

Child Safe Human Resources Policy

Gippsland Grammar (the **School**) is committed to protecting its students from all aspects of harm, and has established strategies, practices, policies and procedures to uphold this commitment.

The School takes a zero-tolerance approach to any behaviours that jeopardise student safety (including child abuse and reportable conduct). The School regards its student safety responsibilities with the utmost importance and strives to deliver an Academic Care model that promotes the School's core values of compassion, leadership, excellence, respect and responsibility.

The School's aim is to create an environment where students can learn in a calm and focused environment characterised by ethical behaviour. We believe that the safety of students is dependent on the existence of a child safe culture. Establishing that culture requires effective staff selection, supervision and management practices.

This document sets out those practices as required by *Ministerial Order No.870 - Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools*.

Definitions

A number of terms in this document are defined in the **Child Protection Program Definitions** (a copy of which is available on the School's website).

Clear expectations

All positions at the School that involve child-connected work will have a position description, which clearly sets out:

The positions requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety.

The occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.

All position descriptions and/or job advertisements will contain the following statement:

Gippsland Grammar is a child safe environment. Every child has a right to be safe, and at the School, we take a zero-tolerance approach to any behaviours that jeopardise student safety (including child abuse and reportable conduct). As such, preferred applicants will be subject to child protection screening, background and reference checks, verification of identity checks and must adhere to the School's child safe practices, as outlined in the Child Protection Program policies on the School's website.

All prospective employees will be informed about the School's child safety practices, including the Child Protection Staff Code of Conduct.

Recruitment Practices

The School's recruitment practices, selection procedures and decisions reflect the School's commitment to employ the best possible candidates and ensure a child safe environment. In achieving this, the School will assess all potential candidates equally, and in accordance with the terms of this Policy.

Recruitment practices are subject to State and Federal anti-discrimination legislation (see our **Equal Employment Opportunity and Staff Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination** Policy) and the requirements of the Privacy Act when obtaining, using, disclosing, and storing information from applicants and referees (see our **Privacy Program**).

The School's overall aim is to conduct recruitment in a manner that:

Ensures the best possible applicant is recruited from a child safety perspective;

Upholds a genuine, transparent and fair selection process; and

Reflects the School's Vision, Mission and Values.

Screening Requirements

Prospective employees

Preferred employees must:

Hold, and provide the School with evidence of, a current valid VIT registration or Working with Children Check clearance status (or similar check);

Provide the School with proof of their personal identity (at least 100 points of identification is required);

Have a current National Police Check or be willing to obtain one prior to, or during the course of their employment;

Provide the School with certified evidence of their professional or other qualifications relevant to the role and other experience and attributes relating to child safety;

Detail and provide to the School their history of child-connected work;

Satisfy a reference check (the School will contact at least two of the applicant's references) that addresses the person's suitability for the job and working with children; and

Be informed of, familiar with and agree to abide by the School's policies and child safe practices (including the **Child Protection Program, Child Protection Staff Code of Conduct and Make a Report Procedure**) prior to commencing at the School.

Volunteers

All volunteers must abide by the School's policies and child safe practices (including the **Child Protection and Safety Policy, Child Protection Staff Code of Conduct and Make a Report Procedure**) prior to commencing at the School.

Direct contact volunteer

A direct contact volunteer means a person who is involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and/or who could potentially have direct contact with students during the normal course of their volunteer service.

All direct contact volunteers are subject to child safety screening prior to their engagement by the School and must:

Hold, and provide the School with evidence of, a current valid Working with Children Check clearance status (or similar check);

Provide the School with proof of their personal identity (at least 100 points of identification is required);

Have a current National Police Check or be willing to obtain one prior to commencement;

Provide the School with certified evidence of their professional or other qualifications relevant to the role;

Detail and provide to the School their history of child-connected work; and

Where appropriate, satisfy a reference check that addresses the person's suitability to volunteer and work with children (this requirement is a matter of best practice and is particularly relevant for large-offsite events, overnight excursions and camps).

Indirect contact volunteers

An indirect contact volunteer means a person who is involved in providing support and services at the School whilst not directly assisting a child or specific group of students. For example, this would include a person assisting with School administration functions.

All indirect contact volunteers are subject to child safety screening prior to their engagement by the School and must:

Hold, and provide the School with evidence of, a current valid Working with Children Check clearance status (or similar check); and

Provide the School with proof of their personal identity (at least 100 points of identification is required).

Third party contractors

Third party contractor(s) include maintenance and building personnel, consultants, tutors, sports coaches and cleaners who attend the School, or other activities and events associated with the School, for the purpose of performing contracted services.

Where a third-party contractor could have direct or indirect contact with students during the ordinary course of providing their services to the School, they will be subjected to the equivalent screening processes for volunteers.

Regular screening practices and obligation to disclose

The School will review the currency of VIT registration and Working with Children Check clearances annually (or more frequently as required).

All employees, volunteers and third-party contractors are required to immediately notify the School if their VIT registration or Working with Children Check clearance (or similar check), is suspended, cancelled or otherwise under investigation.

All employees, volunteers and third-party contractors are prohibited from engaging in child-connected work in the absence of a valid VIT registration or Working with Children Check clearance (or similar check).

Induction

The School requires all staff to undergo appropriate induction upon commencement at the School, including in relation to the School's Child Protection Program and related policies and procedures.

Prior to commencing at the School, all volunteers and third party contractors must undergo appropriate induction, and be provided with the School's Child Protection Program and related policies and procedures.

Once staff, volunteers or contractors have completed the School's induction program, this will be recorded by the School and stored for record keeping purposes.

Supervision, Monitoring and Assessment

The School requires that staff act professionally, and in a way that embodies the School's commitment to child safety.

The School has a **Child Protection Staff Code of Conduct**, available on the School's website, which sets out appropriate and inappropriate behaviours by staff. In addition, Boarding House staff are expected to abide by standards set out in the **Boarding House Staff Code of Conduct**.

Staff will otherwise be subject to regular supervision, and assessment, to ensure their ongoing suitability for child-connected work. This will be managed by the Executive Leadership Team, and will include:

Effective use of probation periods and annual performance reviews for employees, which shall include an assessment a staff member's continuing suitability for child-connected work.

Monitoring staff to ensure their behaviour towards students is appropriate and to ensure compliance with the School's Child Protection Program.

Appropriate levels of supervision for all staff, and in particular employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students.

Acting on concerns which are raised in accordance with the **Make a Report Procedure** and **Grievances Policy**, as applicable.

Taking appropriate disciplinary action where a staff member is found to have acted contrary to the Child Protection Staff Code of Conduct, or the School's other policies and procedures.

The Principal will be responsible for keeping the Board informed regarding any matters which relate to a staff member's continuing suitability for child-connected work, or which otherwise concern the appropriateness of the School's arrangements for ensuring that staff engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

Training

In addition to appropriate training at induction, periodic refresher training will occur for staff to ensure ongoing understanding of their legal obligations.

At least annually, the School will ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to Board members and staff about:

Individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse.

Child abuse risks in the school environment.

Child abuse risks in a boarding environment.

The School's current child safety standards.

Relevant information and details of modules completed by each member of staff is recorded and stored on a School database for record keeping purposes.

Confidentiality

Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained at all times when obtaining, using, disclosing and storing information from prospective employees, volunteers and staff in accordance with this Policy.

The School takes seriously its confidentiality obligations – as stated its internal policies, procedures and through legislation, including under the *Privacy Act 2001* (Cth).

For more information, refer to our **Privacy Policy**.

Communication

This Policy is available to parents, students and the School community via the School's website.

This Policy is available to staff as part of the **Child Protection Program**. The Child Protection Program forms part of the School's induction program for incoming staff, and aspects of (and updates to) the Child Protection Program will be addressed in the School's professional development updates, training programs, bulletins and newsletters.

Authorisation and Evaluation

This Policy was authorised by the Principal and the Board in December 2020.

This Policy will be reviewed annually.

Related Policies

This document forms part of the School's **Child Protection Program** available to staff and members of the School community, and should be read in conjunction with the following publicly available policies:

Child Protection and Safety Policy

Child Protection Program Definitions

Child Protection Staff Code of Conduct

Make a Report Procedure

Grievances Policy