



CHILD SAFETY Policy

Information for the wider school community

Child Safety

Preventing child abuse is everyone's responsibility; it must be embedded into our thinking, attitudes and practices. GWSC continues in its development towards an organisational culture that protects children from abuse and reflects its commitment to child safety. This is underpinned by *Ministerial Order No. 870 – Child Safe Standards- Managing the risk of child abuse in schools*; outlining the seven Child Safe Standards:

1. Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety
2. A child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety
3. A child safety code of conduct
4. Screening, supervision, training and other HR practices that reduce the risk of child abuse
5. Procedures for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
6. Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse
7. Strategies to promote child participation and empowerment

To further meet our legal and moral requirements, Child Safe Standards (1-7) will be continually reflected upon, developed and discussed for refinement to ensure that it is easily accessible, easy to understand and user friendly to children and equally, the wider community.

GWSC will reflect and re-fine its policies to ensure that these cater for our legislative obligations under Ministerial Order No. 870 and ongoing needs of our community. All school staff and people working in a child connected capacity will have an awareness of children's rights and adults' responsibilities regarding child appropriate behaviour. GWSC also meets the guidelines as set out in Ministerial Orders 382 (Work Experience) and 55 (SWL). All policies at Glen Waverley Secondary College that refer to students and children include all students, including International students.

GWSC will meet its obligation under the Ministerial Order as per details provided forthwith.

Standard 1: Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety

School Leaders

- In liaison with the wider school community, College leaders will create a statement of commitment and Code of Conduct policy that addresses the College's vision, mission, values and objectives in regards to child safety and incorporated measures to prevent child abuse.
- Have a nominated child safe representative who is appropriately trained and supported.
- Establish, in consultation, the processes for induction and training for the College community in recognising and responding to child abuse and new legislative requirements affecting processes, policies and protocols for staff, volunteers and contractors.
- Building responsibility for embedding an organisational culture of safety; including knowledge and understanding of staff obligations and what to do if an allegation is made.
- Advertising of employment positions on Recruitment On-line will include reference to our Child Safe Standards and Code of Conduct; including reference that *GWSC promotes the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability. That our school is culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Straight Island children and those from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds.* In addition, that we encourage applications from Aboriginal peoples and those from a culturally and / or linguistically diverse background.
- To investigate partnerships with family / community group to enhance and develop a culture of shared responsibility on organisational child safe policies and the empowerment and inclusiveness of Aboriginal and disabled children.
- Institute and maintain adequate record keeping of child safety issues and responses to any incidents. Strict processes of communication and associated paperwork linked to DET processes and protocols.
- Publish information and **Child Safe policies on the College website** and making the school community aware of child safety strategies via the school newsletter.
- Where opportunities for improvement are identified, then leadership or in conjunction with any other agencies (e.g. DHHS / DET) will adjust processes and protocols and inform the wider community to said change.

School Council

- The School Council communicates that it has zero tolerance of child abuse in any form.
- Child safety is listed for discussion at all formal meetings (e.g. School Council / Consultative Committee).
- Child safety strategies are developed, rigorously reviewed and adjusted to meet legislative needs.
- Effective reporting processes are developed, with identified people in the school to oversee outcomes.
- School Council and identified staff of the College will communicate with the wider school community about the Child Safety Code of Conduct policy and child protection reporting requirements.
- The school will report on child safety in its Annual Report.
- The school will report on child safety (and risk minimisation) in its Risk Registry.

School staff (including contractors, volunteers and any others in a child-connected capacity)

- The College will maintain awareness of Child Safety Code of Conduct policy and child protection reporting requirements to all school staff; including ongoing training and induction of new staff to GWSC.
- Ensuring all staff have current VIT (with Criminal History validation) and Working with Children checks, with a register to current validity and photocopies of staff VIT / WWCC cards placed on file.
- Probation periods for employment will assist the College in determining a new staff member's performance and suitability in working with children.
- Clear processes on child safety practices are widely communicated and understood.
- All CRTs listed for employment at the College to supply VIT registration in advance of offer of work.
- Child safety is listed for discussion regularly at staff meetings.
- Staff are provided with professional development to detect inappropriate behaviour.
- Positive behaviours are recognised and encouraged.
- Provide an environment of openness, transparency and approachability on child safety processes.
- Any CRTs, volunteers and / or contractors to be provided with a College 'Child Safe Code of Conduct' document, affirming our commit to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people at our College. The document will outlay the parameters of our commitment to child safety and list appropriate and inappropriate behaviours within this context. All CRTs, volunteers and / or contractors will need to sign a register acknowledging their reading and understanding of requirements prior to commencing their child-connected work within GWSC.

Children

- Children will be made aware on how to report inappropriate behaviour.
- Children will be encouraged to report inappropriate behaviour.
- The school will identify people that children can approach and discuss issues associated with child safety; including the appointment of a Child-Safety Officer.
- The school will create clearly understood and widely publicised child safety reporting procedures.
- The school employs a Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator, who provides counselling and resources to support children.

(Strategies adapted from DET and VRQA websites and Department of Health and Human Services)

Standard 2: A child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety (including policies, protocols and procedures)

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Rationale:

GWSC is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

GWSC has zero tolerance for child abuse.

GWSC is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in GWSC has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision-making and operations GWSC will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers."
11. GWSC meets the guidelines as set out in Ministerial Orders 382 (Work Experience) and 55 (SWL).

This Code of Conduct was endorsed/approved by the GWSC in February 2018. It will be reviewed if legislative or other changes require in the interim or no later than December 2020 and every two years thereafter..

Standard 3: Code of Conduct

CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

Rationale:

GWSC is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of GWSC will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of GWSC will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media. Note that GWSC also meets the guidelines as set out in Ministerial Orders 382 (Work Experience) and 55 (SWL).

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- Treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership or child safety officer
- Understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- If child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- Ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- Communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- Photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- In the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

This Code of Conduct was endorsed/approved by the GWSC in February 2018. It will be reviewed if legislative or other changes require in the interim or no later than December 2020 and every two years thereafter..

Standard 4: Screening, supervision, training and other human resource practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

GWSC will ensure that newly recruited and existing staff and volunteers understand the importance of child safety, are aware of current policies, procedures and are trained to minimise the risk of child abuse.

These protocols will assist our College to identify the most suitable persons to work with children but will also act as a screening tool to deter unsuitable persons from applying or being appointed (paid / voluntary) basis. Importantly GWSC also observes the guidelines as set out in Ministerial Orders 382 (Work Experience) and 55 (SWL).

Ministerial Order No. 870 provides the framework for how schools will be required to comply with the Standards. Overall responsibility for ensuring compliance rests with the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA). Accountability to compliance rests with GWSC.

The Ministerial Order specifies the following requirements for schools regarding recruitment. The following information has been taken from DET's PROTECT documents on Child Safe (Standard 4), which GWSC will utilize to ensure our compliance to this standard and recruitment of staff to the College-

Each job for school staff which involves child connected work must have a clear statement that sets out:

- a) The job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety
- b) The job occupant's essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.

1. All applicants for jobs that involve child connected work for the school must be informed about the school's child safety practices (including the Code of Conduct).
2. In accordance with any applicable legal requirement or school policy, the school must make reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform child connected work:
 - a) Working with Children Check status, or similar check
 - b) Proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications
 - c) The person's history of work involving children
 - d) References that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
3. The school need not comply with the requirements in step (2) above if it has already made reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the information set out in steps (3)(a) to (3)(d), above about a particular individual within the previous 12 months.
4. The school must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:
 - a) The induction of new school staff into the school's policies, codes, practices, and procedures governing child safety and child connected work
 - b) Monitoring and assessing a job occupant's continuing suitability for child connected work.

- The school must implement practices that enable the school governing authority to be satisfied that people engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.

In order to meet these obligations, GWSC commits to undertaking the following actions:

- Advertising of employment positions on **Recruitment On-line** will include reference to our Child Safe Standards and Code of Conduct; including reference that *GWSC promotes the safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including those with a disability. That our school is culturally safe for Aboriginal children and those from culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds, where we encourage applications from Aboriginal peoples and those from a culturally and / or linguistically diverse background.*
- Ensuring all staff have current VIT (with Criminal History validation) and Working with Children checks, with photocopies of such placed on file.
 - The College will liaise with VIT on any staff identified as not having registered by the required period.
 - The College will inform volunteers, contractors and the wider school community about the parameters of requiring a Working with Children's Check (unless exempt) if they intend to undertake child-connected work. (Full list is available from Department of Justice website)
- Use of probation periods.

Important areas that the College will take into consideration when recruiting new staff / volunteers-

- Relevant and verifiable experience in working with a diversity of children
- The College will conduct a fair and transparent interview of all short-listed applicants for employment positions; allowing (where able) opportunities to draw on the applicant's real-life experiences to assess their skills and suitability in working with children
- Understanding of children's physical, emotional needs
- Understanding professional boundaries
- Communication skills
- Application of non-discriminatory attitudes or behaviours towards any child, for any reason
- Responses from referees (2 x referee's minimum will be requested for each position). One referee must be the current or most recent employer; including the applicant's direct employer
- Require evidence of identity (e.g. driver's licence / passport)
- Applicant provide a true copy of their qualifications
- Monitor and Review provisions will be undertaken at the College, checking that the Working with Children Checks of relevant staff and volunteers are still valid. These will be linked to a register held at the College. The register will be maintained by the HR Administrator.
- GWSC is committed to pro-actively and systematically identifying and assessing risks to student safety across our entire school environment and reducing or eliminating (where possible) all potential sources of harm. We will document, implement, monitor and periodically review our risk management strategies for child safety and ensure that the strategies change as needed as new risks arise. All risks to child safety will be listed on our **Risk Register** and reviewed annually. The Risk Register is available to all staff on the intranet.

- **Standard 5: Processes for responding to & reporting suspected child abuse**

Duty of Care

- All school staff members have a duty to take reasonable steps to protect children under their care and supervision from harm that is reasonably foreseeable. The question of what constitutes "reasonable steps" will depend on the individual circumstances of each case.
- Staff may breach their duty of care towards a student if they fail to act in the way a reasonable or diligent professional would have acted in the same situation. In relation to suspected child abuse, reasonable steps may include:
 - Acting on concerns and suspicions of abuse as soon as practicable
 - Seeking appropriate advice or consulting with other professionals or agencies when the school staff member is unsure of what steps to take.
 - Reporting the suspected child abuse to appropriate authorities such as Victoria Police and DHHS Child Protection.
 - Arranging counselling and/or other appropriate welfare support for the child
 - Providing ongoing support to the child – this may include attending DHHS Child Protection Case Planning meetings, and convening regular Student Support Group meetings.
 - Sharing information with other school based staff who will also be responsible for monitoring and providing ongoing support to the child.

GWSC staff need to liaise with the Child Safety Officer in all cases of suspicion or reasonable belief that child abuse has occurred, or is at risk of occurring.

Student Understanding of Reporting

GWSC will institute processes and protocols to make students aware of child safety / child abuse and their need to report matters of child abuse to authorities.

Child safe information will be developed and shared through a variety of sessions of GWSC, including but not limited to the HPE curriculum, Home group, wellbeing and safety programs.

Mandatory Reporting

All VIT registered teachers and Principals, staff who have been granted permission by VIT to teach, registered doctors and nurses are all classified as 'Mandatory Reporters'. This classification obligates these people to make a report to Victoria Police and / or DHHS Child Protection as soon as practicable if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that:

- A child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm as a result of physical or sexual abuse
and
- The child's parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child from harm or that type

In response to the *Betrayal of Trust Report*, the Victorian Government has introduced new criminal offences to protect children from sexual abuse. New legislation states that failure to report, or take action in relation to suspected child sexual abuse can now constitute a criminal offence. This includes:

1. Failure to Disclose

This offence applies to all adults (not just professionals who work with children) who form a reasonable belief that another adult may have committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 years of age and fail to report this information to Victoria Police.

2. Failure to Protect

This offence applies to people in positions of authority (Principal Class) who:

- Knows of a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16, under the care, supervision or authority of the organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with the organisation (e.g. employee, contractors, volunteer, visitor);

and

- Negligently fails to remove or reduce the risk of harm.

All GWSC staff must act as soon as they witness an incident that breaches student safety or when they form a reasonable belief that a child has been or is at risk of being abused.

GWSC will record any child safety complaints, disclosures or breaches of the Code of Conduct (and subsequent action) and store these to DET and GWSC security and privacy conventions. To make processes, understandings and obligations clear, our College has appointed a dedicated Child-Safety Officer (Wellbeing Co-ordinator) which staff must liaise with on all child safety areas.

Forming a Suspicion

All staff suspicions that a child has been or may be in danger of being abused must be taken seriously. GWSC staff should liaise with our Child Safety Officer, who will advise on the specific incident.

Receiving a Disclosure (current student / former student)

If a child discloses that they have been, are being, or are in danger of being abused, GWSC staff must treat the disclosure seriously and take immediate action by following the *Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures or Suspicions of Child Abuse*. (Processes to such are discussed below).

- If a former student discloses historical abuse, all staff **must** act. If the former student is currently of school age and attending a Victorian school, staff must follow the *Four Critical Actions for Schools: Responding to Incidents, Disclosures or Suspicions of Child Abuse*. If the student is no longer of school age or attending a Victorian school, staff must still act by contacting Victoria Police.

** All disclosures **MUST** be documented utilising the **Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template**

** Additional strategies and advise on how to handle a disclosure can be found on the Departments website:

www.education.vic.gov.au/protect

*This information has been taken from DET's **PROTECT** documents- Identifying and Responding to ALL Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools and linked website- www.education.vic.gov.au/protect to address Standard 5*

Forming a Reasonable Belief

If GWSC staff witness behaviour, have a suspicion or receive a disclosure of child abuse, that staff member needs to determine whether they have formed a Reasonable Belief that a child is being abused or is at risk of being abused. A reasonable belief does not require proof (but needs to be more than a rumour).

Six different identified types of abuse

All staff who believe that a child is being abused by any type of abuse or at risk of being abused must follow the **Four Critical Actions for Schools** (discussed in detail later)

Detailed information on each area (and physical / behavioural indicators) can be gained from DETs website- www.education.vic.gov.au/protect

1: Physical

Abuse which is any non-accidental infliction of physical violence on a child by any person.

2: Sexual

Is when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve them in sexual activity (which can also include non-contact offences). It may not always involve force, as in some circumstances, a child may be manipulated.

3: Grooming

Is when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time. This may involve communicating and / or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent / carer.

4: Emotional

Emotional child abuse occurs when a child is repeatedly rejected, isolated, or frightened by threats or by witnessing family violence.

5: Neglect

Serious neglect significantly impairs the health or physical development of the child or places this development at serious risk.

6: Family Violence

Family violence can include physical violence or threats, verbal abuse, emotional and physical abuse, sexual abuse and financial and social abuse.

** When identifying child abuse, it is critical to remember that:

- The trauma associated with child abuse can significantly impact upon the wellbeing / development of a child.
- All concerns about the safety and wellbeing of a child, or the conduct of a staff member, contractor or volunteer **must** be acted upon as soon as practicable.

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse -Taking Action

Staff members of GWSC play a critical role in protecting children in their care; including:-

- Staff must act, by following the four critical actions, as soon as they witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused.
- Staff must act if they form a suspicion / reasonable belief, even if they are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (e.g. if the victim or another person tells them about the abuse).

- Staff **must** use the *Responding to Suspected Child Abuse* template to keep clear and comprehensive notes.

ACTION 1: RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY (If there is no risk of immediate harm go to ACTION 2)

If a child is at immediate risk of harm, the staff member must ensure their safety by:

- Separating alleged victims and others involved
 - Administering first aid
 - Calling 000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
 - Liaising with GWSC's Child Safety Officer at the school who will confer with Police on the specific incident.

ACTION 2: REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, the staff member **must** report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible. Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.

If the source of suspected abuse is from within our College, all staff members must report all instances of suspected child abuse and sexual abuse involving a school staff member, contractor or volunteer to Victoria Police. School staff **must also** report the incident **internally** to:

- School Principal and/or leadership team
- Employee Conduct Branch
- DET Security Services Unit

If the source of suspected abuse is from within the family or community, all staff **must** report to DHHS Child Protection if a child is considered to be:

- In need of protection from child abuse
- At risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development.

ACTION 3: CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

The Principal **must** consult with DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police to determine what information can be shared with parents / carers. They may advise:

- **Not to contact** the parents / carers (e.g. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish for their parents / carers to be contacted).
- **To contact** the parents / carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion).

ACTION 4: PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

GWSC **will** provide ongoing support for children impacted by abuse via **Student Support Plans**, liaison with DET / External agencies, SSGs and wellbeing strategies.

If a staff member believes that a child is not subject to abuse, but still holds **significant concerns** for their wellbeing, they must still act. This may include making a referral or seeking advice from Child FIRST (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support), or to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.

Strategies in support of a child may include liaison and communication with, but not limited to, the following:

- DHHS Child Protection and Victoria Police;
- Regional Office and engagement of Student Incident and Recovery Unit (SIRU);
- Parents/carers of all impacted students (where appropriate, following advice from authorities);
- If an international student is impacted, liaison with International Education Division (Government schools);
- If an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Student is impacted, liaison with Koorie Education Officer;
- Liaison with Victoria Police;
- Ongoing communication and action as set out by the Employee Conduct Branch (Government schools).

Strategies of ongoing support of a child may include (but not limited to), the following:

- Overseeing the development of a short-term action plan for all children impacted by suspected abuse in consultation with the Region and the Student Incident and Recovery Unit (SIRU);
- Ensuring ongoing education and support services are provided for all children involved via formation of a Student Support Group (SSG), overseen by the Child Safety Officer and representatives from a number of support agencies, including Student Incident and Recovery Unit (SIRU);
- Developing, implementing and reviewing a **Student Support Plan** in partnership with children and their parents/carers, allied health workers and external support agencies where appropriate (this plan should list appropriate school-level and non-school based supports and should assist students in returning to school);
- Addressing concerns as they arise.

Provision of school based wellbeing services for a child may include (but not limited to), the following:

- Continued monitoring of the situation and the health and wellbeing of impacted children and staff members;
- Ensuring the provision of ongoing support for the children, families and staff members involved.

** The Principal (or representative) will undertake a **review process between 4-6 weeks** after a report is made.

** Please note: if a staff member believes that a child is not subject to abuse, but still holds **significant concerns** for their wellbeing, they must still act. This may include making a referral or seeking advice from Child FIRST (in circumstances where the family are open to receiving support), or to DHHS Child Protection or Victoria Police.

Contact Information for Staff:

- **DHHS - Child Protection:** South Division: 1300 655 795;
 - **Sexual Offences and Child Abuse Investigation Team:** (SOCIT) Dandenong: (03) 8769 2200
 - **Regional Office:** Glen Waverley 1300 333 231 or 03 8392 9300
 - **(DET) Security Services Unit:** (03) 9589 6266
 - **(DET): Student Incident and Recovery Unit:** (03) 9637 2934
 - **Child First** www.dhs.vic.gov.au
 - **Victoria Police:** 000
 - **eHeadspace** (online and a 9am-1am telephone support service) www.eheadspace.org.au or 1800 650 850
 - **KidsHelp Line** on 1800 55 1800 or visit for 24-hour support
 - Talk to your doctor, psychologist, social worker
- ** In the case of **international students**, the Principal must notify the International Education Division on (03) 9637 2990 to ensure that appropriate support is arranged for the student.
- ** In the case of **Koorie students**, the Principal must notify the Regional Office to ensure that the Regional Koorie support officer can arrange appropriate support for the student.
- ** **Please note:** whilst staff members may need to gather information to make a report, it is not the role of GWSC staff to investigate abuse- leave this to Victoria Police and / or DHHS Child Protection.

Information contained in this policy has been taken, in part, from DET's **PROTECT** documents- *Identifying and Responding to ALL Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools* and linked website- www.education.vic.gov.au/protect

Management Support Plan for student involved in an allegation of sexual assault

Student Name: _____ **Home Group:** _____ **P/C Teacher:** _____ **Sub school:** _____ **AP:** _____

An individual Management Support Plan must be specifically developed for each **student involved in an allegation of sexual assault**. The Management Support Plan must be developed with the student, the parents/carers and relevant staff. It is advisable that external agencies providing support are involved. The Management Support Plan must be signed by the Principal, parents/carers and the student. The purpose of a student-specific Management Support Plan is to maintain safety and wellbeing and meet the school's duty of care to all students. **This information is confidential and should be kept securely.**

| Categories | Management Strategies | Actions | Person Responsible |
|--|--|--|--|
| Internal and External Support | <p><i>-What supports are currently in place for the student (i.e. counselling and return to school strategies)?</i></p> <p><i>-Have you identified key teachers & friends to provide support?</i></p> <p><i>-Does the student require a Personal Safety Plan? (Safe places, self-talk, help-seeking, self-calming strategies, support people, etc.)</i></p> <p><i>-Is an individual intervention program required?</i></p> | <p>- Ensure appropriate in school and external supports are in place and identified (name & contact details with permission) e.g.: SECASA, SOCIT, SCIAU, Regional Office, SSSO, private psychologist, GP, etc.</p> <p>-Determine if student is residing with parent/carer (who is responsible adult?)</p> <p>-Determine appropriate phased return to school plan if necessary</p> <p>-Inform staff (including Admin) of any changes to parent/carer arrangements</p> <p>-Prin/SWC/AP to liaise with student/parents/carer to determine most appropriate support teacher & friend.</p> <p>-Assess need (consult with student, parents/carers, SSSO, SOCIT, SECASA psychologist). Appropriate accommodations to be made as required. Circulate plan to staff.</p> <p>-Assess need (in consultation with support team). Who will facilitate the intervention program? When? Length of program? Goals? Success measures?</p> | <p>Prin /SWC/AP</p> <p>Prin/SWC/AP/P/C</p> <p>Prin/SWC/AP/PC/nominated teacher</p> <p>Prin/SWC/AP/nominated teacher</p> |
| Educational Support | <p><i>-If the student is absent from school for more than one week, what school work is being provided to the student?</i></p> <p><i>-Who will provide feedback to the student on their performance and out of school work?</i></p> <p><i>-Is extra support required (i.e. tuition)?</i></p> | <p>-Liaise with student/parents/carers/teacher re appropriate workload. Organise supply of work e.g.: Compass, hard copies etc.</p> <p>-Liaise with teachers to ensure work is assessed & feedback provided</p> <p>-Liaise with student/ parents/carers – organise additional support if required</p> | <p>Prin/SWC/AP/PC/nominated teacher</p> <p>Prin/SWC/AP/PC/nominated support teacher</p> <p>Nominated support teacher</p> |
| Yard Duty | <p><i>-Does the student require special arrangements to ensure a safe environment?</i></p> | <p>-Assess need to provide safe space</p> | <p>Prin/SWC/AP/PC/nominated teacher</p> |
| Start of the Day | <p><i>-Does someone need to meet the student?</i></p> | <p>-Liaise with student/parent/carer to identify appropriate staff/students</p> | <p>Prin/SWC/AP/PC/nominated teacher</p> |
| End of the Day | <p><i>-Does someone need to wait for the student to be collected?</i></p> | <p>-Liaise with student/parent/carer to identify appropriate staff/students</p> | <p>Prin/SWC/AP/PC/nominated teacher</p> |
| Whole School Events, Camps or Excursions | <p><i>-What advice does the supervising teacher need?</i></p> <p><i>-What strategies need to be put in place to ensure the safety of all students?</i></p> | <p>-Need to know basis only (minimal information shared)</p> <p>-To be determined in consultation with student/parent/carers/support team</p> | <p>Prin/SWC/AP/PC/nominated teacher</p> |
| Review | <p><i>-When, how frequently and by whom will the Management Support Plan be reviewed?</i></p> | <p>-To be determined in consultation with all parties</p> | <p>Prin/SWC/AP/PC/nominated teacher</p> |

Student: _____

Parent/Carer: _____

Principal: _____

Date: _____

Standard 6: Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

GWSC will adopt an annual risk management analysis, to identify risk assessment specific to child safety. To be read in conjunction with GWSC Risk Register.

| Hazard Ref | Area | Location | Hazard Type | Hazard Description. | Conseq. | Likelihood | Risk Rating | DET Suggest Controls | Controls implemented at the workplace | Conseq. | Likelihood | Risk Rating | Person Responsible |
|------------|-----------|---------------|--|---------------------|----------|------------|-------------|--|---|----------|------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| GWSC | All areas | All locations | No organisational culture of child-requiring leadership, public commitment and frequent communication. | All locations | Moderate | Likely | HIGH | The College will be compliant to VQRA having regard to the seven standards identified through Ministerial Order 870. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to embed organisational culture of child safety are reviewed Statement of commitment to child safety is publicly available Child safety code of conduct Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety | Moderate | Possible | MODERATE | GWSC Principal |
| GWSC | All areas | All locations | Inappropriate behaviour is not reported and addressed | All locations | Moderate | Unlikely | HIGH | The College will be compliant to VQRA having regard to the seven standards identified through Ministerial Order 870. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategies to embed organisational culture of child safety are reviewed Refresher training for staff – see eLearning mandatory reporting module Child safety code of conduct Clear child safety reporting procedures | Moderate | Possible | LOW | GWSC Principal |
| GWSC | All areas | All locations | Unquestioning trust of long term employees and contractors or norms | All locations | Moderate | Unlikely | HIGH | The College will be compliant to VQRA having regard to the seven standards identified through Ministerial Order 870. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refresher training for staff – see eLearning mandatory reporting module Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety Clear child safety reporting procedures | Moderate | Possible | LOW | GWSC Principal |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|-----------|---------------|---|---------------|----------|----------|-----------------|--|---|----------|----------|------------|----------------|
| GWSC | All areas | All locations | Recruitment of an inappropriate person | All locations | Moderate | Unlikely | MODERATE | The College will be compliant to VQRA having regard to the seven standards identified through Ministerial Order 870. | Processes updated to require: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criminal history search • Pre-employment reference check includes asking about child safety • WWCC or Victorian Institute of Teaching registration | Moderate | Possible | LOW | GWSC Principal |
| GWSC | All areas | All locations | Engagement with children online | All locations | Moderate | Unlikely | MODERATE | The College will be compliant to VQRA having regard to the seven standards identified through Ministerial Order 870. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train students and staff to detect inappropriate behaviour • Ensure appropriate settings on all student technologies • Child safety code of conduct • Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety | Moderate | Possible | LOW | GWSC Principal |
| GWSC | All areas | All locations | Unknown people and environments at excursions and camps | All locations | Moderate | Unlikely | MODERATE | The College will be compliant to VQRA having regard to the seven standards identified through Ministerial Order 870. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment of new or changed environments for child safety risks • Ensure Code and strategies apply in all school contexts • Child safety code of conduct • Strategies developed to embed culture of child safety • Clear child safety reporting procedures | Moderate | Possible | LOW | GWSC Principal |
| GWSC | All areas | All locations | Ad-hoc contractors on the premises (e.g. maintenance) | All locations | Moderate | Unlikely | MODERATE | The College will be compliant to VQRA having regard to the seven standards identified through Ministerial Order 870. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refresher training for frequent contractors • Child safe environments Information and awareness for visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors • Adequate monitoring | Moderate | Possible | LOW | GWSC Principal |

Risk Management assessment will cover the following areas at GWSC:

- Establishing the Context
- Identify and analyse the risks
- Monitor and Review
- * Consult and Communicate
- * Develop intervention
- * Designate and Manage

Adapted from DETs - DET's **PROTECT** documents- *Identifying and Responding to ALL Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools* and linked website- www.education.vic.gov.au/protect to address Standard 6.

Standard 7: Strategies to promote child empowerment and participation

GWSC acknowledges within our statement of commitment that it is our moral and legal responsibility to create a nurturing school environment where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and they are safe and feel safe. All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age disability, sexual orientation, or family or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse.

Within this context it is vitally important that GWSC staff promote the participation and empowerment of all children. When children have an environment in which they feel safe, respected and comfortable, they are more likely to speak on issues of safety and wellbeing.

GWSC will, having regard to recommendations established through the *Royal Commission for Children and Young People* and strategies adapted from DHHS booklet- *An Overview of the Victorian Child Safe Standards and published by Victorian Govt. 2015* refine and further develop our processes and protocols, specifically:

- Empowering students to have a formal voice of what needs to occur at the College from their perspective, with an identified forum and scheduled timeframe (created by the Leadership Team) of when this will occur.
- Continually building upon the opportunities and avenues for participation and empowerment of all children within the College.
- Celebrating diversity and continually developing GWSC's capacity to be a culturally and linguistically safe community, where respect and equality is enhanced in all things we do.
- Liaising with student groups within the College to establish standards of care, their rights, how to raise concerns, consulting mechanisms and the various manners that they can have a voice in this area as student leaders / student mentors. Creating strategies and processes for this occur.
- Information and processes for reporting concerns are accessible to all children, for example by having policies and procedures that are able to be accessed and understood by children with a disability.
- Ensure information and processes for reporting concerns are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal children. As required, the school will engage with parents of Aboriginal children, local Aboriginal communities or an Aboriginal community controlled organisation to review information and processes. Additionally, the Regional Koorie support officer can arrange appropriate support for a student.
- Provide culturally appropriate language, photographs and artwork for Aboriginal children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and children with a disability when drafting communications materials.
- Translate organisational information (including information about children's rights, child safe policies, statements of commitment and reporting and response procedures) into relevant community languages, as required or upon request.
- Gather strategic feedback from children (for example, through surveys, focus groups, Pastoral Care) about student safety, modes of raising concerns and suggested improvements for the school.
- Enable children to express their views and make suggestions on what child safety means to them, and on child safe policies, reporting and response procedures, and acknowledge and act upon these where possible. (For example, student views could be gathered through Sub-School suggestion boxes, feedback sessions through Pastoral Care sessions or via direct communication with the Child Safety Officer.
- Ensure services are accessible for people with a disability, for example provide appropriate communication aids such as hearing loops through classroom of GWSC's buildings.
- Provide relevant training to all staff of GWSC on methods of inclusiveness to encourage the participation of all children, in all activities, through:
 - Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and / or linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability
 - Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children living in Out-of-Home Care.
- Ensure Aboriginal children are accepted when identifying as Aboriginal, and that staff and volunteers understand appropriate responses to children identifying as Aboriginal.
 - Raise awareness within the College about children's RIGHTS through our Values and Expectations posters.
 - Provide a physical environment that is visually inclusive and welcoming for Aboriginal peoples and culture, such as by displaying symbols that indicate support and respect for Aboriginal peoples.
 - Promoting a school environment where the past is acknowledged and Aboriginal cultural diversity is respected, such as by including an Acknowledgement of Country at each meeting or event.

In meeting our obligations under Child Safe (Standard 7), **GWSC will institute appropriate curriculum and a delivery platform** providing students with education on:

- What child abuse is
- Student rights to make decisions about their body
- Privacy
- Forms of child abuse
- How students raise concerns about abuse
- Student Engagement
- School wide positive behaviour support
- Safe Schools Hub for students
- Respectful relationships education
- Health education
- Sexuality education
- Mental Health
- Visible Wellbeing (supporting resilience)
- Standards of behaviour for students attending GWSC
- Healthy and Respectful relationships (including sexuality)

To further meet our legal and moral requirements, Child Safe Standards (1-7) will be continually reflected upon, developed and discussed for refinement **to ensure that it is easily accessible, easy to understand and user friendly to children** and equally, the wider community. GWSC will reflect and re-fine its policies to ensure that these cater for our legislative obligations under Ministerial Order 870 and ongoing needs of our community.

The College will develop a policy that has a specific focus on the promotion of student empowerment to ensure children feel safe and comfortable in reporting concerns or allegations of abuse. All school staff and people working in a child connected capacity will have an awareness of children's rights and adults' responsibilities regarding child appropriate behaviour.

Review

- Ratified March 2018
- To be reviewed every three years or sooner in response to change in legislation
- Next Review March 2012