Greensborough
COLLEGE

Child Safety Policy

RATIONALE

Greensborough College has zero tolerance to child abuse and is committed to the protection and wellbeing of all students whilst participating in school activities both during and outside school hours. This includes online school environments, cyberbullying (eg. email and intranet systems). Staff have responsibility for building and maintaining a child safe environment. This responsibility extends to the identification and timely response to concerns regarding the possible, sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect of a child.

PURPOSE

- To embed a culture of child safety within the College community.
- To raise awareness of child abuse.
- To raise awareness of the needs of all children.
- To increase awareness of the need for sensitive and diverse approaches to child safety issues due to Indigenous, cultural or linguistic background or disability.
- To define the roles and responsibilities of the College and staff in protecting the safety and wellbeing of students.
- To increase awareness of the processes for reporting child abuse.
- To define the rights and responsibilities of students.

GUIDELINES

Child abuse includes physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse; neglect & medical neglect; family violence; human trafficking (including forced marriage) and sexual exploitation (including pornography and prostitution).

The College will handle all child safety concerns in a sensitive, confidential and timely manner.

Greensborough College has responsibility to ensure all staff:

- have undertaken appropriate Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration, National Police Check and Working with Children Checks.
- are provided with appropriate training to recognise indicators that a student may be in need of protection.
- have an understanding of student diversity and the need for a variety of approaches to child safety issues.
- are aware of their mandatory obligation to report a student who may be in need of protection.
- are aware of the procedures for reporting child safety concerns.
- abide by the College Statement of Values, Equal Opportunity & Sexual Harassment Policy and Bullying & Harassment Policy.

Staff have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care. If a staff member has concerns about the safety, health and wellbeing of students they should take immediate action.

In the case of a student who may be in need of protection or treatment, or where there are significant concerns about the wellbeing of a student, staff can discharge this duty of care by taking action which includes the following:

- notifying a student counsellor of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.
- notifying the Principal or a member of the school leadership team of their concerns and the reasons for those concerns.
- reporting their concerns to the Department of Human Services Child Protection (DHS).

A report should be made to DHS Child Protection in circumstances where, for example:

- the child is engaging in risk-taking behaviour
- female genital mutilation has occurred, or there is a risk of it occurring
- a child or young person is exhibiting sexually-abusive behaviours
- there are indications that a child is being groomed. For information see: Department of Justice and Regulation – Grooming offence.

A staff member who becomes aware that a colleague or person associated with the College (such as a contractor, volunteer or visitor) poses a risk of sexual abuse to a student must take all reasonable steps to remove or reduce that risk. This may include, for example, notifying a Principal team member and removing the person from child-related work pending investigation.

All contractors and volunteers are required to have a Working with Children Check.

Visitors are required to be supervised at all times by a staff member.

Any staff member who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria by an adult against a child under 16 must disclose that information to police.

Students:

- have the right be treated with respect and to be protected from harm.
- have the right to feel and be safe in their interactions with staff, contractors, volunteers or visitors.
- need to understand what is meant by 'feeling and being safe'
- will have the support of school based counsellors or designated staff whose role includes being an advocate for their safety and wellbeing.
- need to abide by the College Statement of Values, Student Code of Conduct, Equal Opportunity & Sexual Harassment Policy, Bullying & Harassment Policy and Information & Communications Technology - Acceptable Use Guidelines.

Definitions

Child abuse includes physical, sexual, emotional or psychological abuse; neglect & medical neglect; family violence; human trafficking (including forced marriage) and sexual exploitation (including pornography and prostitution).

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 to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including: a campus of the school; online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events.)

Related Legislation:

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*
- *Crimes Act 1958*
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*
- *Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001*
- *Child Safe Standards - Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, Ministerial Order No.870*

Department Resources:

- [A step-by-step guide to making a report to Child Protection or Child FIRST (PDF - 270Kb)](#)
- [Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people](#)
- [Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations](#) – e-learning module log-in
- [Reportable Conduct Scheme](#)

EVALUATION

This Policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Ratified by School Council September 2018