

Child Safety Code of Conduct

1. Statement of commitment to child safety

The Geelong College is a Child Safe School. We have a zero-tolerance stance on child abuse and are committed to the protection of all children from all forms of abuse. The Geelong College recognises that in order to achieve a child safe environment at the College which meets students' intellectual, physical, social, emotional and moral needs, students need to be involved in the creation and maintenance of such an environment.

We are committed to taking a preventative and proactive approach to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe; they are empowered to use their voices when decisions are being made that affect their safety. We are also committed to providing simple and accessible processes to assist all children to identify and communicate when they do not feel safe. Particularly, this includes those who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, from culturally diverse backgrounds and those with a disability.

We are clear about our behavioral expectations of every person in our community and are committed to having a shared understanding of and responsibility for child safety. All staff are expected to uphold a culture that protects children from all forms of harm.

2. Purpose

This Child Safety Code of Conduct lists behaviour's that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships. When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is educated about the Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the College environment becomes much more transparent, and people are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safety Code of Conduct helps to protect all children from harm. The Child Safety Code of Conduct set out below is designed to stand alone. It has also been incorporated in part into The Geelong College Codes of Conduct developed within the College.

[Staff Code of Conduct](#)

[Early Learning Outside School Hours Care Code of Conduct Policy](#)

[Council Code of Conduct](#)

3. Scope

This policy applies to;

The Geelong College staff (including early childhood teachers and educators), Day Students- Domestic and International Boarding, volunteers (including Council Members), approved providers/contractors, parents/guardians, visitors, children, and others attending the programs and activities of The Geelong College, including offsite excursions and activities.

Together referred to as "The Geelong College Community" for the purpose of the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

4. Application

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to all in The College and Boarding House environments. The College and Boarding House environments include the following physical, virtual and online places used by a student or a boarding student at any time:

- camps
- approved homestay (International Students)
- Delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFE's, non-school senior secondary providers, another school
- Sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events.

5. Details

This Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards all students. The Code serves to protect all students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote child safety in the College environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. Where a staff member breaches the Code, The College may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal.

The College has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our College community.

The College's Council members have endorsed this Child Safety Code of Conduct and The Geelong College Code of Conduct Policy.

Each member of The College Community is responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of students by adhering to the following standards of behaviour:

DO:

- a. Uphold and in accordance with The College Child Protection and Safety Policy at all times
- b. Comply with applicable guidelines published by The College with respect to child safety, such as the Staff and Student Professional Boundaries policy. Behave as a positive role model to students
- c. Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students
- d. Be vigilant and proactive with regard to student safety and child protection issues
- e. Provide age-appropriate supervision for students
- f. Treat all students with respect
- g. Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- h. Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and/or culturally diverse students and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- i. Use positive and affirming language towards students
- j. Encourage students to 'have a say' and then listen to them with respect
- k. Respect cultural, religious and political difference
- l. Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact, and socialise
- m. Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way
- n. Report any breaches of this Child Safety Code of Conduct
- o. Report concerns about child safety to one of the College's Child Protection Officers and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met

- p. Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe
- q. Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety
- r. Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

DO NOT:

- a. Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour
- b. Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with students
- c. Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- d. Engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of students
- e. Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a student including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material
- f. Engage in inappropriate or unnecessary physical conduct or behaviours including doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- g. Engage in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriately rough physical play
- h. Use physical means (other than expressly outlined in the Retrain of Student Policy) or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student
- i. Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm
- j. Develop 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favoritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students)
- k. Engage in undisclosed private meetings with a student that is not your own child
- l. Engage in activities with a child that is not your own, outside of school hours and without permission from the College and the child's parent/carer
- m. Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student Take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent
- n. Post identifying information about a student online unless it is necessary for The College activities, or you have consent from the student and/or parents/guardians. Identifying information includes things such as the student's: full name; age; e-mail address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group they may attend
- o. Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse

Our Child Protection Program includes a Staff and Student Professional Boundaries document and Code of Conduct that provides detailed guidance for all staff and volunteers on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and staff at The College.

6. Agreement to the Child Safe Code of Conduct

The College provides a copy of the Child Safe Code of Conduct to all staff, relevant Volunteers and relevant Contractors at induction, or otherwise prior to them commencing at The College. The College also communicates it via refresher training at regular intervals for all staff, as well as Volunteers. All Staff, as well as Volunteers, parents/carers acknowledge and agree to adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct forms part of the contract between The College and Contractors. Therefore, all Direct Contact Contractors and Regular Contractors are deemed to have agreed to adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct on commencing work at The College.

7. Consequences for Breaching the Child Safe Code of Conduct

Staff, including the Senior/Executive Management and Principal, Volunteers and Contractors who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary actions that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- Remedial education
- Counselling
- Increased supervision
- The restriction of duties
- Appointment to an alternate role
- Suspension
- In the case of a serious breach, termination of employment, contract or engagement.

Where any other member of The College Community breaches any obligations, duty or responsibility within our Child Safe Code of Conduct, The College will take appropriate action.

8. Reporting any concerns

Staff/Volunteers/Contractors

It is The College's policy that any breach of the Child safe Code of Conduct is a child safety incident. Therefore, all Staff, Volunteers and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors who witness, or suspect, any breach of the Code of Conduct must report their concerns internally and, if required, also externally. Staff who, in good faith, make an internal report alleging a breach of the Child Safe Code of Conduct will be protected from victimisation or other adverse consequences.

Our Child Protection Program includes information for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors' about how to identify key indicators of child abuse or other harm and how to report child safety incidents or concerns internally.

It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child safety incidents or concerns to relevant authorities. For more information, refer to our procedures for *Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns*.

Students

The College provides students with information about, and encourages them to use, multiple pathways to raise child safety incidents or concerns about, or at, The College, including breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct. These include informal and formal ways, an 'anonymous' way, and through external child advocacy or child safety organisations, refer to *Child Protection Complaints Management*.

Anyone in 'The College Community' who witnesses or suspects that there has been a breach of this Code of Conduct, or have concerns that a child or young person associated with The College may be subject to abuse or harm from a member of Staff, a Volunteer or a Contractor, should contact:

A College Child Safety Officers:

Name	Position	Contact No.	Email Address
Simon Young	Principal	+61 3 5226 3107	Simon.Young@tgc.vic.edu.au
Nathan Morton	Deputy Principal	+61 3 5226 3122	Nathan.Morton@tgc.vic.edu.au
Nat Coull	Head of Senior School	+61 3 5226 3120	Nat.Coull@tgc.vic.edu.au
Leanne Russell	Head of Middle School	+61 3 5226 3460	Leanne.Russell@tgc.vic.edu.au
Sondra Wolfenden	Head of Junior School	+61 3 5226 3430	Sondra.Wolfenden@tgc.vic.edu.au

Or;

- If the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of The Geelong College Council on +61 3 5226 3107 or email Council.Chair@tgc.vic.edu.au

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, the Police should be contacted on 000.

[Definitions and Additional Resources](#)

[Definitions and Key Indicators of Child Abuse and Other Harm](#)

9. Legal Obligations

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) – Criminal Offenses Related to Child Safety

Failure to Disclose (s.327)

*Any adult who **fails to report child sexual abuse** to police may face criminal charges.*

*Maximum **3 years imprisonment.***

Failure to Protect 9s.490)

*Applies to people in authority (e.g., school leaders, managers) who **fail to act on a known risk** of child abuse.*

*Maximum **5 years imprisonment.***

Grooming Offense (s.49M)

*Criminalizes **any act of grooming** a child or their caregiver for sexual abuse.*

*Maximum **10 years imprisonment.***

Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)

Offences Under the Child, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

Offences Under the Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021 (Vic)

10. Related Documents

[Codes of Conduct Policy](#)

[Staff Code of Conduct](#)

[Student Code of Conduct Guidelines](#)

[Council Code of Conduct](#)

[Code of Conduct for Bus Traveller](#)