



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Camberwell Grammar School ("the School") has developed this Child Safety Policy to protect students, staff and the School by providing clear behavioural guidelines and expectations to support the safety of the students in our care.

This policy is intended to be a guide. It is not an exhaustive list, but it outlines the standards and expectations required of all members of staff, including volunteers and contractors of the school, for how to behave with students in our organisation, and should be read in conjunction with applicable legislative requirements and related school policies.

All staff will conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner consistent with their role as school representatives, be positive role models for students, and act to support the safety and wellbeing of those in their care.

The School is committed to student safety and to providing an environment in which students feel safe, happy and empowered. We are inclusive to all children and families and support and respect all of our students, staff, volunteers and contractors.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all Camberwell Grammar School staff, students, volunteers, contractors and any other members of the school community.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

The School:

- has zero tolerance for child abuse;
- has systems to protect students from abuse, and will take all allegations and concerns very seriously, and will respond to them consistently in line with the School's policies and procedures and our legislative and legal requirements.
- requires all members of staff, volunteers and those contracted to work with students to agree to abide by our *Code of Conduct for Working with Students* Policy that specifies the standards of conduct required when working with students.

We are committed to:

- the safety, participation and empowerment of all students in our care, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and students with a disability;
- preventing child abuse, identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks;
- training and educating our staff and volunteers regularly on child abuse risks

We have:

- robust human resource and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers;
- designated Child Safety Officers;
- specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments

If you believe a student is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As delegated by the School Council, the Headmaster and School Executive are responsible for developing strategies and initiatives that embed a culture of child safety at the School.

All staff, volunteers and contractors at the School are required to understand the importance of child safety and wellbeing and consistently follow child safety policies and procedures including mandatory reporting.

The School has five Child Safety Officers. These are the Heads of School and the School Counsellors. Child Safety Officers:

- ensure that child safety is prioritized within the School, providing advice and raising awareness of child safety;
- receive reports of suspicion of child abuse;
- are responsible for ensuring an appropriate response to any child abuse allegations;
- will keep their skills up to date in the area of child safety.

HUMAN RESOURCES

The School has human resource practices which include the recruitment, training and supervision of all staff to ensure that we engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children.

Recruitment

The School's recruitment practices enable the School Council, Headmaster and School Executive to be satisfied that people engaged in student-related work for the School perform appropriately in relation to child safety. We take all reasonable steps and follow recruitment processes to employ skilled and suitable people to work with students. We welcome applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and people with a disability.

These recruitment processes will ensure:

- new and existing staff, volunteers and contractors understand the importance of child safety and are aware of the School's policies and procedures;
- we develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities;
- the School understands that when recruiting staff and volunteers we have ethical as well as legislative obligations;
- compliance with School policy for recruitment and selection of staff for obtaining, verifying and recording information about a person whom it proposes to engage to perform student-related work, including processes for screening and background checks such as Working with Children Check, police record checks and VIT registration;
- the induction of new staff, volunteers and contractors into the School's policies, codes, practices and procedures governing child safety and student-related work;
- a staff member's continuing suitability for student-related work is monitored and assessed

Training and Supervision

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone in our organisation understands that student safety is everyone's responsibility. The School's culture aims for all staff,

volunteers and contractors (in addition to parents/carers and students) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or student safety concerns.

The School:

- trains staff to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.
- supports staff through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect students from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, the cultural safety of students from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of students with a disability.
- regularly supervises new employees, volunteers and contractors to ensure they understand our commitment to student safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting students from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards students is safe and appropriate.

RISK MANAGEMENT

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively assess, identify and manage risks in relation to child safety and document risk management strategies where necessary.

The School has policies and practices in place that raises the awareness within the School of our need to protect children. Such policies and practices:

- promote understanding by all School staff, volunteers and contractors of its expectations in relation to behavior and conduct when interacting with children and the consequences of failing to abide by those expectations.
- are monitored and reviewed to minimise student abuse risk posed by physical and virtual School environments, taking into account the age and needs of the students, the nature of the activities undertaken at the School and the particular risks they might present.
- include the provision of ongoing training, education and support for all School staff in relation to understanding child abuse, identifying risks and areas for improvement, the School's policies and practices for reporting concerns of child abuse and how to respond.

REGULAR REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and students have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

PROCESSES FOR RESPONDING TO AND REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

The School takes all allegations seriously and has clear and comprehensive practices in place for reporting and responding to suspected child abuse. Our staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

The School will continually work to improve practices and workplace systems to ensure all students, families, staff, volunteers and contractors know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

If you believe a student is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

The Schools' practices are based on the following:

- Compliance with mandatory reporting laws and obligations imposed by the criminal law to report a belief that child abuse may have occurred including reporting to the Victoria police and relevant authorities
- Ensuring any situation is handled appropriately, and that any parties involved in an allegation of child abuse are provided with support and treated fairly and consistently
- Clarity as to who should notify any concerns, who to notify within the School and what processes should be followed during and after an investigation
- Ensuring we have continuous review and improvement of our processes and that they are easily accessible for all persons within the School community including an easy to understand process for students.

The School will support and assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse, by:

- ensuring they have access to School support personnel, such as counsellors and Child Safety Officers;
- ensuring their situation is treated confidentially and with sensitivity;
- providing such other support or assistance as may be reasonable including due consideration for and necessary adjustments in the curriculum and co-curriculum programmes.

Appendix 1 – *Four Critical Actions for School* guide.

PROMOTING CHILD EMPOWERMENT AND PARTICIPATION

As delegated by the School Council, the Headmaster and School Executive are responsible for developing strategies and initiatives to deliver age appropriate education about:

- Standards of behaviour for students
- Healthy and respectful relationships (including sexual)
- Resilience
- Child abuse awareness and prevention

The School will ensure that the prevention approaches it adopts for its students will be focused on initiatives that build their awareness and encourage them to disclose behaviours that makes them feel unsafe.

COMMUNICATION

The School community will be informed about this policy. It will be publicly available. It will be available on the School's parent portal and communicated in the School's newsletters, staff induction programmes and during recruitment and enrolment processes for staff, volunteers and contractors.

All School Council members, staff, volunteers and contractors of the School will be made aware of this policy and our commitment to child safety.

DEFINITIONS

CHILD refers to an individual who is under the age of 18 years of age or who is enrolled as a student at Camberwell Grammar School.

CHILD ABUSE includes:

- Any act committed against a child involving:
 - A sexual offence or
 - An offence under section 49B(2) of the **Crimes Act 1958** (grooming)
- The infliction, on a child, of:
 - Physical violence or
 - Serious emotional or psychological harm
- 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 to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT is any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a student during or outside school hours, including:

- Our campus at 55 Mont Albert Road, Canterbury;
- Online school environments including approved social media groups set up for school communication, email, the Learning Management System, and intranet systems;
- Other locations provided by the School for a student's use, including locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events.

RELATED SCHOOL DOCUMENTS

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the objectives and aims of all other School policies and procedures concerning the welfare and protection of the students of the School. These include, but are not limited to:

- Bullying Behaviour Policy
- Code of Conduct for Working With Students Policy
- Complaint & Grievance Policy
- Information Technology Access and Use Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Social Media - Principles of Student Use Policy
- Student Welfare Policy
- Responding to Suspected Child Abuse Procedures and Form
- Human Resource – Recruitment Procedure
- Working With Children Check Procedure
- VIT Check Procedures

RELATED LINKS

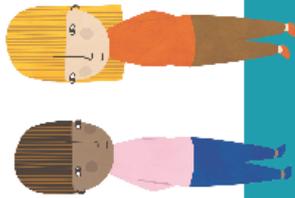
- The Victorian Institute of Teaching - [Teaching Profession Code of Conduct](#)
- Child Safe Standards - [Ministerial Order 870](#)
- Victorian Government – [Working With Children Check](#)
- [Working with Children Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Crimes Act 1958 \(Vic\)](#)
- [Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 \(Vic\)](#)

APPENDIX 1: FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

PROTECT



YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

As a school staff member, you play a critical role in protecting children in your care.

- You must act, by following the 4 critical actions, as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief that a child has, or is at risk of being abused.
- You must act if you form a suspicion/reasonable belief even if you are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (e.g. if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse).
- You must use the Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template to keep clear and comprehensive notes.

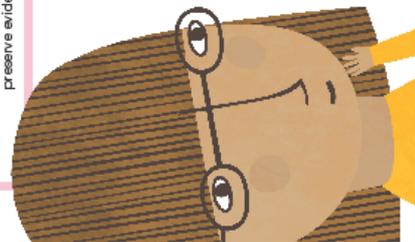
*A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

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 you must ensure their safety by:
- separating alleged victims and others involved
 - administering first aid
 - calling 000 for urgent medical aid or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns
 - identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police.

Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.



2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES

As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you 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.

← Q: Where does the source of suspected abuse come from? →

WITHIN THE SCHOOL

VICTORIA POLICE

You must report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor or volunteer to Victoria Police.

You must also report internally to:

- GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS
 - School Principal and/or leadership team
 - Employee Conduct Branch
 - DET's security Services Unit
- CATHOLIC SCHOOLS
 - School Principal and/or leadership team
 - Diocesan education office
- INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS
 - School Principal and/or school chairperson

WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION

You 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.

VICTORIA POLICE

You must also report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.

You must also report internally to:

GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

You must also report to:

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

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

You must also report to:

- School Principal and/or leadership team
- Diocesan education office

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

You must also report to:

- School Principal and/or chairperson

If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but you still hold significant concerns for their wellbeing you 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.

3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS

Your 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/carer (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 parent/carer 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).

4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT

Your school must provide support for children impacted by abuse. This should include the development of a Student Support Plan in consultation with wellbeing professionals. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements.

Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals.

You must follow the Four Critical Actions every time you become aware of a further instance or risk of abuse. This includes reporting new information to authorities.

CONTACT

DHHS CHILD PROTECTION AREA

North Division 1300 664 9777

South Division 1300 655 795

East Division 1300 360 391

West Division (Rural) 1800 075 5599

West Division (Metro) 1300 664 9777

AFTER HOURS

After hours, weekends, public holidays 13 12 78

Sale 03 5622 6600

Sandhurst 03 5443 2377

www.dhhs.vt.gov.au

VICTORIA POLICE

000 or your local police station

DET SECURITY SERVICES UNIT

(03) 9569 6266

STUDENT INCIDENT AND RECOVERY UNIT

(03) 9537 2934

EMPLOYEE CONDUCT BRANCH

(03) 9537 2595

DIOCESAN OFFICE

Melbourne (03) 9267 0228

Bellarat (03) 5937 7135

Sale (03) 5622 6600

Sandhurst (03) 5443 2377

INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

(03) 9625 7200

APPENDIX 2: CHILD SAFETY OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION



CHILD SAFETY OFFICER JOB DESCRIPTION

CHILD SAFETY OFFICER ROLE

The identification of Child Safety Officers provides students, staff and parents with clearly identifiable "go-to" people in the event of a suspected Child Safety issue. However, this does not remove the statutory obligation of all adults to report child abuse as per Mandatory Reporting regulations, nor does it take away the opportunity of any child to speak to any member of staff should they have concerns.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Child Safety Officers are responsible for:

1. promptly managing the school's response to an allegation or disclosure of child abuse, and ensuring that the allegation or disclosure is taken seriously;
2. responding appropriately to a child who makes or is affected by an allegation of child abuse (this includes following the procedures developed by the school);
3. informing appropriate authorities about the allegation (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);
4. protecting any child connected to the alleged child abuse until the allegation is resolved; and
5. making, securing, and retaining records of the allegation of child abuse and the school's response to it.

The School has five Child Safety Officers. These are the Heads of School and School Counsellors:

Head of Junior School - Mr Howard Kelly hk@cqs.vic.edu.au
Head of Middle School - Mr Rob French raf@cqs.vic.edu.au
Head of Senior School - Ms Rachael Falloon raf@cqs.vic.edu.au
School Counsellors - Mrs Elizabeth Grant efg@cqs.vic.edu.au
- Mrs Paulene Clarke pmc@cqs.vic.edu.au

In addition, the Headmaster has the responsibility for monitoring overall school compliance with this procedure and keeping the School Council informed of any incidents or allegations. In this he can be assisted by the Child Safety Officers. In cases where a Child Safety Officer cannot perform his or her role, the Headmaster is responsible for managing an alternative procedure for responding to an allegation or disclosure.

In the case of an historic allegation, these will be managed by the Headmaster.

Developed by RGF & SGP: June 2016
Reviewed and updated by RAF: August 2016
Next Review: August 2017

*This is a controlled document. Hardcopies of this document are considered uncontrolled. Please refer to the Intranet - Staff Handbook (staff) or the School's Parent Portal (parents) for the latest version.