1 The School's Council, Principal, Executive Team, Executive's Leadership Team and Campus Leadership Teams prioritise student safeguarding in the governance and decision making of the School.
- 4.2 Student safeguarding forms a part of regular reviews and fixed meeting agendas, to implement and discuss all student safeguarding and safety matters including, where relevant, to addressing historical issues.

5. Student Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct

- 5.1 The School's Student Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct are reviewed annually, approved by the Executive Team and be endorsed by the School Council on an annual basis.
- 5.2 The School's Student Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct are required to be read and the Code of Conduct signed by all School Employees prior to their engagement with the School.
- 5.3 The School's Student Safeguarding Code of Conduct is required to be read and the Code of Conduct signed by all Third Party Contractors, Volunteers and Homestay Providers prior to their engagement with the School.
- 5.4 The School's annually updated Student Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct will be published on the School website, the intranet and the Hive.

6. Employee Engagement Resource Practices

- 6.1 The School has strong recruitment practices in place, including the mandatory student safeguarding questions required during reference checks and the required provision of valid Working with Children Clearances or Victorian Institute of Teaching registration prior to engagement and where required, a National Police Check.
- 6.2 The School's Employee Engagement team uses the Guidelines for Reference Checks and Recruitment of New Staff when recruiting any new School Employees.

7. Responding and Reporting

- 7.1 The School's Student Safeguarding suite of policies, including those mandated by law, are reviewed on an annual basis or if an incident necessitates further amendment. Policies include template reporting and recording forms to assist School Employees

in responding appropriately and accurately recording and reporting any incidents. The School's Student Safeguarding suite of policies mandated by law are signed off annually by the School Council.

- 7.2 The School commits to the PROTECT Framework being applied requiring School Employees, Third Party Contractors and Volunteers to act immediately on concerns, follow the Four Critical Actions, and meet all reporting obligations. The Four Critical Actions for responding to student safeguarding concerns are:

Identify

Abuse may be identified by witnessing behaviour or an incident, receiving a disclosure or observing physical or behavioural signs.

Report

As soon as a reasonable belief is formed, inform School Leadership and report to Child Protection or Victoria Police.

Support

Arrange support for impacted students. Engage students and inform parents/guardians (if safe to do so). Tailor support to diverse needs; use information sharing and continue supports as long as necessary.

Refer

Support the student's wellbeing through appropriate care, safety planning, referrals, and continued monitoring.

- 7.3 The School has appointed a Student Safeguarding Officer in a cross campus capacity to provide a point of contact for any student related incidents reported by School Employees, Students, Contractors, Volunteers and members of the School Community.

8. Risk Management Framework

- 8.1 The Risk Management Framework provides the means by which the School implements risk identification and mitigation approaches in relation to all risks including student safeguarding.
- 8.2 The School's Risk Management Framework directs that risk assessments identify student safeguarding as the top priority when reviewing any risk.
- 8.3 The School conducts student safeguarding training for all School Employees.
- 8.4 Relevant School Employees attend annual student safety seminars, webinars and training courses to familiarise themselves with any legislative change and current practice.
- 8.5 The School acknowledges that the process of improving student safeguarding is continuous and ongoing. The School will regularly monitor and improve performance against all the Child Safe Standards. The School will actively foster a culture of openness that encourages equity for all students, and enables all members of the School Community to address difficult subjects and decisions, to identify mistakes and to learn from them.

9. Empowering Students

- 9.1 Students receive Student Safeguarding training from a third-party provider in the Early Learning Centre to Year 3, and in Years 7, 9 and 10.
- 9.2 Students in other year levels receive internal educational and pastoral information at assemblies and through the School's Positive Education programme.

10. Top Risks

- 10.1 The School has identified the following student activities as the highest risk:
- 10.1.1 online environment with potential for cyberbullying and predatory grooming;
 - 10.1.2 vulnerabilities regarding Overseas Students upon their arrival in Australia, during the settling in phase, and in homestay arrangements;
 - 10.1.3 one on one tutoring/interviewing or transportation of lone students;
 - 10.1.4 excursions and camps
 - 10.1.5 when in receipt of medical treatment; and
 - 10.1.6 boarding house environments.
- 10.2 The identified risks in each activity are:
- 10.2.1 predatory risk (persons who may become adept at creating opportunities to abuse and avoid detection);
 - 10.2.2 opportunistic risk (persons who may abuse in low-risk, low-effort situations);
 - 10.2.3 situational risk (persons who may abuse in a specific set of circumstances); and
 - 10.2.4 environmental risk (environments that create student safety risks).
- 10.3 The identified risks are addressed in Risks Assessments completed by School Employees responsible for excursions, camps or sporting events, and controls are required to be applied for each individual identified risk.

11. Risk Mitigation and Reduction Strategies

- 11.1 The School's existing risk mitigation and reduction strategies include without limitation:



- 11.1.1 induction for all visitors, School Employees, Volunteers and Third Party Contractors which includes information on obligations under current Student Safeguarding Safety reporting and protection procedures;
- 11.1.2 visitor and Third Party Contractor sign in control systems;
- 11.1.3 requirement for a valid Working with Children Check and National Police Check for all School Employees, Volunteers and Third Party Contractors;
- 11.1.4 Victorian Institute of Teaching registration for all teaching School Employees;
- 11.1.5 requiring all School Employees, Third Party Contractors and Volunteers to comply with the Student Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct and the Community Code of Conduct;
- 11.1.6 risk assessments for all overnight excursions and activities (supervision as determined by gender and ensuring staff/student ratios are appropriate);
- 11.1.7 risk assessments conducted of boarding houses and units twice yearly;
- 11.1.8 screening and assessment of all Homestay Providers and homestay accommodation for students enrolled at the School pursuant to student visa subclass 500;
- 11.1.9 twice yearly homestay accommodation inspections;
- 11.1.10 Homestay Providers comply with the Student Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct and the Homestay Provider Policy, which are signed and acknowledged;
- 11.1.11 counselling and psychological resources available to students and School Employees;
- 11.1.12 CCTV for unsupervised areas and 'hot spot' areas;
- 11.1.13 clear windows in walls/doors to enable visibility of occupants;
- 11.1.14 non-lockable doors in 'hot spot' areas;
- 11.1.15 assessment of new or changed physical environments for student safeguarding risks;
- 11.1.16 risk assessments for all student activities;
- 11.1.17 firewall in place to monitor on-line School Employee and student internet activity;
- 11.1.18 performance management procedures for School Employees;
- 11.1.19 pre-employment reference checks;
- 11.1.20 confirming currency of WWCC/VIT registration;
- 11.1.21 School Policies and Procedures;
- 11.1.22 reiteration of School values of curiosity, courage and compassion;
- 11.1.23 provision of procedural fairness and natural justice to all visitors, School Employees, Volunteers and Third Party Contractors within the context of the prioritisation of student safeguarding; and
- 11.1.24 review and evaluation of all strategies and controls on an annual basis and/or upon any incident or changes to legislation.

12. Definitions

School Community Members	Includes all Staff, students, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors that support or engage in School activities and School Operations
PROTECT Framework	means a framework of actions to identify and respond to child abuse by an adult (more information is available at https://www.vic.gov.au/protect-schools)

13. Review and Circulation

Responsible Department	☒ Executive Team ☒ Safeguarding and Legal Services
Version	4
Approved by	☒ School Council
Effective Date	17 August 2026
Review Date	17 August 2027
Location	☒ School wide
Audience	☒ Whole School Community
Publication	☒ Hive ☒ Intranet ☒ School Website