



Geelong Lutheran College is committed to providing a safe environment for all our students when they are in the care of the College.

Geelong Lutheran College has developed this Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy as an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse. It forms the foundation of the College's procedures, practices, decision making processes and ultimately the College's culture with respect to child safety, in line with Ministerial Order 1359.

The College's Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy has been approved and endorsed by the College's College Board and is regularly reviewed by the Board.

Definitions

The College: Geelong Lutheran College St John's Newtown and Armstrong Creek

Parents: Parents, Guardians, Caregivers

MO 1359: Ministerial Order 1359 was issued by the Victorian Minister of Education on 31 January 2022 for implementation by 1 July 2022

Definitions of the following terms used in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy can be found in Child Safe Program Definitions (Appendix A: Child Safe Program Definitions):

- child and young person
- child abuse and other harm
- child safety and wellbeing
- child safety incident or concern
- child-connected work
- child-related work
- contractor
- school environment
- school staff
- school governing authority
- student
- visitor
- volunteer.

Rationale

This Policy provides the framework for:

- the implementation of the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order 1359
- the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures
- the promotion of child safety within the College
- the creation of a positive and robust child safe culture
- the promotion and open discussion of child safety issues within the College
- compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child safety in Victoria

Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

Geelong Lutheran College is committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe to actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.



At Geelong Lutheran College we have a zero tolerance for child abuse, racism and discrimination and are committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The College regards its child safety responsibilities with the utmost importance and as such, is committed to providing the necessary resources to ensure compliance with all relevant child protection laws and regulations and maintain a child safe culture.

Each member of the College community has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role that they play individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all that they do and every decision that they make.

Scope

The College's Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy applies to all adults in the College community, whether or not their work involves direct contact with students, including:

- Staff and Direct Contact Contractors (including External Education Providers) who are "school staff" within the meaning of Ministerial Order 1359
- Other types of Contractors
- Volunteers
- Visitors

This Policy applies in all physical, virtual and online College environments used by students during or outside of school hours, including all locations provided for a student's use, (for example on-site and off-site College grounds, sporting events, camps and excursions and environments provided by External Education Providers and other Contractors).

Roles and Responsibilities

Child safety and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility. All adults in the College community have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety, wellbeing and protection of students.

Specific responsibilities are summarised at the end of this Policy.

Child Safety Standards

Geelong Lutheran College has also developed specific child safe principles and values relevant to its own specific circumstances that guide our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect students from abuse and harm.

The Victorian Child Safe Standards

The Victorian Child Safe Standards were originally developed in response to the Victorian Parliament's Inquiry into the Handling of Child Abuse by Religious and Other Organisations. They were replaced by a set of new Standards in 2022, to reflect the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and to support greater national consistency.

There are 11 Victorian Child Safe Standards. They are:

1. Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
2. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
3. Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.



4. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
5. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
6. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
7. Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused.
8. Staff and volunteers are equipped with knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
9. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
10. Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
11. Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

The Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) monitors and enforces compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards for all registered schools in Victoria.

Geelong Lutheran College's Child Safety Principles and Values

Lutheran schools have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected, have agency, their voices are heard, and they are safe and feel safe.

The following principles underpin our commitment to child safety and wellbeing at our College:

- All students deserve, as a fundamental right, safety and protection from all forms of abuse and neglect.
- Our College staff work in partnership with families and the community to ensure that they are engaged in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on child safety and wellbeing and protection.
- All students have the right to a thorough and systematic education in all aspects of personal safety, in partnership with their parents/guardians/carers.
- All adults in our College, including teaching and non-teaching staff, clergy, volunteers and contractors, have a responsibility to:
 - care for children and young people
 - positively promote their wellbeing
 - identify and mitigate risks related to child safety and wellbeing in the College environment
 - protect them from any kind of harm or abuse, and
 - encourage and support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.
- Our College community is committed to equity and inclusion and recognising and respecting the diverse needs of all children.
- All adults in our College will take all reasonable measures to prevent child abuse and harm resulting from discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- All members of the College community (including students and their families) are kept informed of child safety and wellbeing matters (where appropriate) and are involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- Staff, clergy, volunteers, contractors, parents and students should feel free to raise concerns about child safety and wellbeing, knowing these will be taken seriously by College leadership.
- Appropriate confidentiality will be maintained, with information being provided to those who have a right or a need to be informed, either legally (including under legislated information sharing schemes being Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS) or Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS)) or pastorally.



Embedding a Culture of Child Safety

Our Child Safe Program is one of the strategies employed by the school to embed a culture of child safety. Our Child Safe Program relates to all aspects of child safety and wellbeing and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe environment and school culture. It includes:

- Child Safe policies and Child Safe Codes of Conduct.
- Clear information about what is child abuse and other harm and key indicators of child abuse and other harm.
- Clear procedures for responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns internally to a Child Safety Officer, and for responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse or other harm.
- Strategies to support, encourage and enable Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, parents/carers and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters.
- Procedures for recruiting and screening members of the School Executive Team, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors.
- Procedures for reporting to external agencies, including Mandatory Reporting to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (Child Protection), Reportable Conduct to the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) and Reporting Child Sexual Abuse to Police.
- Pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe.
- Strategies to support and encourage the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and students with disability.
- Customised child protection training.
- Information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse or other harm to protect, support and assist students.
- Guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality.
- Policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards, Ministerial Order 1359 and the National Principles).
- A system for continuous review and improvement.

Child Safety Codes of Conduct

The College has Child Safety Codes of Conduct which includes our Child Safe Code of Conduct and our Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.

Together, these Codes of Conduct set boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults in our College community and students, including in physical, online and virtual environments.

The Profile of a GLC Student includes standards of behaviour for students relevant to child safety and wellbeing.

There are standards of behaviour for students relevant to child safety and wellbeing encapsulated within our Restorative Practice processes (SIMON Behaviour Green → Red).

The Child Safety Codes of Conduct include clear processes to report inappropriate behaviour. The Child Safety Codes of Conduct is published on our College website, which indicates appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and how to report inappropriate behaviour back.

Additional information is available to students and families about the Child Safety Codes of Conduct, to ensure that they know what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable and how to report inappropriate behaviour.



Cultural Safety

At Geelong Lutheran College, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe College where the strengths of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, values and practices are respected.

We identify, confront and do not tolerate racism, and we address any instances of racism within the school environment with appropriate consequences.

We think about how every student can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, we recognise the link between culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, their families and their communities (including local Aboriginal communities relevant to the College) to have a voice and presence in our College's planning, Policies, and activities.

The specific strategies that we have adopted to promote cultural safety in our College community are set out in our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students (Child Safety) policy.

Student Empowerment and Participation

Geelong Lutheran College is committed to embedding a safe, supportive and inclusive learning environment, where our students feel valued, respected, and their voices are heard. Student participation and empowerment are crucial aspects in developing resilient and respectful young people; *Shaping Learners Who Inspire the World*.

Three key principles underpin the participation and empowerment of students:

- **Empowerment:** which involves students having greater control or say over their lives through participation.
- **Purposeful Engagement:** which involves students taking on valued roles, addressing issues that are relevant to them, and influencing real outcomes.
- **Inclusiveness:** which involves ensuring that all students are able to participate.

Part of creating and maintaining a child safe environment at the school for all students is ensuring that all students:

- are engaged and involved in decisions that affect them
- can express their views and raise concerns
- have their views and opinions taken seriously
- are educated about their rights and child safety.

The College actively seeks to understand what makes students feel safe in our school and regularly communicate with students about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

The College recognises the importance of friendships and encourage respectful relationships, strong friendships and support from peers.

Parent/Carer, Family and Community Engagement at the College

The College recognises that parents and carers have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their children. The College will:

- Ensure that parents participate in decisions affecting their children.



- Ensure that families and relevant communities (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, culturally and linguistically diverse communities, other communities that make up our staff and student cohort, and the local community in which our school operates) know about the College's operations and policies, including its Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the Child Safe Codes of Conduct and our Child Safe Program.
- Actively seek to include families and relevant communities in decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and learning and assessment environments.
- Build cultural safety at the College through partnerships with relevant communities.
- Inform the College community about the changes to College operations and governance relating to child safety and wellbeing via Newsletters and Executive Principal announcements and communications.

Diversity and Equity

Our College values diversity and does not tolerate any discriminatory practices.

To achieve this, we:

- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and their families
- support the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and their families
- support students with disabilities and their families and act to promote their participation
- support students and families of diverse sexuality and act to promote their participation
- seek to recruit a workforce that reflects a diversity of cultures, abilities and identities
- ensure that all Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors are provided information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, disability, culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and those with particular experiences or needs
- have a physical environment that actively celebrates diverse cultures and recognises cultural differences
- commit to promoting the inclusion of students of differing abilities.

The specific strategies that we have adopted to promote equity and respect diversity at the College are set out in the Family and Community Involvement, Cultural Safety and Equity/Diversity section of our Child Safety Program.

Recruitment and Screening

Geelong Lutheran College applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of Staff, Volunteers and Contractors to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with our students.

Our practices include:

- making our commitment to child safety and wellbeing clear in recruitment advertising and documentation
- requiring all Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors to maintain a valid VIT Registration or WWC (working with children) clearance, and sighting, verifying and recording this information
- using additional selection, background checking and screening processes that take into account child safety considerations.
- ensuring that professional development programs for staff include child protection education and training programs.



Training on and Information About Child Safety

As a part of Geelong Lutheran College's induction process, all Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors, must complete our child safety induction program, which includes information about our child safety Policies, practices and procedures.

All Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors also receive refresher and ongoing child safety training at least annually.

Our child safety induction and ongoing training program includes information about:

- this Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy
- the Child Safety Codes of Conduct
- recognising child abuse and other harm and identifying key indicators, including harm caused by other children and young people
- our Policies and procedures for responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns (including mandatory reporting, reporting to police and reportable conduct obligations)
- our Policies and procedures for information sharing and record keeping about child safety incidents and concerns
- WWCC clearances and other child safety and wellbeing human resources practices
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the College's environments.

GLC Board also receives child safety training at least annually, to ensure that its members are 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 College's environment.

Its 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 College's environment
- the College's child safety Policies, procedures, codes and practices.

Ongoing Supervision, Management and Support

The College's Child Protection Officers and Executive Leadership provide supervision and support to all Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors to ensure that they are compliant with the College's approach to child safety and wellbeing.

Our child safety supervision and support program includes:

- appointing a supervising staff member to Direct Contact Volunteers/Contractors and to those Regular Volunteers/Contractors who are engaged in "child-connected work"
- professional development programs for Staff that include child safety education.

The College swiftly manages any inappropriate behaviour towards students, in accordance with our policies and legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing are paramount considerations when managing inappropriate behaviour.



Complaints and Reporting Processes: The College's Response to Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

Geelong Lutheran College fosters a culture that encourages everyone in the College community to raise concerns and complaints about child safety and wellbeing. We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns set out in the Complaints Handling Policy.

We also have clear procedures that all Staff, Volunteers and Contractors must follow whenever they witness, suspect or receive a complaint about a child safety incident or concern involving a student, a staff member, a Volunteer, a Contractor or the College, set out in the **Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns** section of the Child Safety Program. These are summarised for students, parents and other members of the College community in our public-facing Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns and public-facing Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns At or Involving the School or its Staff.

The College will take appropriate, prompt action in response to all child safety incidents or concerns, including all complaints, allegations or disclosures of abuse or other harm, when Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, students, parents or anyone else reports these to the College.

The safety and wellbeing of the student/s involved in the matter will be the paramount consideration when responding to child safety incidents and concerns.

The College's response will include:

- externally reporting all matters that meet the required relevant thresholds to Child Protection (Mandatory Reports), the Police (Mandatory Reporting of Child Sexual Abuse), the CCYP (Reportable Conduct), and/or the Victorian Institute of Teaching (Teacher Misconduct), depending on the issues raised and consistent with PROTECT Four Critical Actions and Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending
- fully cooperating with any resulting investigation by an external agency
- protecting any student connected to the child safety incident or concern until it is resolved and providing ongoing support to those affected
- taking particular measures in response to child safety incidents or concerns about an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student, a student from a culturally and linguistically diverse background, a student with disability, and other vulnerable students (such as students who are unable to live at home or students who identify as lesbian gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex)
- sharing information with, or requesting information from, external people or agencies as permitted or required under the Child Information Sharing Scheme and/or the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme
- securing and retaining records of the child safety incident or concern and the College's response to it
- taking broader actions to improve child safety at the College (including systemic reviews and resulting improvements).

Child Safety Risk Management

LEVNT and Geelong Lutheran College recognise the importance of a risk management approach to child safety and to minimising the risk of harm to children and young people without compromising their rights to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

We have implemented a Child Safety Risk Management Policy to assist in the identification, assessment and management of child safety risks in all College environments.



We identify, assess and manage child safety risks in all College environments, based on a range of factors including the nature of our College's activities, its physical, virtual and online environments and the characteristics of the student body. We use this information to inform our Policies, procedures and activity planning.

We record identified risks to child safety and wellbeing in our Child Safety Risk Register, along with the actions in place at the College to manage these risks. GLC College Board, the Executive Principal and/or the Executive Team monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these actions at least annually.

Child Safety Privacy and Information Sharing

The College collects, uses and discloses information about students and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws and other relevant laws, including laws that permit the College to disclose information about child safety and wellbeing to external people and agencies. For information about how the College collects, uses and discloses this information, refer to our <https://www.glc.vic.edu.au/assets/documents/privacy-policy.pdf>.

Child Safety Record Keeping

The College is committed to best practice record keeping about child safety incidents and concerns. The College records all internal and external reports of child safety incidents and concerns, as a well as any other responses by the College using our Child Safe Incident Report.

When keeping records of child safety incidents or concerns, the College maintains confidentiality and privacy for students and families in accordance with federal and state privacy legislation.

Communications

Geelong Lutheran College is committed to communicating our child safety and wellbeing strategies, Policies and procedures to our College community through the measures set out in the Implementation section below.

In addition, we:

- display PROTECT posters around the College
- provide child safety information and updates through PAM, College Newsletters and Parent Communication
- include child safety as a regular agenda item at Executive Team meetings and staff meetings.

Child Safety Program and Practice Review

Geelong Lutheran College is committed to the continuous improvement of the Policies and procedures making up our entire Child Safety Program and of our child safety and wellbeing practices. We review the Program as a whole bi-annually or earlier if a significant child safety incident occurs at the College or legislation changes for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child safety and wellbeing related laws, regulations and standards.

When undertaking these reviews, the College:

- actively seeks, actions, and incorporates feedback from students, families, the wider College community, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- analyses any complaints and child safety incidents that may have occurred
- communicates any learnings, adjustments or amendments to policy and practice widely throughout the College community.



Child Safety Reporting Procedures

Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns to the College

Whenever there are concerns that a child or young person is in immediate danger call the Police on 000.

Any person, including all Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, parents and students, can at any time report concerns about the wellbeing of a child aged under 17 to Child Protection by:

- during business hours (8:45am-5:00pm, Monday to Friday), contacting the Child Protection intake service for the local government area where the child resides, listed [here](#).
- after hours, telephoning 13 12 78.

Staff, Volunteers and Contractors

Staff, Volunteers and Contractors must follow our Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns and report child safety incidents or concerns internally to a Child Protection Officer or the Executive Principal.

Where the incident or concerns involves the Executive Principal, internal reports should instead be made to the Chair of College Board.

We recognise that some individuals, particularly children, face additional vulnerabilities to child abuse and other harm, as well as additional barriers to disclosing child safety incidents or concerns. Our Child Safety Program provides guidance on identifying additional vulnerabilities and barriers and contains strategies for supporting these individuals to participate in the College community and enabling them to disclose child safety incidents or concerns to the College.

Students, Parents/Carers and Community Members

Students who have child safety concerns about themselves or any other child or student aged 18 or over can:

- disclose the child safety incident or concern to any staff member, Volunteer or Contractor. This might be done:
 - verbally
 - in writing
 - through electronic means (such as email)
 - indirectly (such as in written assignments, in artworks or in any other way)

Parents, family members and other community members who have child safety concerns or who suspect that a child or young person associated with the College may be subject to abuse or other harm can contact:

- the Executive Principal
- the College's Senior Child Safety Officer, by phoning (03) 5264 1038 or emailing georgia.quirk@glc.vic.edu.au

Any person can also contact the Executive Principal, or the Senior Child Safety Officer if they have concerns regarding the College's leadership in relation to child safety.

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



The College's Response to and External Reporting of Child Safety Incidents or Concerns

Our Child Safety Program sets out the procedures, consistent with PROTECT Four Critical Actions that the College will follow for any child safety incident or concern involving a student, College Staff, Volunteer, Contractor or Visitor, or other person connected to the College or the College environment.

It also provides guidance for all Staff, Volunteers and Contractors on their obligations to respond to and report, to relevant external authorities, child safety incidents and concerns.

These procedures and guidance are summarised in our public-facing Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns and public-facing Procedures for Managing Child Safety Incidents or Concerns At or Involving the School or its Staff.

Support for Students, Families and Staff Following Child Safety Incident or Disclosure

Child safety incidents or concerns can cause trauma and significantly impact on the mental health and wellbeing of children, as well as on their families. In addition to reporting and referral to the relevant authorities, the College plays a central role in addressing this trauma and has a duty of care to ensure that students feel safe and supported at the College.

The College employs a range of measures to support students affected by a child safety incident or concern depending on the particular circumstances of the matter and of the student and their family:

- Child Protection Officers will work with the student and their family to develop a Student Support Plan
- support strategies that could be considered for students and/or their families might include offering or organising referrals to:
 - internal or external support, such as the College counsellor/psychologist
 - bi- cultural workers and/or translators
 - an external support agency and/or child advocacy organisation which specialises in supporting children and young people impacted by abuse or other harm.

The College offers former students who may disclose historical child safety incidents or concerns from their time at the College similar support.

Witnessing a child safety incident or receiving a disclosure of abuse or other harm can be a distressing experience for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors involved. The College assists impacted Staff, Volunteers and Contractors to access necessary support.

Embedding a Culture of Child Safety: Our Child Safety Program

Our Child Safety Program itself is one of the strategies employed by Geelong Lutheran College to embed a culture of child safety at the College.

Our Child Safety Program relates to all aspects of child safety and wellbeing and establishes work systems, practices, Policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe environment and culture at the College.



It includes:

- the Child Safety Codes of Conduct
- clear information about what is child abuse and other harm and key indicators of child abuse and other harm
- clear procedures, that are consistent with PROTECT Four Critical Actions and Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending, for responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns internally to a Child Protection Officer, and for responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse or other harm
- strategies to support, encourage and enable Staff, Volunteers, Contractors, parents/carers and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
- procedures for recruiting and screening members of the Executive Team, Staff, Volunteers and Contractors
- procedures for reporting to external agencies, that are consistent with PROTECT Four Critical Actions and Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending, including Mandatory Reporting to the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (Child Protection), reporting reportable conduct to the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) and reporting child sexual abuse to police
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe
- strategies to support and encourage the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and students with disability
- child safety training
- information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse or other harm to protect, support and assist student
- guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality
- policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order 1359)
- a system for continuous review and improvement.

Child Safety Responsibilities at the College

Child safety and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility. Specific responsibilities at the College include:

The College Child Protection Officer/s

One or more staff members are nominated as a Colleges Child Protection Officer. Child Protection Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child safety and wellbeing, including but not limited to child protection issues. They are a point of contact for raising child safety concerns within the College. They are also responsible for championing child safety within the College and assisting in coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

Our Child Protection Officers are:

Armstrong Creek Campus

Georgia Quirk	Assistant Head of Secondary	5264 1038	georgia.quirk@glc.vic.edu.au
Natasha Rae	Head of Wellbeing	5264 1038	natasha.rae@glc.vic.edu.au

St John's Newtown Campus

Luke Symes	Head of Primary	5221 5221	luke.symes@glc.vic.edu.au
Angela McLean	Wellbeing Coordinator	5221 5221	angela.mclean@glc.vic.edu.au
Jack Pidd	Teacher	5221 5221	jack.pidd@glc.vic.edu.au



The Senior Child Safety Officer

Geelong Lutheran College has also appointed Georgia Quirk as the College Senior Child Safety Officer.

The Senior Child Safety Officer has additional child safety responsibilities, such as being a first point of contact for all child safety concerns or queries for the wider community and coordinating the College's response to child safety incidents in consultation with the Executive Principal, the Executive Team and GLC College Board.

GLC College Board

GLC College Board is Geelong Lutheran College's "school governing authority" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

GLC College Board is responsible for:

- championing and promoting a child safe culture within the College
- approving our Child Safety Program, including this Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and the Child Safety Codes of Conduct

It is responsible for ensuring that the College has appropriate resources to effectively implement the Victorian Child Safe Standards, Ministerial Order 1359 and our Child Safety Program.

The Board

Each member of the College Board is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to allow the College's Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and the Child Safety Program to be effectively implemented within the College and are responsible for holding the Executive Principal and the senior Leadership accountable for effective implementation.

The Executive Principal

The Executive Principal is responsible, and will be accountable, for the operational management of the College, and the implementation of the Child Safety Program.

The Executive Principal is responsible for:

- taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and the College's Child Safety Program is implemented effectively and followed
- ensuring that a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within the College, including by:
 - modelling the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and reinforcing high standards of child safe behaviours between adults and students and between students
 - facilitating the participation of students, families, Staff and other members of the College community in promoting and improving child safety and wellbeing at the College
 - promoting regular and open discussion of child safety and wellbeing issues within the College community
 - facilitating regular professional learning for Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors about child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and preventing and responding to child safety incidents and concerns
 - creating an environment where child safety incidents, concerns and complaints are readily raised with the College and where no one is discouraged from reporting child safety incidents or concerns to relevant external authorities.



Staff

All Staff are “school staff” for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

All Staff are required to comply with our Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Codes of Conduct, be familiar with our Child Safety Program and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm, and WWC Checks.

It is each individual’s responsibility to be aware of key indicators of child abuse and other harm, to be observant, and to raise all child safety incidents and concerns with a Child Protection Officer.

To meet these obligations, all Staff must:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and ongoing training provided by the College
- always follow the College’s child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures in the Child Safety Program
- act in accordance with the Child Safety Codes of Conduct
- identify and raise child safety incidents and concerns in accordance with our Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns, and follow the PROTECT Four Critical Actions and Four Critical Actions: Student Sexual Offending
- ensure students’ views are taken seriously and their voices are heard when making decisions that affect them
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of students.

Volunteers

A Volunteer is someone who performs work for the College in a College environment without remuneration or reward. Volunteers may be family members of students, or from the wider College or local community. Volunteers are not “school staff” for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

All Volunteers at the College are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment.

To meet these obligations:

- all Volunteers must comply with our Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Codes of Conduct
- Direct Contact Volunteers (and, if required by the College, other Volunteers such as Regular Volunteers who are engaged in “child-connected work”) must:
 - participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and ongoing training provided by the College
 - be aware of key indicators of child abuse and other harm
 - understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm
 - raise all child safety concerns with a Child Protection Officer.

Contractors

A Contractor is someone engaged by the College to perform specific tasks. Contractors are not employees of the College. However, Contractors who have direct contact with children are “school staff” for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

Contractors may include maintenance and building personnel, consultants, music tutors, sports coaches, and cleaners as well as external education providers (organisations that the College has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the College).



All Contractors are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the College environment. To meet these obligations:

- all Contractors must comply with our Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Codes of Conduct.
- Direct Contact Contractors (and, if required by the College, other Contractors such as Regular Contractors who are engaged in “child-connected work”) must:
 - participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and ongoing training provided by the College
 - be aware of key indicators of child abuse and other harm
 - understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm
 - raise all child safety concerns with a Child Protection Officer.

The College may include these requirements in the written agreement between it and the Contractor.

Implementation

The Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy is published on our College’s public website.

It is provided to new Staff, and to Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors at their induction or prior to them commencing their work at the College.

The College provides all Visitors to the College, including Casual Volunteers and Casual Contractors, with information about the Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy (including in particular the Child Safety Codes of Conduct and how to report child safety incidents or concerns to the College and to relevant external authorities).

Breach of the Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy

Geelong Lutheran College enforces this Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy and our Child Safety Codes of Conduct. In the event of any non-compliance, we will instigate a review that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- the restriction of duties
- suspension
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement
- or a notification to Police and other agencies were obligated to do so.

Source of Obligation

The Child Safe and Wellbeing Policy is implemented, and is to be read and understood in conjunction with:

- Victorian Child Safe Standards, Standard 2
- Ministerial Order 1359, Clause 6

Policy and Program Review

Geelong Lutheran College is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Safety Program. The Program is regularly reviewed for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child safety related laws, regulations and standards.



Appendix A: Child Safe Program Definitions

Child and Young Person

A child and young person is defined in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) and for the purposes of our Child Safe Program, as a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Child Abuse and Other Harm

“Child abuse and other harm” is not a defined term in Victorian law. However, various sources of legislation provide a definition of “child abuse” as well as other concepts and conduct which, together, provide guidance as to what is child abuse and other harm in Victoria.

For the purposes of this Program, the phrase child abuse and other harm refers to incidents of our concerns about, including concerns about a risk of physical, sexual, psychological and emotional harm, neglect, grooming and exposure to family violence, regardless of by whom or how this harm occurs.

For more detailed information, refer to Definitions and Key Indicators of Child Abuse and Other Harm.

Child Safety Incident or Concern

The different definitions of child abuse or other harm in various legislation, and the key indicators of child abuse and other harm are set out in Definitions and Key Indicators of Child Abuse and Other Harm. Together, they are all considered “child safety incidents or concerns” for the purposes of our Child Safe Program.

Breaches of the Child Safe Codes of Conduct are also considered child safety incidents or concerns.

Child Safety Incidents or Concerns “Involving” the Executive Principal

Throughout this Child Safe Program, the Executive Principal is given specific responsibilities for receiving and managing internal reports, complaints, disclosures or allegations of child safety incidents or concerns that involve the College or its Staff, Volunteers or Contractors.

However, where the child safety incident or concern involves or is alleged to involve the Executive Principal or where a child protection-related complaint is made about the Executive Principal, the Chair of School Board is responsible for receiving and managing these reports, complaints, disclosures or allegations.

For the purposes of these policies and procedures, a child safety incident, concern, complaint or allegation “involves” the Executive Principal if:

- the Executive Principal is the perpetrator of the child safety incident or concern, or is otherwise the subject of the complaint or allegation about a child a safety incident or concern
- the Executive Principal has, or is alleged to have, mishandled a child safety incident, concern, complaint or allegation
- the Executive Principal is otherwise involved in the chain of events surrounding the child safety incident or concern (for example, they are a witness to the child safety incident)
- the Executive Principal has an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest in receiving or managing the internal report, complaint or allegation (for example, they are related to the alleged victim or the alleged perpetrator).



Child-Connected Work

Ministerial Order 1359 defines “child-connected work” as work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

The College Board authorises the Executive Principal to work at the College.

The Executive Principal authorises all other Staff, Volunteers and Contractors to work at the College on behalf of Geelong Lutheran College Board.

This means that all staff members, including teaching and non-teaching Staff, are engaged in child-connected work. Under this definition, the following Volunteers and Contractors are also engaged in child-connected work:

- all Direct Contact Volunteers/Contractors who are adults
- Regular Volunteers/Contractors who are adults and who work when children are present or expected to be present
- Casual Volunteers/Contractors who are adults and who work when children are present or expected to be present.

For more information, refer to the definitions of Direct Contact, Regular and Casual Volunteers, and Direct Contact, Regular and Casual Contractors, below.

Child-Related Work

“Child-related work” is defined in the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic). It is work performed at the College by a staff member, Volunteer or Contractor that usually involves (or is likely to involve) direct contact with a child (unless the direct contact is only occasional and incidental to the work).

Direct contact means any contact between a person and a child that involves:

- physical contact
- face-to-face contact
- contact by post or other written communication
- contact by telephone or other oral communication; or
- contact by email or other electronic communication.

Under this definition, most Staff at the College, and all Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors, are engaged in child-related work for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

Contractor

Direct Contact, Regular and Casual Contractors

On occasion it may be necessary for the College to engage outside, independent contractors to perform specific tasks. These Contractors are not employees of Geelong Lutheran College. Contractors may include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, tutors, sports coaches, and External Education Providers.

Contractors who have direct contact with children (see below) are “school staff” for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359. Many, but not all, Contractors are engaged in “child-connected work” for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

Contractors who are themselves children or who do not work when children or students are present or expected to be present are NOT engaged in child-connected work.



Geelong Lutheran College has identified three categories of Contractors, based on the level and frequency of their interaction with students. Contractors' responsibilities and obligations under the Child Safe Program may depend on their category. These categories are:

- Direct Contact Contractors
- Regular Contractors
- Casual Contractors

Where the term "Contractor" is used, it captures "Direct Contact Contractors," "Regular Contractors" and "Casual Contractors".

Direct Contact Contractors

Direct Contact Contractors are individuals who provide contractor services to the College where, in the normal course of providing the services, they could potentially have direct contact with students in circumstances where they:

- may be left alone, one-on-one, with a student (for example, 1:1 tutor or learning support)
- a reasonable person would consider that the contact may enable the individual to form a relationship of trust with a student (for example, casual teacher, music tutor, canteen worker, regular maintenance worker)
- a reasonable person would consider that the contact could create a potential risk to the safety of a student (for example, casual teacher, music tutor).

All Direct Contact Contractors (other than those who are themselves children) are engaged in child-connected work and child-related work within the meaning of Ministerial Order 1359. Examples of Direct Contact Contractors may include:

- maintenance workers who regularly work at times when students are present
- tutors
- specialist music or drama teachers
- casual teachers

This also includes music tutors and other extra-curricular tutors and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the College, but have an agreement with the College to use the College's facilities.

Due to the nature of Direct Contact Contractors' contact with students, they will have more comprehensive child protection responsibilities and obligations within our Child Safe Program.

Regular Contractor

Regular Contractors are individuals who provide contractor services to the College more than seven times in any one year and are not Direct Contact Contractors. They may have some indirect or limited contact with students when providing their services.



Regular Contractors (other than those who are themselves children) who work in any Geelong Lutheran College environment while children are present or are expected to present are engaged in “child-connected work” within the meaning of the Ministerial Order 1359. However, they are not engaged in “child-related work”. Examples of Regular Contractors may include:

- consultants
- umpires, referees or linesmen at sporting events
- maintenance workers who regularly work at times when students are not expected to be present
- regular caterers for Staff events.

Due to the regular nature of Regular Contractors’ attendance at the College or College events, even though their contact with students may be indirect or limited, they will have some child protection responsibilities and obligations within our Child Safe Program.

Casual Contractor

Casual Contractors are individuals who provide contractor services to the College, seven times or less in any one year during which they may have indirect or limited contact with students, but only in circumstances where:

- they are not left alone, one-on-one, with a student
- a reasonable person would not consider that the contact may enable the individual to form a relationship or trust with a student
- a reasonable person would not consider the contact to create a risk to the safety of a student.

Casual Contractors (other than those who are themselves children) who work in any Geelong Lutheran College environment while children are present or are expected to present are engaged in “child-connected work” within the meaning of the Ministerial Order 1359. However, they are not engaged in “child-related work”. Examples of Casual Contractors may include individuals who, less than seven times a year:

- provide one-off emergency maintenance work
- give a speech, performance or presentation at the College
- provide assistance with activities at a College sports day (e.g. lifeguards).

Due to the limited nature of Casual Contractors’ contact with students, they do not have the same comprehensive role, responsibilities and obligations as College staff members or Direct Contact or Regular Contractors and are instead treated as Visitors.

External Education Providers

An External Education Provider is any organisation that the College has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the College. This may include:

- another registered school
- a government school including:
 - the Open High School
 - Distance Education Centres
 - TAFE Colleges
 - Registered Training Organisations (RTOs)
- other external providers with appropriate scope of registration, qualifications and expertise.



The delivery of such a course may take place on College premises or elsewhere.

For the purposes of our Child Safe Program, External Education Providers are considered Direct Contact Contractors.

College Community Members

Throughout the College's Child Safe Program, certain groups of people in the College community are identified for the purposes of assigning roles, responsibilities and obligations. To ensure clarity, the following terms are used consistently throughout the Program and have the following meanings:

College Board

The College Board is Geelong Lutheran College's "school governing authority" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

College Board includes all members irrespective of their level of interaction with students or College policy.

The Executive Principal

With the exception of where the Executive Principal has specific roles and responsibilities and is therefore expressly identified, the Executive Principal will be included as a staff member for the purposes of the Child Safe Program.

School Staff

"School staff" is a particular phrase used in Ministerial Order 1359. It defines "school staff" as "an individual working in a school environment who is:

- directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority;
- a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by the school governing authority to perform child-related work; or
- a minister of religion, religious leader or an employee or officer or a religious body associated with the school".

The Executive Principal engages or employs Staff, Volunteers and Contractors at the College (other than the Executive Principal) on behalf of College Board.

This means that the phrase "school staff" includes all Staff, as well as Direct Contact Contractors at the College, no matter their age or the frequency of their engagement.

"School staff", for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359, is therefore broader in scope than the terms "Staff" and "staff members" as set out below.

Staff and Staff Members

The terms "Staff" and "staff members" include all persons employed by the College whether on a permanent, temporary or casual basis. These terms include all teaching and non-teaching Staff and, unless otherwise stated, the Executive Principal.

All "staff members" are "school staff" for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359.

Where differentiation between teachers and non-teaching Staff is required, it will be expressly stated within the policy or procedure itself.



Where the term “staff members” is extended to include other members of the College community such as Volunteers or Contractors, this will be expressly stated within the policy or procedure itself.

College Environment

The “College environment” means any of the following physical, virtual or online places used during or outside school hours:

- a campus of the College
- online or virtual School environments made available or authorised by College Board (or the Executive Principal on its behalf) for use by a child or student (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools and online services)
- other locations provided by the College or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use, including but not limited to:
 - camps
 - approved homestay accommodation
 - delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers, and another school
 - sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events.

Student

A student is defined in Ministerial Order 1359 as a person who is enrolled at or attends the College.

Similarly, where the term “student” is used in this Program, it refers to all students enrolled at or attending the College including those aged 18 and above.

Note that, as set out in our procedures about the internal and external reporting of child safety incidents and concerns must be followed for incidents and concerns about students aged 18 years and above, provided that – for external reporting – the relevant student consents to the report or, if they do not consent, to lessen or prevent a serious or imminent threat to an individual’s life, health, safety or welfare.

Visitor

The term “Visitor” refers to any adult who attends a College event or in a College environment on a one-off or casual basis.

Examples of Visitors include, but are not limited to:

- Casual Volunteers
- Casual Contractors
- parents and other adult family members of students, when they are attending events or in a College environment
- people invited by the College or a staff member to attend a College event or to be in a College environment
- people who attend the College environment for commercial purposes, such as for deliveries or sales purposes.

Volunteer

Direct Contact, Regular and Casual Volunteers

A Volunteer is a person who performs work for the College in a College environment without remuneration or reward.



Volunteers may be family members of students, or from the wider College or local community. Volunteers make a considerable contribution to the College community by giving their time and sharing their skills and expertise with others.

Volunteers are NOT “school staff” for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359. However, many, but not all, Volunteers are engaged in “child-connected work” for the purposes of Ministerial Order 1359. Volunteers who are themselves children or who do not work when children or students are present or expected to be present are NOT engaged in child-connected work.

The College has identified three categories of Volunteers, based on the level and frequency of their interaction with students. Volunteers’ responsibilities and obligations under the Child Safe Program may depend on their category. The categories of Volunteer are:

- Direct Contact Volunteers
- Regular Volunteers
- Casual Volunteers

Where the term “Volunteer” is used, it captures “Direct Contact Volunteers,” “Regular Volunteers” and “Casual Volunteers”.

Direct Contact Volunteer

Direct Contact Volunteers are volunteers who are involved in providing support, guidance and supervision directly to students and could potentially have direct contact with students during the normal course of providing the volunteer service.

The Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) defines “direct contact” in section 3 as any contact between a person and a child (aged under 18) that involves:

- physical contact
- face-to-face contact
- contact by post or other written communication
- contact by telephone or other oral communication
- contact by email or other electronic communication.

All Direct Contact Volunteers (other than those who are themselves children) are engaged in both child-connected work and child-related work within the meaning of Ministerial Order 1359. Direct Contact Volunteers may have direct contact with students in circumstances where:

- they may have limited supervision by College Staff in their role
- they may be left alone, one-on-one, with a student (for example, 1:1 tutoring or learning support)
- a reasonable person would consider that the contact may enable the individual to form a relationship of trust with a student (for example, coaching a sports team, helping with a drama production, or regularly working in a canteen or library)
- a reasonable person would consider that the contact could create a potential risk to the safety of a student (for example, responsibility for a group of students during an excursion without a member of Staff present).



Examples of Direct Contact Volunteers include individuals who:

- attend a camp or excursion
- assist a student during a learning activity
- assist a student to complete tests or exams (e.g., as a scribe or reader)
- coach, manage, or assist with the coaching or managing, of sports at the College
- assist with theatre or music productions
- tutor, or assist with the tutoring of, a student in extracurricular activities such as music, choir or debating.

Due to the nature of Direct Contact Volunteers' contact with students, they will have more comprehensive child protection responsibilities and obligations within our Child Safe Program.

Regular Volunteer

Regular Volunteers are individuals who provide volunteer services to the College, more than seven times in any one year, but are not a Direct Contact Volunteer. They may have some indirect or incidental contact with students when providing their services.

Regular Volunteers (other than those who are themselves children) who work in any College environment while children are present or are expected to present are engaged in "child-connected work" within the meaning of the Ministerial Order 1359. However, they are not engaged in "child-related work".

Examples of Regular Volunteers include individuals who volunteer more than seven times per year:

- on College advisory committees or advisory councils and do not have direct contact (such as by post, telephone or email) with students while doing so.

Due to the regular nature of Regular Volunteers' attendance at the College or College events, even though their contact with students may be indirect or limited, they will have some child protection responsibilities and obligations within our Child Safe Program.

Casual Volunteer

Casual Volunteers are individuals who provide volunteer services to the College, seven times or less in any one year, but are not a Direct Contact Volunteer. They may have indirect or incidental contact with students when providing their services but only in circumstances where:

- they are providing services aimed at the general public
- they are not likely to be left alone, one-on-one, with a student
- a reasonable person would not consider that the contact may enable the individual to form a relationship of trust with a student
- a reasonable person would not consider the contact to create a risk to the safety of a student.



Casual Volunteers (other than those who are themselves children) who work in any College environment while children are present or are expected to present are engaged in “child-connected work” within the meaning of the Ministerial Order 1359. However, they are not engaged in “child-related work”. Examples of Casual Volunteers include individuals who, in the circumstances described above, volunteer seven times or less in any one year:

- at a working bee to cover books or landscape a College garden
- on a College BBQ at a sporting event
- in the College administrative office.

Due to the limited nature of Casual Volunteers’ contact with students, they do not have the same comprehensive role, responsibilities, and obligations as Geelong Lutheran College staff members or Direct Contact or Regular Volunteers and are instead treated as Visitors.

Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed as part of the College’s annual review cycle.

Policy Administration

Responsible Person/s	Approver	Date Approved	Next Review
Executive Principal	College Board	October 2025	October 2026