



Student Safety Policy

1. Statement of Context and Purpose

Ivanhoe Grammar School (the **School**) has a zero-tolerance policy for child abuse or reportable conduct and is committed to promoting student safety, and student wellbeing and protecting students from abuse (including child abuse and reportable conduct). The School has established strategies, practices, policies, and procedures to uphold this commitment.

The School's aim is to create a learning environment that recognises that each student is different, where they can engage in a diverse range of activities to identify their individual strengths, and where students feel safe and supported by the School.

Ministerial Order No. 1359 requires the School to implement child safety standards and to accommodate and take the needs of all children into account when creating a child-safe environment. The School treats seriously all of its legal obligations (whether under Ministerial Order No. 1359 and the *Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and Boarding Premises* (Child Safe Standards), section 490 of the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic), or otherwise) to create a safe space for children at all times and seeks to ensure that its culture is defined by a mentality where protecting students forms part of our everyday thinking and activity.

In this regard, the School and its staff are aware that a failure by a person in authority to reduce or remove a substantial risk that a child will become the victim of a sexual offence, committed by a person associated with the School, is also an offence under the *Crimes Act*.

The School also takes seriously its legal duty of care to students, which requires taking reasonable measures to protect students from reasonably foreseeable risks of injury or harm. The School's duty of care and the measures implemented to discharge this duty are outlined in the School's Duty of Care Policy.

This policy sets out key elements of the School's approach to student safety in accordance with Ministerial Order No. 1359 and the Child Safe Standards set out therein.

It also outlines:

- The overarching principles and values that guide the School in its approach to student safety
- The strategies utilised by the School to develop a culture of student safety and wellbeing
- Summarises the processes and procedures for reporting and responding to allegations of child abuse and reportable conduct
- Refers to the Student Safety Code of Conduct which in turn provides the standards of expected and appropriate behaviour with students.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Board members, employees, volunteers, contractors, and other authorised personnel required to perform functions on the School's premises, or at School-organised activities and events. This policy will refer to all employees, volunteers, contractors, and other authorised personnel interchangeably as 'staff'

This policy extends to any person who is engaged in student-related work, or who otherwise has direct and regular contact with the School's students (whether supervised or not).

This policy is not intended to override or form part of the terms of any award or contract that applies to an employee but should be considered a reasonable direction to staff. As such all staff are expected to abide by this policy and report any suspected or known breaches of this policy.

3. Policy

3.1 Overarching Values and Principles

The School's approach to student safety and wellbeing is guided by a number of overarching principles and values, including:

- a) All students at the School have a right to be safe and feel safe.
- b) The welfare and the best interests of the student are paramount.
- c) The views of the student and a student's privacy must be respected.
- d) Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour by staff with students must be established, including in the Student Safety Code of Conduct.
- e) The safety of students is dependent upon the existence of a student-safe culture.
- f) Student safety awareness is embodied, promoted, and openly discussed within our School community.
- g) Families can participate in decisions affecting their child and they, and the School community, are engaged and informed about the School's approach to student safety and wellbeing.
- h) Procedures are in place to screen all staff, contractors, volunteers, and external education providers who engage in student-connected work (whether occurring on the School grounds or at a location connected to the School).
- i) Student safety and wellbeing are everyone's responsibility.
- j) Specific responsibilities with respect to student safety and wellbeing are outlined in the Student Safety Responsibilities document.
- k) Annual student safety and wellbeing training is mandatory for all members of the Board, the Principal, staff, and anyone else otherwise engaged by the School in relation to student-connected work.
- l) Procedures for reporting and responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse or reportable conduct (including the complaints process and support available) are clearly communicated and accessible to all members of the School community. This includes students and otherwise, members of the School community, who must have access to information and support in a reader-friendly, accessible, culturally safe, and age-appropriate manner.
- m) Students from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds should receive special care and support.
- n) Students who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander should receive special care and support.
- o) Students with a disability should receive special care and support.
- p) Staff have regard for a student's diverse circumstances and needs so that they can provide support and respond to those who are vulnerable and ensure equity is upheld in policy and practice.
- q) Staff working with students will be suitable and supported to ensure student safety and wellbeing values are reflected in the School environment.

- r) Ensuring the safety and wellbeing of students in relation to visitors to the School, including third parties contracted to provide services either directly or indirectly to or for students.

All persons to whom this policy applies are responsible for complying with the School's student safety and wellbeing strategies, policies, and procedures (including the Student Safety Code of Conduct, Mandatory Reporting Policy, and the Reportable Conduct Policy).

3.2 Student Protection Responsibilities

Society shares responsibility for promoting the safety, wellbeing, and protection of students from abuse. In the School context, all members of the School community have a role to play.

However, specific responsibilities with respect to student safety and wellbeing are assigned to:

1. The Board
2. The Principal
3. The Executive Team
4. The School's Student Safety Officers
5. Staff
6. Students and parents

For further information, please refer to the Student Protection Responsibilities policy (a copy of which is available on the School's website).

4. Behaviours and conduct covered by this Policy

4.1 What is Child Abuse?

The definition of **Child Abuse** is set out in the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic) as meaning:

- a) Any act committed against a child involving:
 - a sexual offence
 - an offence under section 49M(1) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic), that is, the offence of "grooming".
- b) The infliction on a child of:
 - physical violence
 - serious emotional or psychological harm
- c) Serious neglect of a child.

As per The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct, Principle 1.5, no employee of Ivanhoe Grammar School will have a sexualised relationship with a former student within two years of that student completing their senior secondary schooling or equivalent.

For the purposes of this Student Safety Policy, a breach of this principle will also constitute "Child Abuse".

4.2 Physical Violence and Abuse

Physical violence occurs when a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from a non-accidental injury or injuries inflicted by another person. Physical violence can be inflicted in many ways, including beating, shaking, burning, or use of weapons.

| Possible physical indicators: | Possible behavioural indicators: |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unexplained bruises • burns and/or fractured bones | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • showing wariness or distrust of adults • wearing long sleeved clothes on hot days (to hide bruising or other injury) • fear of specific people • unexplained absences • academic problems |

4.3 Child Sexual Offences and Abuse

Child sexual offences occur when a person involves a child in sexual activity, or deliberately puts the child in the presence of sexual behaviours that are exploitative or inappropriate to his/her age and development. Child sexual abuse can involve a range of sexual activities including fondling, masturbation, penetration, voyeurism, and exhibitionism. It can also include exposure to or exploitation through pornography or prostitution, as well as grooming behaviour.

| Possible physical indicators: | Possible behavioural indicators: |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presence of sexually transmitted diseases • pregnancy • bleeding | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • displaying sexual behaviour or knowledge that is unusual for the child's age • difficulty sleeping • being withdrawn • complaining of headaches or stomach pains • fear of specific people • showing weariness or distrust of adults • displaying aggressive behaviour |

4.4 Serious Emotional or Psychological Harm

Serious emotional or psychological harm can be inflicted on a child through repeated rejection, isolation, or by threats or violence. It can include derogatory name-calling and put-downs, or persistent and deliberate coldness from a person to the extent that the behaviour of the child is disturbed, or their emotional development is at serious risk of being impaired. Serious emotional or psychological harm could also result from conduct that exploits a child without necessarily being criminal, such as encouraging a child to engage in inappropriate or risky behaviours.

| Possible physical indicators: | Possible behavioural indicators: |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delays in emotional, mental, or even physical development • physical signs of self-harming. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exhibiting low self-esteem or anxiety • displaying aggressive or demanding behaviour • being withdrawn, passive, and/or tearful |

4.5 Serious Neglect

Serious neglect is the continued failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, hygiene, medical attention, or adequate supervision, to the extent that the child's health, safety, wellbeing, and/or development is, or is likely to be, jeopardised. Serious neglect can also occur if an adult fails to adequately ensure the safety of a child when the child is exposed to extremely dangerous or life-threatening situations.

| Possible physical indicators: | Possible behavioural indicators: |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • frequent hunger • malnutrition • poor hygiene • inappropriate clothing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • stealing food • staying at school outside of school hours • aggressive behaviour • using alcohol or drugs • academic issues |

5. Strategies to embed a culture of student safety and wellbeing at the School

Creating and maintaining a child-safe culture requires input from the entire School community.

Our aim is to provide a safe environment that aligns with the values at Ivanhoe Grammar School and requires our staff, students, and community to be courageous, innovative, balanced, cooperative, ethical, reflective, and compassionate.

To achieve this, we promote a model of education where students are understood not just as learners, but as an integral part of the School and broader community. As such, we regard the relationship between wellbeing and learning to be critical to the development of the whole person. In our approach to the curriculum and through our policies and procedures, the School recognises that feeling comfortable at school and being happy and healthy has a direct impact on each student's capacity for optimal learning.

Through our processes and practices, we also ensure that a student-safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the School, from the top down to the bottom up. Accordingly, student safety and wellbeing are embedded in our school leadership, governance, and culture. We do this by setting clear expectations regarding student safety to our staff school community (including staff and students), and ensuring that at all times, our governance arrangements facilitate the implementation of this policy (including by making student safety and wellbeing a standing agenda item and reviewing the School's student safe processes across all levels).

The commitments, values, and principles which guide the School include the following matters, and also those which are further outlined below:

- Demonstrate its commitment to child safety and wellbeing and monitor the School's adherence to this Student Safety Policy
- Support, encourage, and enable school staff, parents, and children to understand, identify, discuss, and report child safety matters
- Support or assist children who disclose child abuse or reportable conduct or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse or reportable conduct.

5.1 Zero Tolerance for Child Abuse or behaviours that otherwise endangers student-safety

The School has zero tolerance for child abuse or reportable conduct, and will not tolerate any form of child abuse, reportable conduct, or behaviour which otherwise endangers student safety (including by anyone who is working within the school environment or engaged in student-connected work).

The School has legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when student safety and/or wellbeing concerns are raised and will comply with these obligations. The commitments contained in the School's student safety policies and procedures (including this policy), underpin every aspect of the School's student safety strategies, practices, and decisions.

The School takes all allegations or disclosures of suspected child abuse and reportable conduct seriously. All instances of suspected child abuse or reportable conduct, allegations of child abuse or reportable conduct, or student safety or wellbeing concerns must be reported to the Student Safety Officer and will be treated very seriously and consistently according to the School's and individual staff member's reporting procedures and obligations (including as set out in this policy, the Mandatory Reporting Policy, Student Safety - Concerns Management Procedure and the Reportable Conduct Policy).

In this regard, the School's Student Safety - Concerns Management Procedure, which is available on the School's website, sets out:

- How concerns about actual and suspected child abuse and reportable conduct may be raised with the School
- Who such concerns can be raised with at first instance, include the Class Teacher/ Mentor, or alternatively, the Principal, Head of Campus, Student Safety Officer (details of which are outlined in this policy), or another member of the Wellbeing Team
- How such concerns will be dealt with by the School (including by complying with any legislative reporting obligations)
- How the School will support or assist students (and their families) who disclose such concerns, or who are otherwise linked to such concerns.

If School staff believe a student is at immediate risk of abuse, **they must phone 000**.

5.2 Support and engagement of all students

The School appreciates that a student-safe environment looks different for every student, and in delivering this, supports and respects the cultural safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the students with a disability or who are otherwise vulnerable (including students who identify as LGBTQIA+, and those with challenging home situations).

The School operates to deliver education. By educating students and empowering them through decision-making, it is our intention and aim that all students are safe, feel safe, and are able to create and develop a range of strategies and skills, which can be used flexibly to flourish in all aspects of their lives. As such, we support and encourage students to talk openly and share their views, particularly about matters that directly impact them.

The School will aim to ensure students (and their parents) are provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their own personal safety and wellbeing, including:

- Understanding, identifying, discussing, and reporting student safety and wellbeing matters
- Standards of behaviour for students attending the School
- Healthy and respectful relationships (including those relating to gender and sexuality)
- Resilience.

The School will aim to ensure that staff are provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain a student and culturally safe environment, including through:

- Actively supporting and encouraging Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families to:
 - Express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights
 - Facilitate participation and inclusion in all aspects of school life

- Implementing and embedding strategies within the school community that acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students.
- Cultural training to improve understanding and respect (particularly with regard to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture), appreciation of culturally sensitive issues, including using appropriate language when referring to individuals or communities, and equip staff to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.
- Identifying, confronting, and addressing incidences of racism seriously (noting it will not be tolerated), with the appropriate consequences and where appropriate with the involvement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and their families.
- Ensuring that the School's strategies, practices, policies, and procedures create a culturally safe and inclusive environment that values and respects the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, and students, (including their families), as well as others from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Providing particular attention to the needs of students with a disability (or otherwise, additional needs), students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international students, students who identify as LGBTQIA+ (or who are otherwise gender diverse), and those students who are unable to live at home.
- Providing particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and promote and provide a culturally safe environment for them.

The School will promote its student safety and wellbeing practices to students in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly, including through:

- The appointment of Student Safety Officers and a Senior Student Safety Officer who promote student safety and wellbeing (see below).
- Training staff to recognise the indicators of harm to students, including harm caused by not only adults but also other children and young people, and harm in an online environment.
- Collaborating with parents to ensure that they are provided with the information necessary to maintain consistent messaging about child abuse and reportable conduct.
- Encouraging students to identify safe and unsafe environments and situations (including in an online environment).
- Setting clear student safety and wellbeing standards so that staff, students, and the school community are aware of the standards that are expected, and those which fall short of the School's expectations.
- Distributing child-friendly publications, including student safety posters.
- Clearly communicating where students can access support, make a report about safety or wellbeing concerns, or otherwise obtain information.
- Ensuring that students have identified safety and support networks to overcome any barriers that may prevent disclosure of safety or wellbeing concerns.
- Ensuring staff are trained and supported to effectively implement this policy.

5.3 Development, maintenance, implementation and publication of student safety policies, procedures, and codes of conduct

The School requires that staff act professionally, and in a way that embodies the School's commitment to student safety and wellbeing. All school staff must abide by the School's Student Safety Code of Conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with students and is available on the School's website.

The School welcomes input from employees and authorised personnel, as well as students and their families, regarding the development and content of the Student Safety Code of Conduct.

The School will take appropriate disciplinary action where a staff member is found to have acted contrary to the Student Safety Code of Conduct, or the School's other policies and procedures regarding appropriate standards of behaviour.

This policy (along with the associated procedures and Student Safety Code of Conduct, Mandatory Reporting Policy, the Reportable Conduct Policy, Student Safety - Concerns Management Procedure, and other School policies and procedures) also guides School staff in how to behave with students at the School.

We all have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place.

The School:

- Takes all allegations seriously and has a procedure in place to enable allegations to be investigated thoroughly and quickly
- Trains staff and volunteers to deal appropriately with allegations of child abuse and reportable conduct

5.4 Recruitment and Selection

We believe that the safety and wellbeing of students are dependent on the existence of a student-safe culture. Establishing that culture requires effective staff recruitment, supervision, and management practices.

Student safety and wellbeing is a paramount consideration during the recruitment process. All staff working with children and young people must be suitable and reflect the School's values and commitment to student safety and wellbeing in practice.

The School takes all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with students and develops selection criteria and advertisements that clearly demonstrate our commitment to student safety and wellbeing, and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities.

All positions at the School that involve the child and student-connected work will have a position description, which clearly sets out:

- The position's requirements, duties, and responsibilities regarding student safety and wellbeing
- The candidate's essential or relevant qualifications, experience, and attributes in relation to education and student safety and wellbeing
- The School's commitment in respect of student safety and wellbeing.

All prospective staff will be informed about the School's student safety practices, and be subject to child protection screening in accordance with the School's obligations under legislation (including *the Child Safe Standards*).

A successful candidate cannot commence at the School until written clearance in respect of child protection screening is obtained. Further, a current VIT registration and photographic identification, or Working with Children Check (or equivalent), must be sighted and verified by the School, and appropriately recorded before staff can engage in student-connected work.

Appropriate and mandatory induction regarding the School's student safety and wellbeing practices and other policies and procedures will follow any successful appointment or engagement.

Please refer to the School's Recruitment and Selection Policy for further information.

5.5 Ongoing Supervision, Training and Education

Ongoing supervision, training, and education are important to ensure that everyone at the School (including the Principal, the Board, School staff, students, and parents/carers) understands that student safety and wellbeing are everyone's responsibility.

The School's culture aims for all School staff (in addition to parents/carers and students) to feel comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse, reportable conduct, or student safety and wellbeing concerns.

The School trains its employees and authorised staff to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and reportable conduct, and to detect potential signs of child abuse and reportable conduct.

Staff will otherwise be subject to regular supervision, monitoring, performance reviews, and periodic student safety and wellbeing checks, including to ensure their ongoing suitability for student-connected work:

- At least annually, the School will ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to Board members and staff about:
- Individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse and reportable conduct.
- Child abuse and reportable conduct risks in the school environment.
- The School's current student safety standards and practices.

The Board will ensure that privacy and employment law obligations are met when responding to student concerns and complaints.

5.6 Appointment of a Student Safety Officer

The School has appointed Student Safety Officers as the first point of contact to provide advice and support to students, parents, employees, and volunteers regarding the safety and wellbeing of students at the School.

The following Student Safety Officer may be contacted to provide advice and support:

| Campus | Officer | Email | Telephone |
|--------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Buckley House | James McAlley | James.McAlley@ivanhoe.com.au | (03) 9490 3548 |
| Plenty Campus | Carolyn Mansour | Carolyn.Mansour@ivanhoe.com.au | (03) 9490 3781 |
| | Darren Gibson | Darren.Gibson@ivanhoe.com.au | (03) 9490 3748 |
| Ridgeway Campus | Angela Di Ciocco | Angela.DiCiocco@ivanhoe.com.au | (03) 9490 3863 |
| | Voula Arnas | Voula.Arnas@ivanhoe.com.au | (03) 9490 3057 |
| University Campus | Samantha Scott | Samantha.Scott@ivanhoe.com.au | (03) 9490 3759 |
| | Stuart Adderley | Stuart.Adderley@ivanhoe.com.au | (03) 9490 3823 |
| Secondary Co-curricular | Chris Branigan | Chris.Branigan@ivanhoe.com.au | (03) 9490 3545 |
| International Students | Leisl Bruhn | Leisl.Bruhn@ivanhoe.com.au | (03) 9490 3796 |

The Student Safety Officer will receive appropriate training and support in relation to student safety and wellbeing, prevention of child abuse and reportable conduct, and responding to allegations of child abuse and reportable conduct.

The Student Safety Officers can act as a source of support, advice, and expertise to staff on matters of student safety and wellbeing and liaise with the Principal and the Senior Leadership team to maintain the visibility of student safety and wellbeing. Staff are encouraged to speak with one of the Student Safety Officers should they hold any concerns relating to student safety wellbeing.

School staff, students, and parents can contact the Student Safety Officer for further information regarding student safety and for any questions concerns, or reports of suspected or alleged child abuse or reportable conduct.

5.7 Provision of Counselling

The School has counselling services available to students who disclose child abuse or reportable conduct, or who are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse or reportable conduct.

5.8 Risk Management Strategies

The School proactively manages the risks of abuse to students.

The School has developed and implemented risk management strategies for student's safety and wellbeing both online and in the physical school environment without compromising a student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections, and learning opportunities.

The strategies identify, prevent, and mitigate the risk of child abuse and reportable conduct in school environments by considering:

- The nature of the School environment. For example:
 - Risks posed by physical environments such as doors that can lock
 - Risks posted by online environments, such as preventing employees or volunteers from having contact with a student on social media
- The activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations)
- The characteristics and needs of all students expected to be present in that environment.

In addition to the above, student wellbeing, child abuse, reportable conduct, and neglect are addressed in the School's Enterprise Risk Register. These risks are incorporated in a workshop format including guidewords relevant to the child safe standards. The resulting risk assessment and chosen controls are documented using bowtie risk analysis methodology consistent with ISO 31000.

The Enterprise Risk Register is updated two times per year as part of monitoring enterprise risk within the School. The associated action plan and key performance indicators are reported to the Board of Governors at every board meeting (approximately ten times per year).

Where risks are identified of child abuse or reportable conduct occurring in one or more school environments, the Principal will:

- Make a record of those risks.
- Specify the actions the School takes to reduce or remove the risks (risk controls), which will take into account the nature of the risk and the diverse characteristics of the students affected by the risk.

The Principal and Board monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of its risk controls and update these when required.

The Principal and/or Board ensures (at least annually) that they and School staff undertake appropriate guidance and training about individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for managing the risk of child abuse and reportable conduct; child abuse and reportable conduct risks in the school environment; and the School's current child safety standards.

The School will ensure it creates, maintains, and disposes of any records about student safety and wellbeing in line with the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards, including minimum retention periods regarding these obligations. In addition, the School will detail its information-sharing and record-keeping processes and ensure all staff (including volunteers) understand their relevant obligations.

The Principal:

- 1) Has developed strategies to deliver appropriate education about standards of behaviour for students attending the School, healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality), resilience, and child abuse and reportable conduct awareness and prevention.
- 2) Promotes child safety standards set out in Ministerial Order 1359 in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children.

5.9 Responding to and Reporting Allegations of Suspected Child Abuse and Reportable Conduct

The School takes all allegations or disclosures of actual or suspected child abuse and reportable conduct seriously and will respond to and report (including to authorities and the police) such allegations or disclosures promptly and thoroughly, in accordance with its policies and any legal obligations (including the Student Safety - Concerns Management Procedure) – which is to be read in conjunction with this policy.

The Student Safety - Concerns Management Procedure applies to student safety and wellbeing concerns made by, or in relation to a student, School staff, visitors, or other persons while connected to a school environment. The School will ensure that the Student Safety - Concerns Management Procedure is student-focused, and can be easily understood by the School community, in particular students.

All employees, volunteers, contractors, and other authorised personnel are expected to act in accordance with this policy and the Student Safety - Concerns Management Procedure if they have a reasonable belief that a child may be in harm or have been subjected to child abuse.

5.10 Awareness of potential barriers in reporting allegations of abuse

All persons need to be aware that some people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers in reporting allegations of abuse.

In implementing this policy and the minimum child safety standards in accordance with Ministerial Order No. 1359, School staff will consider the diversity of all students, including (but not limited to) children, the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities and students who are vulnerable. Appropriate support and assistance should be sought in these instances.

5.11 Continual improvement

The School is committed to continual improvement that is responsive to emerging thinking, evidence, and practice, so as to eliminate (where practicable) the possibility of student safety risks occurring in the first place.

The School will periodically review the effectiveness of the student-safe strategies it has put into practice and where the School can improve, it will strive to do so, including by revising those strategies.

The School will report on the outcomes of any relevant review to the School community.

6. Redress for individuals who have experienced child sexual abuse

It is important the School acknowledges that, in the past, some students experienced sexual abuse perpetrated by individuals who are no longer at the School. The School condemns such abuse and is ashamed of the way these individuals who perpetrated the abuse betrayed the trust placed in them, and the School, by those students and their parents.

This section of the Student Safety Policy aims to set out the School's intention to acknowledge survivors of abuse and identify the process that we will honour. The policy does not limit a survivor's right to seek independent legal advice and we encourage them to do so.

This Student Safety Policy, and the student wellbeing framework it establishes, reflect the School's commitment to preventing students in its care from being abused again. The School is also committed to providing redress for any current and former students who have experienced child sexual abuse for which the School is responsible.

The Reporting Concerns about Student Wellbeing – The School community section of this document sets out how individuals can raise concerns about student wellbeing, including a concern that a student has experienced sexual abuse. The Student Safety - Concerns Management Procedure also sets out how such concerns will be dealt with. The School is committed to such concerns being acknowledged, treated seriously, and responded to with empathy in accordance with that framework.

Where a current or former student has experienced child sexual abuse for which the School is responsible, the School is committed to providing that individual with appropriate redress.

While the appropriate redress will be dictated by the particular circumstances, it will ordinarily include one or more of the following:

- A direct personal response to the student who experienced the abuse. This may take the form of an apology or statement of regret and may include an acknowledgement of the impact of the abuse. It will include an assurance as to the steps the School has taken or will take, to prevent abuse from occurring again. It will also include an opportunity for the student, and a support person, to meet with the Principal or another senior representative of the School to discuss their experiences and the School's commitment to student wellbeing.
- Access to professional counselling and psychological care.
- Financial compensation. Any payment of compensation will take into account the type of abuse that occurred, the circumstances in which it occurred, the impact the abuse has had on the student or former student, and any compensation the student or former student has previously received from the School or other sources.
- Consistent with the National Redress Scheme for people who have experienced institutional sexual abuse, offers of redress will usually be made on a 'without prejudice' basis.

7. Related Documents

7.1 External Documents

Relevant Legislation or Authority:

- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic)
- *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic)
- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic)
- *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic)
- *Ministerial Order No. 1359*

7.2 Internal Documents

Policies and Procedures:

- Student Safety Code of Conduct
- Student Safety - Concerns Management Procedure
- Student Protection Responsibilities
- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Reportable Conduct Policy
- Respectful Workplace Behaviour Policy
- Social Media and Networking Policy

8. Breach of this Policy

The School emphasises the need to comply with the requirements of this policy. Any school staff found to be in breach of the requirements of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment (or engagement, where appropriate). Breaches may also result in appropriate authorities and/or the Police being informed.

9. Communication

This policy is available to parents, students and the School community via the School's website.

This policy is available to staff as part of the School's internal policies and procedures, and forms part of the School's induction program for incoming staff. Aspects of (and updates to) the School's student protection framework will be addressed in the School's professional development updates, training programs, bulletins, and newsletters.

The Board will review this policy and the School's student safe practices at least every two years (or more frequently after a significant student safety incident) and implement improvements where applicable.

10. Definitions

Behaviour that causes significant or serious emotional or psychological harm to a child includes sexual offences, sexual misconduct, physical violence, and significant neglect.

However, other types of behaviours can also cause significant emotional or psychological harm including, for example, severe or sustained instances of:

- Verbal abuse.
- Coercive or manipulative behaviour.
- Hostility towards, or rejection of, a child.
- Humiliation, belittling or scapegoating.

Child means a child under the age of 18 years, except in the case of certain mandatory reporting requirements which define a child to be under a different age.

Student-connected work means work authorised by the School and performed by an adult in the school environment while children and other students are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Student safety and wellbeing encompasses matters related to protecting all students from child abuse and reportable conduct, managing the risk of child abuse and reportable conduct, providing support to students at risk or potential victims of child abuse or reportable conduct, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse and reportable conduct.

Student Safety Officer means the staff referred to in section 5.6 of this policy.

Grooming is communication, including online communication, by an adult with a child under the age of 16 or their parents with the intent of committing child sexual abuse. This offence targets predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual abuse at a later time with the groomer (aged 18 years old or over) or another adult.

Mandatory Reporter includes but is not limited to registered teachers (including early childhood teachers), those with post-secondary qualifications employed in the care, education or minding of children, school principals, nurses, and students in training to become teachers (who have been granted permission to teach under relevant legislation).

Mandatory reporters also include police officers, registered medical practitioners, midwives, people in religious ministry, youth justice officers, youth parole officers, and any other person referred to in section 182 of the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic) (**CYF Act**)

Mandatory reporting refers to legal requirements to report alleged behaviour compromising student safety or student wellbeing, including:

- In relation to child sexual abuse under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic)
- As a Mandatory Reporter under the *Child Youth and Families Act 2005* (Vic)
- In relation to Reportable Conduct under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005* (Vic).

Neglect refers to an individual's failure to meet their obligations and responsibilities to keep a child safe and well, and can include:

- Supervisory neglect, which is the absence or inattention of a worker or volunteer which places the child at risk of physical harm or injury, sexual abuse or allows other criminal behaviour to occur
- Physical neglect, which is the failure to provide basic physical necessities for a child, such as adequate food, clothing, housing, or medical attention.

Physical Abuse consists of any non-accidental form of injury or serious physical harm inflicted on a child by any person. Physical abuse does not mean reasonable discipline, though it may result from excessive or inappropriate discipline. Physical abuse can include beating, shaking, burning and assault with implements.

Physical Violence includes an act that causes physical injury or pain.

Examples of physical violence can include:

- Hitting, kicking, and punching
- Pushing, shoving, grabbing, throwing, and shaking
- Using an object to hit or strike
- Using inappropriate restraint/excessive force.

Physical violence does not include lawful behaviour. For example:

- (1) Reasonable steps taken to protect a child from immediate harm, such as taking their arm to stop them from going into oncoming traffic
- (2) Medical treatment given in good faith by an appropriately qualified worker or volunteer, such as a senior first aid officer administering first aid.

Threats of physical violence that do not cause physical injury or pain may still amount to behaviour that causes serious or significant emotional or psychological harm

Reasonable belief means a belief that would lead a reasonable person in the same position as you, and with the same information as you to form a belief that child abuse (including sexual abuse) or reportable conduct is occurring or may occur. There must be some objective basis for the belief.

However, it is not necessary to have proof to form a reasonable belief, nor do you need to make a judgement about the truth of an allegation. However, a reasonable belief is more than suspicion, mere rumour, or speculation. For examples of circumstances where a reasonable belief may be formed, refer to the Student Safety – Concerns Management Procedure.

Reportable conduct means:

- (a) A sexual offence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child, whether a criminal proceeding in relation to the offence has been commenced or concluded
- (b) Sexual misconduct, committed against, with or in the presence, of a child
- (c) Physical violence committed against, with or in the presence of, a child
- (d) Any behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm to a child
- (e) Significant neglect of a child.

School staff means an individual working in a School environment who is directly engaged or employed by the School and/or a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) and/or a minister of religion.

Sexual abuse is when any person uses their authority or power over a child to engage in sexual activity. Examples include sexual penetration, inappropriate touching, and exposure to sexual acts or pornographic materials.

Sexual misconduct includes behaviour, physical contact or speech or other communication of a sexual nature, inappropriate touching, grooming behaviour, and voyeurism.

Sexual offence means a sexual offence referred to in the *Sentencing Act 1991* (Vic), which includes but is not limited to rape, attempted rape, sexual assault, incest, grooming, and distribution and possession of child abuse material.

Significant means, in relation to physical harm or neglect, that the harm or neglect is more than trivial or insignificant. However, it need not be as high as serious and need not have a lasting permanent effect.

School community means all those who are directly and indirectly involved with the School, including students, parents, carers and alumni, as well as businesses, charitable organisations, and locals that are affiliated with the School.

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the School for use by a student during or outside school hours, including:

- (a) An Ivanhoe Grammar School campus
- (b) Online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- (c) Other locations provided by the School for a student's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

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| Last Review Date: June 2023 | Approved By: Board of Governors |
| Next Review Date: June 2025 | Approval Date: June 2023 |
| Policy Owner: Deputy Principal, Head of Campus/ The Ridgeway Campus. | |