



Child Safety Policy

POLICY OWNER: Principal
APPROVED BY: Board of Directors
REVIEW DATE: June 2023

1. PURPOSE

The Hume Anglican Grammar Child Safety Policy demonstrates the School's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This policy provides an overview of the School's approach to implementing Ministerial Order 1359 which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children, and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

Hume Anglican Grammar has zero tolerance of child abuse.

2. SCOPE

This policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students.
- applies to the Board of Directors where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided for a student's use (for example, a school camp) and those provided through third-party providers.
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related school policies section below.

3. ALIGNMENT TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Values: Christian, Respect, Integrity and Safety

Goal:

1. Student Wellbeing – a supportive, caring and inspiring environment where all can thrive.
3. Staff – professional and dedicated staff committed to the success of the School
4. Parents – engaging families and forging strong relationships
7. Infrastructure and development – a responsible organisation, looking after and making best use of our resources on a sustainable basis

Pathways:

- a. Create a culture which promotes a positive sense of wellbeing and self-worth based upon Christ's example.
- b. Maintain and promote a safe and secure environment with a zero tolerance towards child abuse, with an emphasis on pastoral care that nurtures each individual.
- a. Attract, develop and retain staff of the highest calibre.
- b. Establish a supportive and collegial workplace culture based upon optimism, respect and professionalism.
- e. Provide a structured and targeted approach to professional development that enhances personal and organisational performance.
- a. Foster a fruitful partnership between home and school.
- a. Manage the grounds and buildings effectively based upon sound stewardship and environmental principles, and with full regard to health and safety.

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

4. DEFINITIONS

Child	A person who is under the age of 18 years.
Child safety	Includes 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 suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse.
Child abuse	Includes: a) any act committed against a child involving: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• a sexual offence• grooming offences under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 b) the infliction, on a child, of: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• physical violence• serious emotional or psychological harm c) the serious neglect of a child including exposure to family violence and its effects
Child-connected work	Work authorised by the School's Board of Directors and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.
School environment	Any of the following physical, online or virtual places used during or outside school hours: a) A campus of the school. b) Online or virtual school environments made available or authorised by the Board of Directors for use by a child or student (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services). c) Other locations provided by the school or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for camps, homestay accommodation, or delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school; or sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.
School staff	An individual working in the School who is directly engaged or employed by the Board of Directors; a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by the School to perform child-related work; or a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the School.
Student	A person who is enrolled at or attends the School.
Volunteer	A person who performs work without remuneration or reward for the School in the School environment.

5. STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Hume Anglican Grammar is a child safe organisation that welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our students are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and students.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between students and adults and between students and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to students in our school environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other students experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting students based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our school, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our students, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1. Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is responsible:

- for authorising the Child Safety Policy, overseeing and holding management accountable for its implementation and for managing the risk of child abuse
- together with the Principal, for meeting the requirements of Ministerial Order 1359.

6.2. Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

The Senior Leadership Team (comprising the Principal, Deputy Principal, Business Manager, Assistant Principals, Director of Teaching and Learning, and Director of Student Wellbeing) is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359.

The SLT will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of students, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all students are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between students, and between students and adults
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the School community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school Board meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers (where appropriate) to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing, and prevention of or strategies for responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and where no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

6.3 Deputy Principal

The Deputy Principal, as the School's Child Safety Officer, is:

- responsible for supporting the Principal to implement the School's child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training
- the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries, and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents
- responsible for monitoring the School's compliance with the Child Safety Policy
- responsible for informing the School community about this policy, and making it publicly available.

6.4 School staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the School, and always follow the School's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with the School's Child Safety Code of Conduct
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with the School's Mandatory Reporting Policy, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- identify and raise any concerns about the School's compliance with the Child Safety Policy
- ensure students' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

7. CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

8. MANAGING RISKS TO CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity-specific risk registers, such as those we develop for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities and facilities and services we contract through third party providers for student use.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. The Senior Leadership Team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

Risk mitigation and minimisation strategies at the School include, but are not limited to:

- supervising students properly in all settings, including the playground, excursions and camps
- giving particular attention to the safety, diverse needs and vulnerabilities of students in each activity or setting
- informing students and their families about appropriate use of the School's technology, safety tools and how to seek help and report concerns including cyberbullying and online grooming
- keeping up to date with current online safety issues and expert information from specialist government and non-government bodies including the Office of the e-Safety

Commissioner, and eSmart Schools

- promoting activities in the school community that connect schools and communities and raise awareness to prevent bullying and violence (e.g. National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence)
- creating a respectful, sensitive and safe environment for people who may be experiencing family violence.

9. ESTABLISHING A CULTURALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENT

At Hume Anglican Grammar, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, values and practices are respected.

We consider how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, we recognise the link between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies, and activities.

Cultural safety strategies at the School include, but are not limited to:

- equipping staff, students, volunteers and the School community to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students
- adopting measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated
- addressing any instances of racism within the School environment with appropriate consequences
- actively supporting participation and inclusion in the School by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, students and their families
- ensuring school policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, students and their families.

10. STUDENT EMPOWERMENT

To support child safety and wellbeing at Hume Anglican Grammar we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages students and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

We encourage respectful relationships between students, strong friendships and peer support in the School to ensure a sense of belonging.

We inform students of their rights and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other students and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our students know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time.

When the School gathers information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the student and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

Student empowerment strategies at the School include, but are not limited to:

- informing students about their rights, including their rights to safety, information and participation
- recognising the importance of friendships and encouraging support from peers, to help students feel safe and be less isolated
- ensuring staff and volunteers are informed about and attuned to signs of harm

- facilitating child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns
- giving students opportunities to participate, for example through student leadership forums, and responding to their contributions to strengthen confidence and engagement
- offering students access to sexual abuse prevention information and programs in an age-appropriate way.

11. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Our families and the School community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Hume Anglican Grammar, we are committed to providing families and community members with accessible information about the School's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement.

Family engagement strategies include, but are not limited to:

- engaging and openly communicating with families and the School community about its child safe approach, including roles and responsibilities of school staff
- seeking input from families and the community; for example, through the parent portal, school website, newsletters, Parents and Friends Association, and parent meetings
- ensuring all of our child safety policies and procedures are available and accessible for students and parents at www.humegrammar.vic.edu.au
- informing families and the School community about any significant updates to our child safety policies, processes, strategies and initiatives; for example through the School website and newsletters
- ensuring families participate in child safety and wellbeing decisions that affect their child; for example, seeking permission for children to attend camps or off-site activities.

12. DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our students, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences from which to draw.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international students
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

Strategies for promoting and responding to diversity and equity include, but are not limited to:

- ensuring school staff and volunteers understand the diverse circumstances of students, provide support, and respond to vulnerable students
- giving students, staff, volunteers and the School community access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.

13. SUITABLE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

At Hume Anglican Grammar, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

13.1 Staff recruitment

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record:
 - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
 - the person's history of working with children
 - references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

13.2 Staff induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safety Policy (this document)
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures
- any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

13.3 Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised and monitored appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school policies and legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

13.4 Monitoring and maintenance of staff credentials

The School has measures in place to ensure that all staff engaged in child-connected work have up-to-date and valid credentials. These will be checked and monitored annually or as required.

Teaching staff will have up-to-date and valid Victorian Institute of Teaching registration, checked annually for compliance.

General staff will have up-to-date and valid Working with Children Checks, monitored and renewed every five years.

13.5 Suitability of volunteers

All volunteers are required to comply with our Volunteer Guidelines, which describe how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction, and supervision and management.

14. CHILD SAFETY KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND AWARENESS

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning opportunities to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- our school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- completing the Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and students
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and students
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing, for example, training for our volunteers, will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

14.1 Board of Directors training and education

To ensure our school Board of Directors is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of student safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment, the Board is trained at least annually. Training includes guidance on:

- individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse
- child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment
- Hume Anglican Grammar child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices

15.COMPLAINTS AND REPORTING PROCESSES

Hume Anglican Grammar fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, students, parents, and the School community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our school's Complaints and Grievances Policy.

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers must follow our Mandatory Reporting Policy and accompanying Mandatory Incident Report Record procedure. Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or student, school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to the school.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we will ensure our school follows:

- the Four Critical Actions for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending for complaints and concerns relating to student sexual offending

Our Student Wellbeing Policy and Anti-bullying Policy cover complaints and concerns relating to student physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

16. COMMUNICATIONS

Hume Anglican Grammar is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the School community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety Policy (this document), Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Mandatory Reporting Policy
- displaying PROTECT posters around the School
- updates in our school newsletter and/or parent portal
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and Board meetings.

17. PRIVACY AND INFORMATION SHARING

Hume Anglican Grammar collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our school collects, uses and discloses information refer to our Privacy Policy.

18. RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

The documents setting out the strategies and actions required to implement this policy are:

a. Policies

- i. Mandatory Reporting Policy
- ii. Reportable Conduct Policy
- iii. Duty of Care Policy
- iv. Excursion and Incursion Policy
- v. Staff Professional Expectations Policy
- vi. Student Wellbeing Policy
- vii. Information and Communication Technology Policy
- viii. Social Media Policy
- ix. Staff ICT Device Policy
- x. Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy
- xi. Contractor Management Policy
- xii. Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- xiii. Privacy Policy
- xiv. Whistleblower Policy
- xv. Relief Lesson Policy

b. Related documents

- i. Keeping Children Safe at Hume
- ii. Child Safe Standards Code of Conduct
- iii. VIT Teaching Professional Code of Conduct
- iv. Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse
- v. Mandatory Incident Report Record
- vi. Grounds Supervision Expectations
- vii. Responding to child abuse and student sexual offending - ISV Guide
- viii. Duty of Care – Guiding Principles
- ix. Volunteer Guidelines

19. REVIEWING THIS POLICY

At Hume Anglican Grammar, we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

We will:

- review and improve the policy annually or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community.

The Board of Directors will require the Principal to report on child safety on a regular basis and in the case of any exception without delay, and to recommend any change that may be called for in the policy or arrangements for its implementation.

The Board of Directors will review the Child Safety Policy annually.

Hume Anglican Grammar seeks to embed a culture of continuous improvement by ensuring that it regularly reviews existing school policies and procedures, whilst also keeping abreast of the latest government regulations and educational discourse. The Deputy Principal will undertake a consultative approach and seek views, comments and suggestions from children, parents and staff as part of the review process as appropriate.

20. COMMUNICATION OF THIS POLICY

The School will, through regular public statements and other actions and internal communications, demonstrate its commitment to child safety and raise awareness of the School community's collective responsibility to ensure all children are safe from harm.

This policy, and relevant policy implementation documents, will be made publicly available on the School's website.

The School will put in place arrangements to ensure the School community is informed about the School's Child Safety Policy, procedures and allocated roles and responsibilities. This includes applicants for employment at Hume.

The School will require all staff to confirm in writing when appointed and thereafter on an annual basis that they know their legal obligations and that they have read and understood the School's Child Safety Policy and procedures.

This policy will be available to staff via SIMON and the School's internal file storage system.