



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
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Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Introduction

Melbourne Grammar School (the School) is committed to promoting and protecting the interests, safety and wellbeing of all children and students. Melbourne Grammar School is committed to a learning and working environment that is safe for all children in the School's care.

The Melbourne Grammar School Council is committed to embedding a culture of child safety and wellbeing that promotes the identification and mitigation of risk and compliance with all child safety policies, procedures and practices.

The School has no tolerance for child abuse or harm to children and students.

All Staff at the School are responsible for providing a supportive and safe School Environment and School Boarding Environment, where every child and student has a place, a voice and their story is known and respected.

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (Policy) and the Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure (Procedure) have been drafted in consultation with the School community and approved by the School Council.

This Policy has been drafted considering the diversity of the School Environment and School Boarding Environment, including but not limited to the needs of children and students who:

- identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- are sexually and gender-diverse
- have a disability
- are unable to live at home and
- are vulnerable.

If any person believes a child or student is at immediate risk of abuse or serious harm, telephone 000 and ask to speak to Victoria Police.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to:

- demonstrate the strong commitment of our School to the care, safety and wellbeing of all students at our school.
- It provides an outline of the policies, procedures, actions and strategies that will be implemented to ensure that a child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the school, to keep students safe from harm
- outline the controls and procedures to prevent child abuse and harm occurring within the School Environment and School Boarding Environment
- promote an organisational culture of child safety and wellbeing including by ensuring that physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and students to be harmed
- provide a clear statement of "no tolerance" for child abuse and strictly forbidding child abuse or harm to children and Students
- provide a clear statement of "no tolerance" for racism to children and students
- ensure all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying child abuse and harm, and eliminating the risk of child abuse and harm occurring
- establish controls and procedures for identifying and preventing child abuse or harm, and detecting it when it occurs in the School Environment or School Boarding Environment
- provide guidance regarding action that should be taken where abuse or harm occurs or is suspected within or outside the School Environment or School Boarding Environment, including following a disclosure of abuse from a child or receipt of a complaint of child abuse or harm
- ensure everyone knows and understands their responsibilities to prevent and report child abuse and harm



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- ensure all complaints, concerns and safety incidents are reported so that they can be analysed to identify causes and systemic failures and inform continuous improvement
- ensure all complaints, concerns and safety incidents are documented, all required reports are made, and information is shared lawfully and when required by law pursuant to the School's Record Keeping, Retention and Destruction Policy
- provide a culturally safe and inclusive environment for the diverse needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, gender and sexually diverse children, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable
- provide assurance that complaints of child abuse and harm will be taken seriously, reported, properly investigated, and responded to in a child-focused manner and
- place an emphasis on genuine engagement with and empowerment of children and students.

The Policy forms the foundation of the School's procedures, practices, decision-making processes and ultimately the School's culture with respect to child safety. This Policy takes into account relevant legislative requirements applicable to our School, including the specific requirements of the Child Safe Standards as set out in Ministerial Order No. 1359.

Scope

This policy applies to all Staff, including school employees, school council, volunteers and contractors.

Staff must comply with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Procedure and Child Safety Code of Conduct.

This Policy applies in all School Environments, School Boarding Environments and applies whether or not Staff work face-to-face, online, or remotely with children.

Guiding Principles

Melbourne Grammar School is committed to the following guiding principles:

- The School has no tolerance for child abuse and harm.
- The best interests of children and Students is paramount.
- Child safety is a shared responsibility of everyone in the School community all children have a right to feel safe and be safe at the School and have equal rights to protection from abuse and neglect.
- The views of the child and a child's rights to safety, information, participation, privacy, social connections and learning opportunities must be respected.
- All children and students, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation or identity, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse and harm, and to special care and support.
- Actively and openly communicates with families about our approach to child safety and wellbeing and supports their participation in decisions affecting their child, where appropriate.
- Staff, volunteers, contractors, parents and students should feel free to raise concerns about child safety and wellbeing, knowing these will be taken seriously by school leadership.
- Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally (including under legislated information sharing schemes being Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) or Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) or pastorally.
- Comprehensive human resources, screening and recruitment policies and practices will be implemented for all staff, contractors and volunteers.



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Recognising Child Abuse

"Child abuse" includes

- any act committed against a child involving:
 - i. a sexual offence or
 - ii. grooming and
- the infliction, on a child, of:
 - i. physical violence or
 - ii. serious emotional or psychological harm and
 - iii. the serious neglect of a child.

This includes conduct towards, against, with or in the presence of a child or student, or threatening to engage in such conduct. Some examples include:

- forced marriage
- family violence
- subjecting a child to a change or suppression practice on the basis of their gender identity or sexual orientation.

Type of child abuse	More details and examples
Sexual offence, sexual misconduct or grooming	Harassment. Encouraging a child to engage in, or be involved in, sexual activity. Compelling sexual touching.
Physical abuse	intentionally or recklessly engaging in conduct which causes physical violence or apprehended physical violence which causes or is likely to cause physical harm. Pushing, kicking, pulling, providing illicit substances to a child or student, slapping, hitting.
Serious emotional and psychological harm	when a child has suffered or is likely to suffer emotional or psychological harm that causes the child's emotional or intellectual development is or is likely to be, significantly damaged and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm.
Serious neglect	Neglect is an omission. serious harm or impairment of development by being deprived of food, clothing, warmth, hygiene, intellectual stimulation, supervision and safety, attachment to and affection from adults, medical care, or failing to respond to allegations of abuse or risk to child safety.

Indicators of harm can be behavioural or physical. Indicators of harm vary for different types of child abuse and can co-occur with multiple types of child abuse. Examples of indicators of harm include but are not limited to:

Physical violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• unexplained bruises, burns, welts, cuts grazes or scratches (or vague or unlikely explanations)• avoidance of physical contact, or disproportionate reactions or limited emotion displayed• unexplained absences and decline in academic performance• wearing clothing that is unsuitable for the weather conditions (to hide injuries)• substance abuse, self-harm or suicide attempts.
Sexual offences
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• signs of pain, itching or discomfort in the genital or rectal area• sexualised behaviours• withdrawal, low self-esteem, suicidal ideation, self-harm• manifestation of psychological diagnoses including anxiety, depression and substance misuse

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE

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Policy Owner: Headmaster

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Page 3 of 17
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MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- presence of sexually transmitted diseases
- frequent urinary tract infections
- pregnancy (actual or suspected)
- self-mutilation
- displaying age-inappropriate sexual behaviour or knowledge
- inappropriate expressions of affection
- sudden fears of specific places or particular adults
- obsessive and compulsive washing
- complaining of headaches, stomach pains or nausea
- sleeping difficulties
- poor self-care or personal hygiene
- regressive behaviours such as bedwetting and speech loss
- substance abuse, self-harm or suicide attempts.

Emotional or psychological harm

- delays in emotional, mental or physical development
- speech impairments such as stuttering or being selectively mute
- rocking, thumb-sucking or other infantile behaviours
- eating disorders
- exhibiting high anxiety or symptoms of stress
- poor self-image or low self-esteem
- displaying aggressive, demanding or attention-seeking behaviour
- compulsive lying or stealing
- unexplained mood swings or depression
- poor social and interpersonal skills
- excessive neatness or cleanliness
- substance abuse, self-harm or suicide attempt.

Neglect

- Frequent hunger, or stealing or begging for food
- Poor hygiene
- Lack adequate or suitable clothing
- Refusal or reluctance to go home
- appearing dirty and unwashed
- unattended health problems
- appearing pale and weak
- inadequate shelter or unsanitary living conditions
- aggressive or self-destructive behaviour
- involvement in criminal activity
- poor, irregular or non-attendance at school
- limited positive interaction with parents, carers or guardians
- poor academic performance and
- substance abuse.

Roles and Responsibilities

School Council

The School Council is responsible for the detection and prevention of child abuse and complying with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order 1359.

The School Council's responsibilities include:



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- ensuring child safety and wellbeing is embedded in leadership, governance and culture of MGS
- ensuring appropriate and effective internal control systems are in place, including processes to respond to risks, complaints, concerns, disclosures, with regular reviews and evaluation of child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices after any significant child safety incident or at least every two years
- ensuring complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures and inform continuous improvement
- implementing policies, procedures and codes of conduct to ensure Staff and Volunteers know how to protect and prevent child abuse, and report it when it occurs or is suspected
- embedding a culture of child safety and wellbeing that promotes the identification and mitigation of risks and
- continuous monitoring and receiving of reports on the School's overall compliance with its child safety policies, procedures and practices, including the conduct of a three yearly independent review of compliance and child safety practices.

Headmaster

The Headmaster of the School is responsible for:

- taking all practical measures to ensure this Policy and the School's Child Safe Code of Conduct are implemented effectively and that a child safe culture is maintained in all School Environments and School Boarding Environments
- appointing an investigator to investigate reports of child abuse and harm, and ensuring that the investigation is carried out in accordance with legislative requirements
- ensuring Staff receive training and information on child safety consistent with this Policy
- ensuring all adults in the School community are aware of their obligation to report suspected child abuse and harm, or risk of child abuse and harm
- performing the responsibilities of the Head of Entity under the Reportable Conduct Scheme and
- providing assurance to the School Council that key identified risks have been appropriately assessed, managed and reported (including risk treatments).

Heads of Campus

All Heads of Campus must ensure they:

- promote child safety and wellbeing at all times including by monitoring compliance with the School's child safety policies and procedure and implementing child safe practices in the School Environment and School Boarding Environment
- assess the risk of child abuse and harm within their area of control and eradicate / minimise any risk to the greatest extent possible
- ensure risk management processes are in place and operating effectively within their areas of delegated responsibility
- educate Staff about the prevention and identification of child abuse and harm through the arrangement of training, induction and educational programs
- facilitate the reporting of any misconduct, inappropriate behaviour or suspected abuse pursuant to the Procedure
- are familiar with the types of abuse and harm which might occur within their area of responsibility and be alert for any indicators of such conduct
- facilitate and monitor protective behaviour programs for students and inform the School community of the School's strategies for child safety and
- provide leadership, support and guidance for staff, students and the wider School community on child safety, including by:
 - i. raising awareness and providing access to the child safe standards and the School's child safety policies and procedures for Staff, students, families and the School community
 - ii. being available to discuss any child safety concerns and
 - iii. providing advice on child safety issues and procedures.



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Responsibilities of the School's CSOs

A number of members of staff have been nominated as the School's Child Safety Officers. Our Child Safety Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child safety issues and are the first point of contact for raising child safety concerns within the School.

The CSOs at the School are:

School Section	Position title
Grimwade	Head of Grimwade
Wadhurst	Head of Wadhurst
Senior School	Deputy Headmaster/Head of Senior School
Boarding Precinct:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Director of Boarding• Senior Counsellors
Human Resources	Director of Human Resources

Our Child Safety Officers are responsible for:

- championing child safety
- raising awareness and providing access to the child safe standards and the School's child safety policies and procedures with students, Staff, families and the School community
- implementing child safe practices in the School Environment and School Boarding Environment
- identifying, mitigating and reporting any risks to child safety to the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, relevant Head of School
- helping coordinate responses to child safety and wellbeing incidents
- promptly responding to a concern or complaint of child abuse, and ensuring concerns and complaints are taken seriously
- arranging training and educational programs
- overseeing investigations of complaints and disclosures of child abuse and harm, as directed by the Headmaster
- supporting Staff and others in the School community to maintain a child safe School Environment and School Boarding Environment, including by listening, discussing and clarifying issues in relation to child safety and providing advice on child safety issues and procedures.

Responsibilities of School Staff and School Boarding Premises Staff

All School Staff and School Boarding Premises Staff have a responsibility to prevent, identify and mitigate risks related to child safety and wellbeing, and must:

- promote child safety and wellbeing at all times, and provide a physically and psychologically safe School environment and School boarding environment for children and students
- read and comply with this Policy and the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- follow the legislative and internal school policies, procedures and processes in the course of their work, if they form a reasonable belief that a child or young person has been or is being abused or neglected
- undertake regular training and education in order to understand their individual responsibilities in relation to child safety, and the wellbeing of children and young people, including ways to prevent, identify and mitigate risks relating to child safety and wellbeing
- respond to all reports, allegations, complaints, concerns and disclosures of child abuse and harm, or a risk of child abuse or harm, seriously, in a child-focused manner, with sensitivity and professionalism



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- be observant and report any concerns about actual, suspected or risk of child abuse or harm as soon as possible in accordance with the Procedure
- report any breach or suspected breach of this Policy or the Child Safety Code of Conduct in accordance with the Policy and Procedure as soon as possible
- provide support for children at risk or where an allegation, complaint or disclosure has been made
- cooperate fully with any investigation conducted by the School, DFFH, Victoria Police, law enforcement authorities, regulators, CCYP, or an investigator pursuant to the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- create and maintain records of all report allegations, complaints, concerns, disclosures, safety incidents, risks, decisions and all actions taken as required by the School's Record Keeping, Retention and Destruction Policy

School Staff and School Boarding Premises Staff are strongly encouraged to report child safety concerns to a Child Safety Officer as soon as possible.

A member of School Staff or School Boarding Premises Staff who holds a significant concern for the safety or wellbeing of a child or student, or believes on reasonable grounds that a child or student needs protection from child abuse, may disclose that information to Victoria Police or DFFH and is strongly encouraged to tell the School.

Responsibilities of Volunteers

Volunteers must:

- promote child safety and wellbeing at all times, and provide a safe School Environment for children and students
- read and comply with this Policy, Procedure and the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- undertaking required training and education in order to understand their individual responsibilities in relation to child safety, and the wellbeing of children and young people, including ways to prevent, identify and mitigate risks relating to child safety and wellbeing
- be familiar with their legal obligations with respect to reporting child abuse
be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse and
- raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Leadership team, Child Safety Officers or Deputy Head of School, Head of School or Head of Campus.

Risk Management and Prevention

Melbourne Grammar School has risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks.

Child safety risks can arise:

- in the online environment
- on overnight stays such as camps
- when children or students participate in events and activities:
 - i. away from the School campuses including but not limited to as excursions, sports festivals and interschool sports and
 - ii. involving adults not associated with the School or the School community.

Risks to child safety can include:

- images or videos being taken of children or students and
- an adult being alone with a student or failing to provide adequate supervision.

To mitigate and prevent these risks, the School:

- annually reviews risks, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the implementation of the risk controls (through the School Council, and Risk and Governance Committee)
- makes child safety and wellbeing a part of its overall risk management strategy approach and
- ensures Staff and Council members receive appropriate training and guidance.



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Child safety is a standing item at Council meetings to ensure the School Council:

- regularly considers risks to children and students in the School Environment and School Boarding Environment
- implements strategies to ensure child safety in all School Environments and School Boarding Environments and
- regularly reviews, and evaluates, the School's Child Safety and Wellbeing policies, procedures and practices.

The School conducts Child Safety Risk Assessments to consider risks of specific activities by the School in the school environment and school boarding environment, and the characteristics of children and students expected to be present in that environment. Child safety Risks must be recorded in the School's Risk Register. A child safety risk register is developed and maintained for monitoring that records the risk management actions to keep children staff in our school environment. These are reviewed annually by our Executive and School council to evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the risk controls.

Recruitment and Ongoing Sustainability

The School's Human Resources Procedure is a comprehensive recruitment and screening process for Staff which aims to:

- ensure people working with children are suitable
- promote and protect the safety and wellbeing of all children and students within the School Environment and School Boarding Environment
- identify and recruit the safest and most suitable candidates who share the School's values and commitment to protect children and students and
- prevent a person from working at the School if they pose a risk of harm to children.

In all decisions relating to the recruitment of Staff, the safety and wellbeing of children and students is paramount.

Staff have ongoing supervision to ensure they remain suitable for child-connected work, including:

- periodically, between checks, including via review of the status of any accreditations and any incident reports
- during any scheduled performance review and
- after any concern is raised regarding their conduct with children and students.

Staff must comply with the requirements regarding VIT registration and Working With Children Checks as set out in the Recruitment and Screening Procedure.

Education and awareness

Providing ongoing training and information to Staff is a key risk mitigation step of the School. The School delivers education and ongoing awareness to all people within the Melbourne Grammar School community to ensure they understand that child safety and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility.

We will also ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to the induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices and procedures governing child safety and wellbeing and child-connected work.

Melbourne Grammar School aims for all staff, parents/guardians and children to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns.

The School educates and assists its staff to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. The School educates staff on their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping on matters relevant to child safety and wellbeing.

Training also ensures people working with children are supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

School Staff and School Boarding Premises Staff

During or prior to orientation, School Staff and School Boarding Premises Staff are required to complete the following child safety and wellbeing training:

- the e-learning module 'insert title' or equivalent, as directed by the School and
- training regarding:
 - i. the Child Safe Standards
 - ii. this Policy
 - iii. the Child Safety Code of Conduct and
 - iv. the Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure.

Each year, at the annual briefing during Staff Day, the School provides School Staff and School Boarding Premises Staff with appropriate guidance and training about:

- this Policy
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure
- child abuse and harm risks in the School Environment and School Boarding Environment
- recognising the indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm or risk of harm
- the reportable conduct scheme
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- their information sharing and record keeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the School Environment and School Boarding Environment without compromising a child or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities and
- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse and harm, including reporting obligations and offences.

Volunteers

The School ensures Volunteers at the School receive training and information that will equip them with the knowledge, skills and awareness required to keep children and students safe, and that is appropriate to the nature and responsibilities of their role. This may include:

- this Policy
- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure
- the School's Child Safety Code of Conduct and guidance on:
 - how to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
 - how to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues and children and students who disclose harm
 - how they can contribute to building culturally safe environments for children and students
 - any information sharing and record keeping obligations and
 - how to identify and manage child safety and wellbeing risks relevant to the role the volunteer will undertake, without compromising a child or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Contractors

Upon commencement of work at the School, all contractors are required to read and confirm their understanding of and adherence to the School's child safety policies, procedures and practices as part of the induction process, and annually thereafter.

For contractors engaged in child connected work they will receive training and information that will equip them with the knowledge, skills and awareness required to keep children and students safe, and that is appropriate to the nature and responsibilities of their role. This may include:

- this Policy
- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure
- the School's Child Safety Code of Conduct and guidance on:
 - how to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
 - how to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues and children and students who disclose harm
 - how they can contribute to building culturally safe environments for children and students
 - any information sharing and record keeping obligations and
 - how to identify and manage child safety and wellbeing risks relevant to the role the volunteer will undertake, without compromising a child or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

School Council

The School's child safety policies and procedures are included in the School Council Induction Manual, which is issued to members upon commencement on the School Council.

The School Council also review the School's Child Safe policies and procedures biennially in accordance with their Governance calendar. The Headmaster reports on Child Safety matters at each School Council meeting.

Each year, the School Council receives appropriate guidance and training about:

- the Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order 1359 and their governance accountabilities
- child abuse risks in the School Environment and School Boarding Environment
- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse and harm
- child safety and wellbeing risks in the School Environment and School Boarding Environment and
- the School's child safety policies, procedures and practices.

Family Engagement and Communication

To ensure families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing and have a say in the development of child safety and wellbeing-related policies and practices, the School:

- communicates with families, carers and the School community about its child safe approach and
- publishes this Policy, Procedure and the Child Safety Code of Conduct and other information on its website so families and the School community are informed about the operations and governance of the School relating to child safety and wellbeing.

Any person who holds a significant concern for the wellbeing of a child or student, or believes on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from child abuse:



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- may disclose that information to Victoria Police or DFFH
- is encouraged to tell a member of the Schools Leadership Team, CSO, Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, relevant Head of School.

Child Safety Officers can listen, discuss and clarify issues confronting Staff in relation to child abuse and harm, and risk of child abuse and harm.

The School provides information about child safety, including this Policy, the Procedure and its complaint processes via a number of communications.

Generally, the School includes families in decisions related to child safety and wellbeing that affect their child, however, there may be times when the School will need to report concerns of child safety to the DFFH or Victoria Police without notifying a parent, carer or guardian. For example, when there are concerns that the parent, carer or guardian is involved in perpetrating the harm, or communication may increase the risk of harm.

When assessing whether to communicate with parents, carers or guardians about a child safety concern, the safety of children and students is paramount.

Student Participation and Empowerment

The School empowers children and students to know their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

We actively encourage all students to openly express their views and feel comfortable about giving voice to the things that are important to them.

We teach students about what they can do if they feel unsafe and enable them to understand, identify, discuss and report their concerns. We listen to and act on any concerns students, or their parents or carers, raise with us.

The curriculum design integrates appropriate knowledge and skills to enhance students' understanding of being safe, as well as their understanding of their rights to safety, information and participation. Teaching and learning strategies that acknowledge and support student agency and voice are implemented. We ensure that students are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.

We have developed appropriate education about:

- standards of behavior for students attending our school
- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality)
- resilience
- child abuse awareness and prevention.

We have also developed curriculum planning documents that detail the strategies and actions the school takes to implement its obligations to ensure that:

- children and students are informed about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation
- the importance of friendship is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and students feel safe and be less isolated
- staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns
- we have strategies in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and students
- we provide opportunities for children and students to participate and is responsive to their contributions to strengthen confidence and engagement



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- students are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant information in an age-appropriate way.

Diversity and Equity for Children and Students

The School is committed to providing a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are respected and valued. The School has no tolerance for racism to children or students.

To ensure the School ensures equity and responds diverse needs in policy and practice, the School pays particular attention to the needs of children and students:

- with a disability,
- from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds,
- who are unable to live at home,
- who are international students, and
- who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and
- who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

The School has a Diversity and Inclusion Policy which details the strategies and actions the School takes to ensure equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice.

The School provides information to children and students about child safety and wellbeing, and their rights, via a range of strategies to ensure this information is accessible, easy to understand and age-appropriate. The School does this by:

- for younger children and students, by communicating key messages about child safety and the Policy and Procedure in person (and any other method deemed appropriate and effective for the particular age of the child or student)
- for children and students living with a disability, by communicating key messages about child safety and the Policy and Procedure in person (and any other method deemed appropriate and effective for the particular disability and needs of that child or student) and
- for children and students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, by communicating key messages about child safety

Responding and reporting

When there are concerns a child is in immediate danger, call Victoria Police on 000. All members of the School community have a responsibility to report an allegation of child abuse as per the School's Child Safe Procedures.

All Staff must follow the Procedure, which sets out when and how they must report:

- breaches of the Policy, Procedure or Child Safety Code of Conduct and
- actual or suspected child abuse or risk of harm to students or children.

When the School receives information that a child or student has been harmed or is at risk of harm, the School will respond in a child-focused and professional manner which prioritises the safety of children, taking into account the diverse characteristics of the children and students involved.

The School understands that discussing matters of a sexual nature can be considered haram or taboo or be confronting or upsetting. To promote child safety, the School supports open, honest and respectful communication. The School will support members of our community to report child safety concerns in a manner they feel comfortable – for example, by speaking with someone of the same gender.



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Melbourne Grammar School takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. The School's staff are aware of the policy and procedures to deal appropriately with allegations.

When an allegation is made against a member of Staff, a CSO will follow the Procedure in consultation with the Headmaster or delegate.

Record keeping

Staff must create and maintain records of all complaints, concerns, safety incidents, risks, disclosures, decisions and of all actions taken in relation to a child safety complaint or disclosure.

Staff must follow the School's Record Keeping, Retention and Destruction Policy. Which provides the guidance on their information sharing and record keeping obligations, including under the [Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards](#).

When the School identifies a risk of child abuse in the School Environment or School Boarding Environment, the risk and the actions taken (or that will be taken) to reduce or remove the risk must be recorded. Records must be factual and not conjectural or interpretative. Places, times, dates, names of people, observable behaviours or evidence of harm must be recorded.

Incident Reports must be securely stored by the Headmaster or delegate and all reports made and stored in accordance with the School's Record Keeping, Retention and Destruction Policy.

Our school is a prescribed Information Sharing Entity (ISE) meaning that, where legislated requirements are met, it is able to share confidential information with other ISEs to promote child wellbeing or safety under the CISS or FVISS.

Privacy

The School must handle personal information about individuals (including Students, Staff Volunteers and parents and guardians) according to its Privacy Policy, Record Keeping, Retention and Destruction Policy, and its other legal obligations.

Staff must respect individuals' privacy, and limit sharing or disclosing information about child abuse and harm when it is not necessary to comply with reporting obligations, this Policy or Procedure, or support the child or student. For example, Staff should not discuss child abuse concerns in the Staff room when many people are present. Instead, Staff should arrange a private time and space to talk to a CSO.

Breaches

If the School becomes aware of a breach or suspected breach of this Policy, the Procedure, or Child Safety Code of Conduct, it will take immediate steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of any Student or child who may be at risk.

Staff must immediately report any breaches of this Policy to the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster/Head of Senior School, relevant Head of School, or when on an excursion or School trip, to the responsible CSO.

A breach of this Policy, the Procedure or the Child Safety Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action (up to and including the immediate termination of engagement or employment with the School and the withdrawal of permission for them to be on the School premises).

Suspected breaches will be investigated in accordance with this Policy, the Procedure, and any relevant legislation (for example, the Reportable Conduct Scheme), and in a manner which is child-focused and provides procedural fairness.

At all times and in all decisions relating to a breach or potential breach of this Policy, the Procedure or the Child Safety Code of Conduct, the safety of children and Students is paramount.



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Monitoring and Review

The School welcomes feedback from all members of the community on ways that it can improve its approach to child safety and wellbeing.

Children, students, families and communities have a say in the development and review of the School's policies and procedures.

The School reviews and evaluates this Policy, the Procedure, Child Safety Code of Conduct and the School's child safety procedures and practices every year as well as after any significant child safety incident. This includes evaluating how effective the School's risk controls and risk treatments are, partly by reference to the Child Safety Risk Register.

The Headmaster is responsible for ensuring this review is conducted.

Definitions

"CCYP" means the Commission for Children and Young People.

"Child" or "children" means a child or young person under the age of 18 years, unless otherwise defined by law or noted in this Policy or Procedure. A young person is a child aged 10-17 years old.

"child abuse" means:

any act committed against a child involving:

- a sexual offence or
- grooming and

the infliction, on a child, of:

- physical violence or
- serious emotional or psychological harm and
- the serious neglect of a child.

"Child safety" encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse. (Ministerial Order 135g)

"Child-connected work" means work authorised by the School Council and performed by an adult in the School Environment or School Boarding Environment while children or students are present or reasonably expected to be present.

"Child-related work" is defined under the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) and means (among other things) work at educational institutions or homestay accommodation that usually involves direct contact with a child, including physical contact, face to face contact, communication by post or other written communication, communication by telephone or other oral communication, or communication by email or other electronic communication.

"CSO" means Child Safety Officer.

"DFFH" means the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing.

"Gender diverse" An umbrella term that includes all the different ways gender can be experience and perceived. It can include people questioning their gender and those who identify as transgender, gender-queer, non-binary, gender non-conforming and many more

"Mandatory Reporter" means a mandatory reporter under section 184 of the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) (as



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

amended from time to time) and includes the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, Heads of School, registered teachers, registered nurses, registered psychologists, youth, social or welfare workers, registered early childhood teachers and persons in religious ministry.

Reportable conduct: Five types of reportable conduct are listed in the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic.) (as amended by the *Children Legislation Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2017*). These include:

1. sexual offences (against, with or in the presence of a child)
2. sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of a child)
3. physical violence (against, with or in the presence of a child)
4. behaviour that is likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm
5. significant neglect.

"Reportable Conduct Scheme" is the scheme which requires the School to respond to allegations of child abuse and child-related misconduct made against Staff, to notify CCYP of those allegations, and enable CCYP to oversee the School's responses to these allegations.

"School" means Melbourne Grammar School.

"School Council" means the board of Directors of Melbourne Grammar School.

"School Boarding Environment" means any physical, online or virtual space made available or authorised by the School Boarding Premises Governing Authority for a child or student boarding at a school boarding premises to use at any time, including:

- Creswick House, School House, and Perry House
- online or virtual school boarding environments (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services) and
- other locations provided by the provider of school boarding services or through a third party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for:
 - i. camps
 - ii. approved homestay accommodation
 - iii. delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school or
 - iv. sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.

"School Boarding Premises Staff" means an individual working in a School Boarding Environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by the School Boarding Premises Governing Authority
- a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person as an intermediary) engaged by the School Boarding Premises Governing Authority to perform child-related work or
- a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the School.

"School Boarding Premises Governing Authority" is the School Council and is defined by Ministerial Order 1359 as:

- the provider of the School's boarding services
- the governing body for the School's boarding premises (however described) as authorised by the provider of the School's boarding services or the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) ("ETR Act").

"School Environment" means any of the following physical, online or virtual places, used during or outside school hours:

- a campus of the School
- online or virtual School environments made available or authorised by the School Council for use by a child, young person or student (including email, social media, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services) and
- other locations provided by the school or through a third-party provider for a child, young person or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for:



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

- i. camps
- ii. approved homestay accommodation
- iii. delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school or
- iv. sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.

"School Governing Authority" is the School Council and is defined by Ministerial Order 1359 as:

- a proprietor of the School, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor
- the governing body for the School (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of the School or the ETR Act or
- the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of the School, the School Governing Body, or the ETR Act.

"School Staff" means an individual working in a School Environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by the School (including employees and homestay families and designated care givers)
- a contracted service provider (a body corporate or any other person) engaged by the School to perform child-related work or
- a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the School.

For clarity, this includes teachers, non-teaching staff, counsellors, pastoral staff, administration staff, sporting coaches, music teachers and contractors engaged for an excursion, incursion or camp.

"Staff", "Staff Members" means School Staff, School Boarding Premises Staff and Volunteers.

"Student" means a student enrolled at the School.

"Volunteer" includes a person who performs work without remuneration or reward for the School in the School Environment or the School Boarding Environment, including Council members.

Further Information

Requests for further information concerning any aspect of this Policy may be directed to the Headmaster. Deputy Headmaster/Head of Senior School.

Related Policies, Procedures and Legislation

This Policy must be read in conjunction with:

- the law of the Commonwealth of Australia and of the State of Victoria
- the School's Child Safety and Wellbeing Reporting Procedure and
- the School's Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Related policies include:

- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Standards Human Resources Procedures
- Historical Sexual Abuse Policy
- Recordkeeping, Retention and Destruction Policy
- Equal Opportunity and Respectful Workplace Policy
- Privacy Policy
- ICT Responsible Use Agreement
- Social Media and Internet Policy
- Student Passenger Policy



MELBOURNE
GRAMMAR SCHOOL
AN ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Related legislation includes:

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)*
- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)*
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)*
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)*
- *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)*
- *Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)*
- *Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001 (Vic)*
- *Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic.)*

Policy Sign Off & Acceptance

Reviewed by: Director of Human Resources

Approved/Signed Off By: Headmaster, School Council