



Policy Name	Child Safety Policy	Approval date	June 2022
Policy Owner	Principal	Next review	June 2023
Approved by	School Council		

Introduction

Trinity Grammar School, Kew (the **School**) is committed to creating and maintaining an environment in which all children are safe from harm. The School has zero tolerance of child abuse.

Our Child Safety Policy demonstrates the strong commitment of the School to child safety, and to provide an outline of the policies and practices that we have developed to keep our students safe, including from abuse or other harm.

It is an overarching policy that provides the key elements of our approach to the School as a child safe organisation and sets the tone for the School's entire Child Safety program.

The policy takes into account relevant legislative requirements, including the specific requirements of *Ministerial Order No. 1359: Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and Boarding Premises*.

Purpose

The purposes of this policy are to:

- demonstrate the School's commitment to promoting child safety and embedding a culture of 'zero tolerance' for child abuse;
- communicate the School's strategies for embedding a child safe culture at the School; and
- set out the School's expectations of all stakeholders in recognition of the role they play in ensuring that all children and young people at the School are safe.

Scope

This Child Safety Policy applies to all members of the School Community. It applies in the School environment and in the School Boarding environment.



Definitions

Definition	
Child	Any student enrolled at the School, regardless of age. Any student that attends the School as part of the Co-ordinate Program, regardless of age.
Child abuse	a) any act committed against a child involving - i. a sexual offence; or ii. the offence of grooming; and b) the infliction, on a child, of - i. physical violence; or ii. serious emotional or psychological harm; and c) serious neglect of a child.
Child-connected work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">work authorised by the School Council and performed by an adult in the School environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present; orwork authorised by the School in the School boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.
School Community	All staff (permanent, fixed-term and casual), volunteers, contractors, members of School Council, visitors, external education providers, students teachers on placement at the School, parents/ guardians and any other adult family members of a student at the school.
School Boarding environment	Any physical, online or virtual space made available or authorised by the School Council for a child enrolled as a boarding student at the Senior Boarding House at 17 College Parade, Kew, or the Dadirri Boarding House at 49 Wellington Street, Kew, to use at any time, including: a) online or virtual school boarding environments (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services); b) other locations provided by School or through a third-party provider for a child enrolled as a boarding student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none">camps;approved homestay accommodation;



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivery of education and training such as RTOs, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school (e.g. Ruyton Girls' School); or • sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.
School Environment	<p>Any of the following physical, online or virtual places, used during or outside school hours:</p> <p>(a) The School's campuses/sites, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Kew campus; • the Marles Playing Fields at Bulleen; • the Outdoor Education sites at Lake Nillahcootie and Licola; <p>(b) online or virtual school environments made available or authorised the School Council for use by a child, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • email; • myTGS; • software applications, collaboration tools and online services; <p>and</p> <p>(c) other locations provided by the School or through a third party provider for a child including, but not limited to, locations used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • camps; • approved homestay accommodation; • delivery of education and training such as RTOs, TAFEs, • non-school senior secondary providers or other schools (e.g. Ruyton Girls' School); • sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events.

Policy Statement

All children and young people who come to Trinity Grammar School have a right to feel and be safe. We are committed to providing a child safe and child friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe and can actively participate in decisions that affect their lives.

We have **zero tolerance** for child abuse and other harm and are committed to acting in students' best interests and keeping them safe from harm.

The School 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 maintaining a child safe culture.



Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

The School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. Child safety is at the forefront of all decision-making at the School.

The School's approach to creating and maintaining a child safe school environment is guided by our mission and values which are published on the School's website.

The School's commitment to child safety is based on the following child safety principles:

- all children have the right to be safe and to feel safe at school;
- the safety and wellbeing of children is paramount;
- child safety is everyone's responsibility;
- the safety of children is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture;
- child safety awareness is openly discussed and promoted within the school community, which includes relevant training for stakeholders.

The diverse needs of students are respected, including students who are Aboriginal, students with a disability, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students who are unable to live at home, international students and LGBTQI+ students.

Children and Young People's Rights to Safety, Information and Participation

Trinity Grammar School is a child safe and child-centred environment that is friendly and welcoming to all children and young people. We actively seek to include students in decisions that affect them.

This includes decisions about organisational planning, delivery of services, management of facilities, and classroom learning and assessment environments.

We ensure students know about their rights to safety, information and participation. We recognise the importance of friendships and support from peers.

We actively seek to understand what makes students feel safe in our organisation and regularly communicate with students about what they can do if they feel unsafe.



Our Child Safety program: Embedding a culture of Child Safety

Our Child Safety program is one of the strategies employed by Trinity Grammar School to embed a culture of child safety at the School. The School is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Safety program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated and that staff, contractors, visitors and volunteers receive regular training on the program. This includes new staff receiving competency-based child safe training as part of their induction and onboarding.

We adopt a risk management approach by identifying key risk indicators and assessing child safety risks based on a range of factors including the nature of our School's activities, physical and online environments and the characteristics of the student body.

Our Child Safety program relates to all aspects of child safety and protecting students from abuse or other harm and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to create and maintain a child safe environment and culture at the School.

The Child Safety program includes policies and procedures that clearly explain processes for:

- responding to and reporting child safety incidents;
- recruiting and screening staff, volunteers and contractors;
- reporting to external agencies;
- ensuring compliance with relevant laws, regulations and standards;
- training requirements and expectations for all stakeholders;
- pastoral care strategies designed to empower students and keep them safe;
- strategies to encourage diversity, inclusion and belonging;
- clear information for what constitutes child abuse and grooming.

Responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns to the school

Our Child Safety program provides detailed guidance for Council members, staff, volunteers and contractors on how to identify key indicators of child abuse and other harm and how to report child safety incidents or concerns internally at the School. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child safety incidents or concerns to relevant external authorities.

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 School community and enabling them to disclose child safety incidents or concerns to the School.



Child Safety Policy

Students at the School are provided with information about, and encouraged to use, multiple pathways to raise child safety incidents or concerns about or at the School. These include informal and formal ways, an 'anonymous' way, and through external child advocacy or child safety organisations.

Parents/carers, family members and other community members who have child safety concerns or who suspect that a child or young person associated with the School may be subject to abuse or other harm can contact the School's Senior Child Safety Leader, Adrian Farrer, by phoning 9854 3633 or emailing principal@trinity.vic.edu.au or, if the concern relates to the Principal, the Chair of School Council via schoolcouncil@trinity.vic.edu.au.

Students, parents/carers, family members and other community members can also raise child safety incidents or concerns through the School's Complaints Handling Policy, available on the School website.

Any person can also contact the Senior Child Safety Leader, or the Chair of School Council if they have concerns regarding the School's leadership in relation to child safety.

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

If you believe a student is at immediate risk of abuse, call 000.

The School's practices are based on the following:

- compliance with mandatory reporting laws and obligations imposed by the criminal law to report a belief that child abuse may have occurred including reporting to the Victoria Police and relevant authorities;
- ensuring any situation is handled appropriately, and that any parties involved in an allegation of child abuse are provided with support and treated fairly and consistently;
- ensuring continuous review and improvement of processes and that they are easily accessible for all persons within the School community including an easy-to-understand process for students.

The School will support and assist children who disclose child abuse, or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse, by:

- ensuring they have access to School support personnel, such as the Counsellors and/or Child Safety Officers;
- ensuring their situation is treated confidentially and with sensitivity;
- providing such other support or assistance as may be reasonable including due consideration for and necessary adjustments in the curriculum and co-curriculum programs.



Child Safety Human Resources Management

The School applies best practice standards in the recruitment and screening of staff, volunteers and contractors. Our recruitment procedures ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to engage the most suitable and appropriate people to work with children and young people. All staff and relevant volunteers and contractors are required to maintain a valid WWCC clearance.

The School ensures that staff, volunteers and contractors undergo child safety induction, and ongoing education and training at least annually as part of our commitment to safeguarding children and young people from harm. They are subject to regular supervision and performance monitoring while engaging with students. The School ensures that professional development programs for staff include child safety education and training programs.

Within these processes, the School gathers, verifies and records information about a person to assess their suitability for child-connected work.

Depending on the work to be undertaken, all or some of the following are required for checking and maintained on an ongoing basis:

- confirming identity e.g. driver's license or other photo identification (upon commencement);
- Working with Children Check (upon commencement and 2 months prior to expiry date);
- VIT teacher registration (upon commencement and annual registration renewals for the duration of the teacher's employment with the School);
- National Police Record Check (upon commencement and 2 months prior to expiry date)
- Personal references that address the persons suitability for the job and working with children (upon commencement);
- child safety statement in advertisements;
- child safety responsibilities in position descriptions;
- child safety questions asked during interviews.

All information required by the School is to be up to date at all times. Any changes are to be communicated to the Human Resources Department.

Child Safety Risk Management

The School recognises the importance of a risk management approach to minimise the potential for child abuse or harm to occur and use this information to inform policies, procedures and activity planning. The School has a comprehensive Risk Management program to assist in the identification, assessment and management of child safety risks in all School environments.



Record Keeping

The School has a Record Keeping policy and is committed to best practice record keeping. In accordance with our policy, and as required by our Policy and Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Abuse, all internal and external reports of child safety incidents and concerns, as well as any other responses by the School are recorded using the Child Safety Incident Reporting Form.

In maintaining records of child safety incidents or concerns, the School maintains confidentiality and privacy for students and families in accordance with federal and state privacy legislation and adheres to Public Record Victoria Recordkeeping Standards, including minimum retention periods.

Cultural Safety for Indigenous Students

The School (which includes the school boarding premises) is committed to establishing a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are respected and valued.

The School has a well-established Dadirri Program and Dadirri Boarding House to support Aboriginal students. The School has developed a Dadirri Program Handbook which details the strategies and actions implemented by the School to ensure that:

- a child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported;
- strategies are embedded within the School (including the school boarding premises) to equip staff, students, volunteers and the School Community to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and students;
- measures are adopted by the School (including the school boarding premises) to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated, and any instances of racism within the School environment or the School boarding environment are addressed with appropriate consequences;
- the School (including the school boarding premises) actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion by Aboriginal children and their families;
- all of the policies, procedures, systems and processes of the School (including the school boarding premises), taken together, create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children and their families.

Further information is provided in the Dadirri Program Handbook.



Student Empowerment

The School ensures that children are informed and empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

The School is committed to ensuring a Program for Student Empowerment which details the strategies and actions implemented by the School to ensure that:

- (a) children are informed about all of their rights, including safety, information and participation;
- (b) the importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children feel safe and feel less isolated;
- (c) staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to express their views, participate in decision making and raise their concerns;
- (d) the School's culture facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children;
- (e) there are opportunities for children to participate, and the School is responsive to their contributions to strengthen confidence and engagement;
- (f) children (including boarding students) have access to sexual abuse prevention programs and relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.

School Community Engagement

The School is committed to ensuring that:

- (a) families participate in decisions related to child safety and wellbeing which affect their child;
- (b) the School engages and openly communicates with families and the School Community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible;
- (c) families and the School Community have a say in the development and review of policies and practices of the School related to child safety and wellbeing;
- (d) families, carers and the School Community are informed about the operations and governance of the School related to child safety and wellbeing.

These commitments apply to the school boarding premises and families of boarding students.

The strategies and actions to facilitate and support the engagement of the School Community are documented in the Community Engagement Policy.

Diversity and Equity

The School strives to ensure that equity is upheld in both policy and practice:

- the School and its staff understand the diverse circumstances of children and provide support and respond to vulnerable children;



- children, staff, volunteers and the School Community have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand;
- particular attention is given to the needs of students with disability, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students who are unable to live at home, neurodiverse students, international students, and LGBTQIA+ students;
- particular attention is given to the needs of Aboriginal students and provides and promotes a culturally safe environment for them (see Dadirri Program Handbook).

These commitments apply to school boarding premises.

The School has developed a suite of policies on diversity, inclusion and belonging which detail the strategies and actions implemented by the School in support of these aims.

Child Safety in Digital and Physical Environments

The School has developed a suite of policies that promote safety and wellbeing in physical and online environments and minimise the risks of harm to children, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Staff Code of Conduct, Staff Professional Boundaries Policy, Mobile Device Policy, Social Media Policy, Technology Acceptable Use Agreement and Student Code of Conduct.

Training and Supervision

Training and education are important to ensure that everyone in the School understands that student safety is everyone's responsibility. The School's culture aims for all staff, volunteers and contractors (in addition to parents/carers and students) to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or student safety concerns.

The School's Leadership Team and Risk and Compliance Team are required to ensure that appropriate guidance and training is provided to members of School Council, School Leadership and Staff, at least annually. Initiatives include (but are not limited to):

- Inductions and regular supervision of new employees, volunteers and contractors to ensure they understand the School's commitment to student safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting students from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards students is safe and appropriate;
- School Council members undertaking annual training during Council meeting/retreat sessions to refresh themselves with their Company Director and School Governance obligations;
- Staff undertaking refresher internal training during Staff Professional Learning days to identify, assess and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse;



- Staff enhancing their skills to continue to protect students from abuse; and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, the cultural safety of students from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, and the safety of students with additional needs or a disability.

Policy and Program Review

Trinity Grammar School is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Safety program. The Program is periodically reviewed for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection related laws, regulations, and standards.

The School is committed to actively seeking, actioning, and incorporating into this Policy, feedback from students, families, the wider School community, staff, volunteers and contractors, and will communicate any adjustments or amendments widely throughout the School community.

Key Child Safety Responsibilities

Each member of the School 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.

The School's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing has been designed to reflect the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

School Council

The School Council is responsible for approving the School's Child Safety program and ensuring that the School has appropriate resources to effectively implement the Child Safety Framework, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations published by the Australian Human Rights Commission, the Victorian Child Safe Standards and our Child Safety program.

The Principal

The Principal is responsible, and will be accountable for, the operational management of the School, and the Child Safety program.

The Principal is also responsible for taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Safety Policy and the School's Child Safety program is implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child safe culture is maintained within the School.



Child Safety Leaders

The School has nominated Child Safety Leaders to support the School's Child Safety program. Child Safety Leaders play a key role in embedding the School's child safe culture, raising awareness of child safety issues, and managing child safety concerns.

School Leadership Team

Each member of the School Leadership Team is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available in their area of operations to allow the School's Child Safety program to be effectively implemented within the School, and to support the Principal in the practical application of the School's child safety strategies, policies, procedures and work systems.

Staff

All staff (including boarding house staff) are required to comply with our Child Safety 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, their VIT registration and/ or Working with Children Check.

It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key indicators of abuse and other harm, to be observant, and to raise all child safety incidents and concerns with one of the School's Child Safety Leaders.

All staff are responsible for ensuring they undertake all required Child Safety compliance training and maintain their compliance.

Volunteers

Most volunteers engaged by the School are engaged in child-connected work. All volunteers at the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the School environment and are required to comply with our Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Codes of Conduct and understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm.

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 concerns with one of the School's Child Safety Leaders.



Contractors

Many, but not all, contractors engaged by the School are engaged in child connected work. All contractors engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in the School environment. They are required to comply with our Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Codes of Conduct. Direct contact and regular contractors are required to understand their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse and other harm. The School may include this requirement in the written agreement between the School and the contractor.

Direct contact and regular contractors include, for example, maintenance and building personnel, consultants, casual teachers, tutors, sports coaches and school cleaners. This also includes music teachers and other extra-curricular teachers and instructors who are engaged by students and their families directly, rather than the School, but have an agreement with the School to use the School's facilities.

External Education Providers

An External Education Provider is any organisation that the School has arranged to deliver a specified course of study that is part of the curriculum, to a student or students enrolled at the School. The delivery of such a course may take place on School premises or elsewhere.

All External Education Providers engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of students in all School environments. All External Education Providers engaged by the School are required by the School to comply with our Child Safety Policy and our Child Safety Codes of Conduct. Trinity Grammar School may include this requirement in the written agreement between the School and the External Education Provider.

Breach of Policy

Where a staff member breaches this Policy, Trinity Grammar School may take disciplinary action that may include (depending on the severity of the breach):

- remedial education;
- counselling;
- increased supervision;
- the restriction of duties;
- notifying the Victorian Institute of Teaching; and/or
- in the case of serious breaches, notification to the relevant child protection authority, suspension or termination of employment or termination of contract of engagement.



Communication

This policy is publicly available on the School's website. It is also available to staff through PolicyConnect and to parents/carers through Trinity Connect.

Related Policies

Child Safety Code of Conduct
Child Safety Leaders Poster
Staff Code of Conduct
Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy
Child Safety Code of Conduct for Boarding Staff
Policy and Procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Abuse
Information and Communication Technology Policy
Technology Acceptable Use Agreement
Mobile Device Policy
Student Code of Conduct
Community Engagement Policy
Dadirri Program Handbook

References

Ministerial Order No. 1359: Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and Boarding Premises
Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005
Education and Training Reform Act 2006
Worker Screening Act 2020