



Anglican Grammar
Hume

Child Safety Policy

POLICY OWNER: Principal
APPROVED BY: SLT August 2018
REVIEW DATE: August 2020

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to make clear to all stakeholders, members of the school community, including the Board, Staff, Parents and Students, the values and principles that guide the school in developing policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe environment at Hume Anglican Grammar. This policy specifically responds to Standard 2 of Ministerial Order No. 870 (*Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools*), which also includes the school's reporting obligations with respect to these standards.

2. SCOPE

This policy and associated procedures applies to all members of the Hume Anglican Grammar community and is inclusive of all school environments (physical and online). It is also applicable to approved visitors, including but not limited to pre-service teachers, guest presenters, contracted tradespeople (in 'direct contact' with children) and volunteers, as well as prospective parents and students.

3. ALIGNMENT TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Values:

Christian, Excellence, Resilience, Respect and Integrity.

Pathways:

Goal:

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Student Wellbeing – a supportive, caring and inspiring environment where all can thrive.

4. Parents – engaging families and forging strong relationships | <ol style="list-style-type: none">a. Create a culture which promotes a positive sense of wellbeing and self-worth based upon Christ's example.

b. Maintain a safe and secure environment with an emphasis on pastoral care that nurtures each individual.

a. Foster a fruitful partnership between home and school. |
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DESIRED OUTCOMES:

1. Develop students with school pride, who can embark on meaningful and productive lives as confident and respected global citizens.

2. Have connected parents who support the School as an intrinsic and steadfast element of family-life.

4. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

VIT - Teaching Profession Code of Conduct

Hume Anglican Grammar Child Safety Code of Conduct

Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Hume Anglican Grammar Information and Communication Technologies policy

Hume Anglican Grammar Staff Laptop policy

Hume Anglican Grammar Social Media policy

Hume Anglican Grammar Parent Volunteer policy

Hume Anglican Grammar Staff Professional Expectations policy

5. DEFINITIONS

Child - The word 'child' in this policy refers to children and students up to the age of 18 years. This definition is consistent with the national framework, Creating Safe Environments for Children – Organisations, Employees and Volunteers, the Commission for Children and Young People Act, the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 and the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005

Child abuse – All abuse harms children. Even injuries that are not visible can be profound. They strike at a child's sense of identity, make them fearful and ashamed, and reduce their ability to participate in their community.

Child abuse includes –

- Any act committed against a child involving –
 - a sexual offence;
 - an offence under section 49M of the *Crimes Act 1958* (*grooming*)
 - encouraging a child under the age of 16 to engage in, or be involved in, sexual activity;
 - encouraging a child aged 16 or 17 under care, supervision or authority to engage in, or be involved in, sexual activity
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- the infliction, on a child, of –
 - physical violence or
 - serious emotional harm
- serious neglect of a child

Children's rights - A cornerstone of the development of child safe procedures is the rights that are outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CROC).

CROC specifically recognises that children have a right to be protected from physical and mental harm and neglect and be able to enjoy the full range of human rights – civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. An extract of the convention appears in Appendix 1.

6. HUME ANGLICAN GRAMMAR CHILD SAFETY POLICY

6.1 Commitment to child safety

It is very important that all members of the school and wider communities recognise that Hume Anglican Grammar is absolutely committed to **zero tolerance of child abuse**.

In the spirit of the school's commitment to student wellbeing, the School strives to provide a supportive, caring and inspiring environment where all can thrive and be safe, at all times.

The wellbeing of all who work for or visit the school is paramount.

6.2 Valuing diversity

All current and prospective students, including those with a disability, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander or culturally and linguistically diverse background, will be cared for and their safety given the highest priority.

We are an inclusive Christian community in the Anglican tradition built upon compassion and service to others. We are also open to people of other faiths and respectful of their beliefs and culture.

6.3 Recruiting staff and volunteers

Specific information about child safety is an integral component of the school's recruitment, selection and management of staff. As part of this all Teaching Staff must hold a valid, current Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) registration and advise the Principal immediately if there is any modification to their status or ability to work with children. While all General Staff, Pre-service Teachers and Parent Volunteers must hold a valid, current "Working with Children" check and advise the Principal immediately if there is any modification to their status or ability to work with children. In addition to these checks, targeted questioning during interviews and referee checks is conducted for all staff appointments and for parent volunteer roles. All staff and volunteers are expected to always conduct themselves in a manner that promotes the safety, welfare and wellbeing of our students.

6.4 Supporting staff and volunteers

All staff, as well as supervised pre-service teachers and volunteers at the school are expected to maintain professional relationships with students at all times. This means that these individuals will never have an inappropriately intimate or sexual relationship with students; will never use sexual innuendo in the presence of students; will not use inappropriate or suggestive language or materials with students; will not hold conversations of an unsuitable personal nature with students, in person, via email or other electronic communication, via the post or other written communication, or through telephone communication. All of the examples cited are potentially forms of child abuse (see definition).

All Visitors to the school must report to Main Reception, where they are required to sign-in and sign-out. Visitors, including pre-service teachers, are issued with a Visitor's pass that must be worn. School staff and Board members can be easily distinguished by a magnetic name tag. The school Maintenance Manager will meet and undertake a child safety-based induction with any tradesperson upon their arrival at the school. Regular tradespersons will sign-in, acknowledging the school's commitment to child safety and are required to complete a child safety-based induction annually.

Parent volunteers working with Primary students must report to the Primary Reception upon their arrival to sign-in and sign-out again upon their departure. All Parent volunteers are required to participate in Volunteers induction training, prior to working amongst children.

Visiting parents must also report to either the Primary or Secondary Reception, so that a message can be given to their child. If they have a scheduled meeting the teacher concerned will come to the relevant Reception area to meet them. Parents or a relative who come to the school to collect an ill or injured child from the Health Centre may report directly to the First Aid Officer, upon arrival. They will be required to sign-out the child for our records.

A member of the school staff will approach any visitor to the school, who does not have a Visitor's pass to offer assistance or to provide other instruction. Primary students are regularly reminded about interacting with strangers and are accompanied by at least one other student whenever they leave their classroom.

6.5 Staff interactions with children

(i) Interactions with children can extend beyond the school setting, including outside of school hours, outside of school grounds and through utilising any technology, including social media. Employees and volunteers must ensure that social interactions with students outside of school do not provide any grounds for allegations against them of

improper conduct. They must be conscious that their position places significant obligations on them and a requirement to follow all relevant policies.

(ii) Where a personal relationship (such as family relationship or close friendship) exists between a staff member and a student attending the staff member's place of work, the staff member must notify their Line Manager of a potential conflict of interest. Wherever practical, staff should avoid teaching or being involved in educational decisions relating to family members or the children of close personal friends.

(iii) Staff should avoid driving students in their personal vehicle. In the event of an emergency or extraordinary situation, staff must obtain parental consent and also report the matter to the Deputy Principal, prior to the journey commencing. When this is not possible, staff must advise the Deputy Principal as soon as possible after the journey. The vehicle must be registered and insured when the journey is undertaken. Staff must never take a single student in their personal vehicle. At all times, at least one other person, preferably a staff member or other adult must be in the vehicle, as a third party. Only in extraordinary circumstances will an exemption to this policy be approved. In such extraordinary circumstances, the exemption must be approved prior to the transport taking place.

(iv) Staff must not engage in paid individual tutoring or coaching of current students outside of school hours. If staff are engaged in a registered coaching/tutoring agency, and a Hume student is enrolled through this agency, then this is permissible. Staff must ensure that this outside work is authorised by the Principal.

(iv) Staff must not engage in conduct that could be construed as assault of a child or student. Assault generally involves either hostile or reckless application of force or the threat of force, regardless of whether harm to the child, young person or student takes place.

The School expects that when physical contact with a student is necessary within the teaching/learning experience, employees and volunteers must exercise caution to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable for the duty to be performed.

Examples of situations where physical contact with a student may be necessary include:

- assisting students with special needs, for example, to allow a student to engage with a teaching/learning experience or the curriculum in general;
- assessing a student who is injured or ill. The adult involved should advise the student of what they intend to do and, where possible, seek the student's consent and have a colleague present;
- restraining a student when the student, other students and/or staff are being harmed or are in imminent danger of being harmed;
- teaching sport, music and other activities where physical handling of a student is required to demonstrate a particular action or skill;
- comforting an upset student;
- guiding a student in a helpful and non-threatening manner.

The School expects that any physical contact as referred to in the above examples:

- is only acceptable if the contact was reasonable for the purpose of the management or care of the student;
- must be appropriate given the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the student;
- should be consistent with any Individual Learning Plan in place for that student.

(v) Staff must not engage in unreasonable conduct that could cause psychological harm to a child or student.

Examples include:

- Targeted and sustained criticism, belittling or teasing;
- Excessive or unreasonable demands;
- Persistent hostility and severe verbal abuse, rejection and/or scapegoating;
- Using inappropriate locations or social isolation as a form of punishment.

6.6 Children's rights to safety and participation

Each child at Hume Anglican Grammar has the right to express their views, to be listened to on matters that affect them and to feel safe. To support this a dedicated Class or Homeroom teacher has overall responsibility for their wellbeing. An age-specific wellbeing program is in place for each year level, so that all students are supported and cared for. In addition to the resources that are utilised by the teachers delivering these programs our students are also exposed to visiting speakers and presenters, who are experts in their field. Extending beyond the classroom, student wellbeing also includes a focus on protective behaviours with respect to areas such as the weather, online activities and 'stranger danger'.

Student Mental Health is increasingly recognised in schools as being an area that requires our attention and so we also have processes in place to help cater for the children in our school in this quite specialised area. Both Primary and Secondary students have access to the school's Student Psychologist. We also have links with Headspace in Craigieburn and other specialised support services, where required.

6.7 Reporting a child safety concern or complaint

In addition to helping provide a safe learning environment, our school policies and procedures stipulate how teaching staff fulfil their duty of care towards children and young people in our school. Teachers are encouraged to discuss any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of students with either the Assistant Principal, Head of Wellbeing or Deputy Principal.

We note that any person who is registered as a teacher under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006, or any person who has been granted permission to teach under that Act, is mandated to make a report to Child Protection. Furthermore, all staff (Teaching and General) are provided with information related to the procedures and documents that the school has created in order for them to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters.

In the course of undertaking their professional duties, mandated staff members (this includes all teachers, the Student Psychologist and First Aid Officer) are required to report their belief, when the belief is formed on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from significant harm as a result of sexual abuse or physical injury. 'Failure to disclose' legislation exists in Victoria, meaning it is a criminal offence not to have reported any information leading to a 'reasonable belief' that sexual abuse has occurred. Staff members should refer to the school's *Information and procedures for staff/volunteers when an allegation of child abuse is made* and *Mandatory Incident Report (Staff) documents*. They are also able to consult with their Assistant Principal or Deputy Principal, when a report is required. The reporting staff member is required to provide the Deputy Principal with the completed Mandatory Incident Report form – Staff, as soon as possible after making a report.

Similarly, appropriate information and support is available for both parents and volunteers, as well as children within the school community, so that they can understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters, including abuse. The Deputy Principal is responsible for providing this information and support. However, a child may choose to speak directly with the Student Psychologist, who will inform the Deputy Principal of any disclosure of suspected child abuse.

Specific support will be provided for any child who discloses child abuse or who is otherwise linked to suspected child abuse. The Deputy Principal will have overall responsibility for this and communicate the nature of the support with other staff and a relative of the child.

Any instance of child abuse will be documented, reported and the records kept by the Deputy Principal, who will liaise directly with the Principal with respect to this, to ensure the appropriate follow-up action is undertaken. The school recognises that making a child abuse report could be stressful for a mandated staff member and so the school will encourage any staff member who makes a report to seek support from the Employee Assistance Program, if required.

6.8 Reportable conduct

If the Principal becomes aware of a reportable allegation against an employee, he/she must notify the Commission for Children and Young People (the Commission) in writing within 3 business days of the reportable allegation. The Principal will then adhere to the obligations of heads of organisations under the Victorian Reportable Conduct scheme. This includes conducting an investigation (subject to police clearance on criminal matters), advising the Commission of who is undertaking the investigation, managing the risks to children and providing the Commission with detailed information about the reportable allegation and any action taken, within 30 calendar days.

The scheme does not replace the need to report allegations of child abuse to Victoria Police, where appropriate or to Child Protection if the conduct meets the mandatory reporting criteria. If the employee is a registered teacher, the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) must also be immediately advised of a reportable allegation.

Risk Management

We recognise the importance of risk management to minimise the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this to inform our policies, procedures and activity planning. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks (such as those outlined below), we proactively manage risks of abuse to our children.

- (1) Teachers are on duty before and after school at the major set-down and pick-up points in the designated car park areas. They also monitor the Mt Ridley Road crossing. Clear guidelines set out in our *Traffic Safety Rules* booklet for all drivers (including parents, relatives and staff) as well as onsite signage exists to ensure that our roadways and car parks are child safe zones, at all times.
- (2) In recognition of the scheduled duty times, parents are informed that students should not arrive at school prior to 8:15am and Primary students, who do not have an older sibling in the school and are not being picked up by 3:50pm, will be sent to after school care or their parents will be contacted to collect them from Main Reception.
- (3) During recess and lunch breaks, teaching staff monitor designated Primary and Secondary areas. Where children are using playground equipment or engaged in

more vigorous sporting activities, on the school oval or soccer pitch, the teacher on duty will closely monitor the situation, to ensure that individual student safety is paramount. Where an unexpected accident or injury occurs the student concerned will be provided with first aid assistance, closely monitored and, if necessary, a parent may be called to come and collect them. If the situation warranted it, an ambulance would be called.

- (4) When students are taken outside of the school grounds on an excursion, for a sporting carnival or on a camp, a risk assessment is required, prior to the activity being given formal approval to proceed. In the case of a camp, the provider and any external organisation engaged by the school to run a program for our students, must also provide a detailed risk assessment and provide any other legal documentation they or the school might require, to ensure the safety of our students and staff. Parents will sign a standard form or an online form giving the supervising staff permission to act on their behalf, in the case of a medical emergency involving their child.
- (5) In a 'connected world' it is appropriate that teachers may make contact with students online. Generally, this is most likely to occur through email, with Secondary students, in particular, seeking feedback on drafting or asking questions about upcoming assessment items etc., All such communications will occur from the teacher's school email account, with the student also expected to use their school email account. All members of the school community must be aware of the policies related to the use of ICT, in particular the *Hume Anglican Grammar Information and Communication Technologies Staff Laptop and Social Media* policies.
- (6) The school will have in place policies, processes and procedures (including record-keeping) that are reasonable with relation to the duty of care of all its students, to prevent the abuse of a child by an individual associated with the school, while the child is under the care, supervision or authority of the school.

6.9 Failure to Protect & Failure to Disclose

The Principal is also required to reduce or remove the risk of sexual abuse of a child by an adult associated with the school, as per the *Failure to Protect* criminal offence (1 July 2015). The offence requires the Principal to act if he/she knows that a *person associated with the organization* poses a substantial risk of child sexual abuse.

The failure to disclose offence came into effect on 27 October 2014 for adults who fail to disclose child sexual abuse to police. The offence applies to all adults, not just professionals who work with children. Any adult who holds a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child in Victoria must report that belief to police, unless they have a reasonable excuse for not reporting. All staff of the school therefore have a personal legal obligation with respect to this offence.

Reviewing this policy

Hume Anglican Grammar seeks to embed a culture of child safety within the school by ensuring that we regularly review all of our existing school policies and procedures every two years, whilst also keeping abreast of the latest government regulations and educational discourse in this area. The Deputy Principal, will undertake to seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents, staff and volunteers, as part of the review process. The School Board will ultimately be responsible for ensuring school

management decisions related to child safety at Hume are embedded.

The School undertakes to not only adhere to this policy but also monitor adherence to the policy. This will be part of the review process but also be ongoing.

6.10 Communication of this policy

This policy will be publicly available via the school website and our intranet, SIMON. Regular communication with regards to the policy will occur for the whole school community, including the Board, staff, parents, students, pre-service teachers and volunteers and it will also be shared with prospective families, visitors and contractor supervisors (where direct contact with children could occur).

In addition to providing information about the policy, various initiatives will be employed to ensure the policy is understood by all staff, parents, children, pre-service teachers, volunteers and contractor supervisors (where direct contact with children could occur).

Appendix 1: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Highlights of the convention

- Every child has the inherent right to life, and states shall ensure to the maximum child survival and development.
- Every child has the right to a name and nationality from birth.
- Children shall not be separated from their parents, except by competent authorities for their wellbeing.
- States shall facilitate reunification of families by permitting travel into, or out of, their territories.
- Parents have the primary responsibility for a child's upbringing, but states shall provide them with appropriate assistance and develop child care institutions.
- States shall protect children from physical or mental harm and neglect, including sexual abuse or exploitation.
- States shall provide parentless children with suitable alternative care. The adoption process shall be carefully regulated and international agreements should be sought to provide safeguards and assure legal validity if and when adoptive parents intend to move a child from his or her country of birth.
- Disabled children shall have the right to special treatment, education and care.
- Children are entitled to the highest attainable standard of health. States shall ensure that health care is provided to all children, placing emphasis on preventive measures, health education and reduction of infant mortality.
- Primary education shall be free and compulsory. Discipline in schools shall respect the child's dignity. Education should prepare the child for life in a spirit of understanding, peace and tolerance.
- Children shall have time to rest and play and equal opportunities for cultural and artistic activities.
- States shall protect children from economic exploitation and from work that may interfere with their education or be harmful to their health or wellbeing.
- States shall protect children from the illegal use of drugs and involvement in drug production or trafficking.

- All efforts shall be made to eliminate the abduction and trafficking of children.
- Capital punishment or life imprisonment shall not be imposed for crimes committed before the age of 18.
- Children in detention shall be separated from adults; they must not be tortured or suffer cruel or degrading treatment.
- No child under 15 shall take any part in hostilities; children exposed to armed conflict shall receive special protection.
- Children of minority and indigenous populations shall freely enjoy their own culture, religion and language.
- Children who have suffered mistreatment, neglect or exploitation shall receive appropriate treatment or training for recovery and rehabilitation.
- Children involved in infringements of the penal law shall be treated in a way that promotes their sense of dignity and worth and aims at reintegrating them into society.
- States shall make the rights set out in the convention widely known to both adults and children.