

This Child Safety Code of Conduct (**Code of Conduct**) sets out the expected behaviour of all adults with children and young people in our school.

If you are a non-English speaker who needs help to understand this Code of Conduct, please contact the Head of Faith & Wellbeing.

The Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and students. We take into account the needs of all children and students and ensure that students also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults at Balcombe Grammar School. It promotes child safety and wellbeing in our school environment and provides guidelines on expected standards of behaviour in relation to child safety and wellbeing consistent with our strategies, policies and procedures.

All school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, CSV Board members, Balcombe Consultative Committee members and any other adult involved in child-connected work must follow the Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by students. It also applies during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by Balcombe Grammar School for student use (for example, a school camp). It pays particular attention to balancing the need to identify and mitigate risks in both physical and online school environments with ensuring that student rights to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities are not compromised.

This Code of Conduct also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour and our Online Conduct and Online Safety Policy, also available on our Policy Connect Portal.

This Code of Conduct is publicly available at www.balcombegrammar.vic.edu.au. Additionally, before work commencement, a copy is provided to all school staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, CSV Board members, Balcombe Consultative Committee members and any other adult involved in child-connected work who must follow the Code of Conduct.

To ensure that everyone is supported to embed the Code of Conduct into their daily behaviours, we:

- make sure school staff, contractors and volunteers are aware of the Code of Conduct and how it applies to them
- discuss the Code of Conduct in staff inductions
- raise awareness of the Code of Conduct by:
 - discussing it at school staff meetings
 - communicating about it through school communications
 - displaying the code in common areas (such as the staff room)
- inform parents, carers and other people associated with the school of expected behaviours
- report all suspected or identified breaches of the Code of Conduct via the School's reporting procedures
- reference the Code of Conduct in school employment advertisements and service contracts
- communicate the Code of Conduct to students in an age-appropriate way.

Where school staff, volunteers and contractors at the School have codes of conduct that regulate their profession or occupation, these codes of conduct must also be complied with. Where that person considers there is a conflict between a relevant professional or occupational code of conduct and this Code of Conduct, they must seek advice from the relevant professional or occupational body and/or a Child Safety Champion, and must advise the Principal of their proposed course of action.



Definitions

The following terms in the Code of Conduct have specific definitions (and are consistent with Victorian law where indicated):

Child	<p>Child means a child or young person who is under the age of 18 years.</p> <p>Source: <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)</i></p>
Child abuse	<p>Child abuse includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) any act committed against a child involving: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a sexual offence 2. grooming offences under section 49M(1) of the <i>Crimes Act 1958</i> b) the infliction, on a child, of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. physical violence 2. serious emotional or psychological harm c) the serious neglect of a child including exposure to family violence and its effects. <p>Source: <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)</i></p>
Child-connected work	<p>Child-connected work means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) 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. <p>Source: <i>Ministerial Order 1359</i></p>
Child-related work	<p>Child-related work means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) work at or for a service, body or place, or that involves a specified activity; and b) that usually involves direct contact with a child. <p>Educational institutions are specified for the purpose of a).</p> <p>Source: <i>Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)</i></p>
Child safety	<p>Child safety includes matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse.</p> <p>Source: <i>Ministerial Order 1359</i></p>
Child Safety Champion / Child Safety Officers	<p>Child Safety Champion / Child Safety Officers are appointed by the school as the first point of contact to provide advice and support to children, parents, staff, contractors and volunteers regarding the safety and wellbeing of children when dealing with the school.</p> <p>The role and responsibilities of the Child Safety Champion / Child Safety Officers will include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acting as a point of contact for both staff and students. 2. Taking action when any child protection incidents are reported to them, including providing support to affected members of the school community. 3. Being responsible for reviewing the school's processes and procedures to respond to allegations or disclosures. <p>The responsibilities of the Child Safety Champion are outlined at Guidance for child safety champions.</p>
Direct contact	<p>Direct contact in relation to child-related work, means any contact between a person and a child that involves-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • physical contact; or • face to face contact; or • contact by post or other written communication; or

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • contact by telephone or other oral communication; or • contact by email or other electronic communication. <p>Source: <i>Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)</i></p>
Grooming	<p>Grooming is when a person engages in predatory conduct to prepare a child or young person for sexual activity at a later time.</p> <p>Grooming can include communicating or attempting to befriend or establish a relationship or other emotional connection with the child or their parent or carer.</p> <p>Source: Child Safe Standards Definitions (https://www.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards-definitions)</p>
School environment	<p>School environment means any of the following physical, online or virtual places, used during or outside school hours:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A campus of the school Online or virtual school environments made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child or student (including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools, and online services) Other locations provided by the school or through a third-party provider for a child or student to use including, but not limited to, locations used for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> camps delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers or another school; or sporting events, excursions, competitions or other events. <p>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</p>
School governing authority	<p>School governing authority means:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor; the governing body for a school (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of a school or the <i>Education Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic)</i>; or the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the <i>Education Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic)</i>. <p>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</p>
School staff	<p>School staff in a non-Government school means an individual working in a school environment who is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 a minister of religion, a religious leader or an employee or officer of a religious body associated with the school. <p>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</p>
Student	<p>Student means a person who is enrolled at or attends the school.</p> <p>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</p>
Volunteer	<p>Volunteer means a person who performs work without remuneration or reward for the school in the school environment.</p> <p>Source: Ministerial Order 1359</p>

Acceptable Behaviours

As Balcombe Grammar staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:



- upholding our commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- treating students and families in our school community with respect in our school environment and outside our school environment as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they disclose that they or another child or student has been abused or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or student
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTQIA+) students
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to our Head of Faith and Wellbeing
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and Procedures, including following the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#)
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) is/are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable Behaviours

As Balcombe Grammar staff, volunteers, contractors and members of our school community involved in child-connected work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts)
- display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context
- ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance
- treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to schoolwork or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child or student in a school environment except in accordance with the [Photographing and Video Policy](#) or where required for duty of care purposes
- consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present

As Balcombe Grammar, school staff, volunteers, contractors and members of our school community, involved in child-connected work we must not:

- have contact with any student outside of school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought. As we are a school based on faith and community involvement there are times that you may engage outside of school due to family friendships, sporting or community associations. These should be conducted in accordance with our code of conduct and regular ongoing contact reported to the school for capture in our contact register for awareness and ongoing review by our Leadership.

The above behaviours are not exhaustive. For example, some behaviours may depend upon the student's age, developmental stage or special needs.

The Balcombe Grammar's Child Safety Program also includes a Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy that provides detailed guidance for all adults on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

All Balcombe Grammar School staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-connected work who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

This includes (but is not limited to) the following actions depending on the nature of the relationship and the breach:

- remedial education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- restriction of duties
- appointment to an alternate role
- suspension
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of the employment, contract or engagement.

Breaches of this Code of Conduct may be reported in accordance with Balcombe Grammar School's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures, and Child Safety Risk Register.

In instances where a 'reportable allegation' has been made in accordance with the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)*, the matter will be managed in accordance with the Department of Education and Training Reportable Conduct Scheme and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct must be reported to the principal and Head of Faith and Wellbeing.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact Executive Director Corporate Services.

Child Safety and Wellbeing Review

Balcombe Grammar School is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Safety Program. We have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child safety related laws, regulations and standards:

- the Principal and Head of Faith and Wellbeing is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety Code of Conduct at least every two years or after any significant child safety incident, including seeking input from students, parents and carers and the School community
- we record and analyse all complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to identify causes and systemic failures and inform continuous improvement
- we act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our School community.



Approval

Created date	12 August, 2022
Consultation	Consultative Committee – to be discussed at meeting in Term 4, 2022 Student Representative Group – to be discussed at meeting in Term 4, 2022
Endorsed by	CSV Board
Endorsed on	7 September 2022
Next review date	7 September 2024

This document was current as at 07/09/2022 AEST time. Updates to content may have been made since this date. Refer to your policy site for the latest version.

This content was last updated on 07/09/2022 AEST time.