



POLICY STATEMENT:

Ballarat Grammar has developed the following Child Protection and Safety Policy. This policy is an overarching document that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse.

The policy forms the foundation of the School's procedures, practices, decision-making processes and ultimately the School's culture with respect to child safety.

It is designed to be published on our public website as well as communicated through other mediums such as newsletters, our annual report and in induction and welcome packs for Board of Directors directors, Staff and Volunteers.

The School's Child Protection and Safety Policy has been approved and endorsed by the School's Board of Directors and is regularly reviewed by the Board.

The protection of all children is in accordance with any applicable State and Commonwealth laws and staff are advised of their obligations under those laws.

Ballarat Grammar is committed to zero tolerance of child abuse in every form. All staff and members of our community have a duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of all children in their care.

As a school with a diverse population, this includes students with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Rationale –

In accordance with Ministerial Order 870 "Child Safe Standards" – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools – Ballarat Grammar endeavours to provide a safe school environment (see Appendix 1 – School Environments for an overview of these across the School) and has clear procedures for a culture of child safety. Broader Safety issues arising from our common law duty of care are dealt with through our student duty of care statements and risk management procedures.

Part 1- Objectives

1. This policy provides the framework for:
 - 1.1 the development of work systems, practices, policies and procedures that promote child protection within the School;
 - 1.2 the creation of a positive and robust child protection culture;
 - 1.3 the promotion and open discussion of child protection issues within the School; and
 - 1.4 compliance with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Victoria.





Part 2- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

1. Child abuse includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and a child's exposure to family violence. Ballarat Grammar is committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse and demonstrates this commitment through the implementation of a comprehensive Child Protection Program designed to keep children safe.
2. At Ballarat Grammar we have a zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to acting in children's best interests and keeping them safe from harm. The School regards its child protection 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.
3. Ballarat Grammar's child protection action is made up of work systems, practices, policies and procedures designed to maintain a child-safe environment and to embed an organisational culture of child safety within the whole school community.

Part 3- Child Safe Values and Principles

1. Every child at Ballarat Grammar has the right to be safe and the welfare and best interests of the child are to be of utmost importance. We continue to achieve this by:
 - 1.1 respecting the views of each child and their privacy;
 - 1.2 outlining clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children, in our Child Safety Code of Conduct and Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy;
 - 1.3 providing and creating a school culture that supports the safety for each child within our care;
 - 1.4 promoting child safety awareness for all members of our community along with open discussions about child protection issues;
 - 1.5 ensuring Children from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds have access to special care and support including those who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander;
 - 1.6 ensuring Children who have any kind of disability have access to special care and support;
 - 1.7 ensuring that all members of the School Community understand that Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility;
 - 1.8 ensuring appropriate procedures are in place to screen all staff, Direct Contact Volunteers**, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers who come into contact with our students. (Refer to our Child Safe recruitment practices in Part 6- Staff Selection below);
 - 1.9 ensuring mandatory training for all members of the Board of Directors, Ballarat Grammar staff, BGS Educational Services, and members of the Foundation;
 - 1.10 clear and easily accessible procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse; and
 - 1.11 complying with all laws, regulations and standards relevant to child protection in Victoria.

**** Direct Contact Volunteers are those 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 Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic) defines 'direct contact' as any contact between a person and a child (aged under 18) that involves:

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

Examples of Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include volunteers involved in School camps and excursions, coaching sporting teams or assisting in learning activities.

Part 4- Child Protection Program

1. Ballarat Grammar is committed to the effective implementation of our Child Protection Program and ensuring that it is appropriately reviewed and updated. 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 the School's activities, physical and online environments and the characteristics of the student body.
2. Our Child Protection Program relates to all aspects of protecting children from abuse and establishes work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children from abuse.
3. Creation and maintenance of Ballarat Grammar's child-safe environment and culture occurs through:
 - 3.1 Clear information to all stakeholders as to what constitutes child abuse and associated key risk indicators;
 - 3.2 Education and support for responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse;
 - 3.3 Strategies to support, encourage and enable staff, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, parents and students to understand, identify, discuss and report child protection matters;
 - 3.4 Recruiting procedures that ensure robust screening of all those engaged in work at Ballarat Grammar;
 - 3.5 Procedures for reporting reportable conduct and/or misconduct;
 - 3.6 Embedded education in our curriculum and wellbeing pastoral care program designed to empower students and keep them safe;
 - 3.7 Policies with respect to cultural diversity and students with disabilities;
 - 3.8 Continuous professional development for all embedding the understanding that child safety is the responsibility of every member of staff at Ballarat Grammar;
 - 3.9 Information regarding the steps to take after a disclosure of abuse to protect, support and assist children;
 - 3.10 Guidelines with respect to record keeping and confidentiality;
 - 3.11 Policies to ensure compliance with all relevant laws, regulations and standards (including the Victorian Child Safe Standards); and
 - 3.12 A system for continuous review and improvement.
 - 3.13 All staff are to wear name tags and all visitors to the School must sign in at reception.
 - 3.14 Where appropriate gates will be locked during the day by using a keypad operation.
 - 3.15 Areas where line of sight is obscured will be evaluated for risk factors.





- 3.16 Staff should always place themselves in an appropriate location, so they are not in isolation with a child.
- 3.17 Continued due diligence will be managed through the School's Risk Management Matrix.
- 3.18 Close monitoring of student attendance is required in all areas of the School
4. The School environment encompasses continual monitoring of the School environments through the Risk Management Committee occurs on a regular basis and a risk analysis and management plan must be conducted for all off campus activities.
5. The School's Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines acceptable and unacceptable behaviour when dealing with students and young people in our care. Regular reminders and updates will be provided to all members of our community using the School's various communication resources. This will allow for the monitoring and adherence to the policy or statements appropriate.
6. As a part of Ballarat Grammar's induction process, all staff and Direct Contact Volunteers are required to complete a selection of training modules on the content of our Child Protection Program.
7. All staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Board of Directors directors are provided with additional, ongoing child protection training at least annually.
8. Staff, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers are supported and supervised by the School's Child Protection Officers to ensure that they are compliant with the School's approach to child protection.

Part 5- Responsibilities

1. Society as a whole shares responsibility for promoting the safety and protection of children from abuse. In the School context, all members of the School community have their role to play – teachers, staff, parents/carers, volunteers and students. That said, the School's senior staff team are committed to 'leading from the front' and engaging in a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child protection issues.
2. Students are encouraged to take an active role in developing and maintaining a child safe environment at the School and are provided with opportunities to contribute and give feedback in the development of the School's policies and practices. Students are also made aware of the avenues available to them to report or disclose abuse or concerns for their safety or the safety of others.
3. At Ballarat Grammar all directors of the Board of Directors and staff, as well as Volunteers, have a shared responsibility for contributing to the safety and protection of children. Specific responsibilities include:
 - 3.1 **Board of Directors-** Each director of the Board of Directors is required to ensure that appropriate resources are made available to allow the School's Child Protection and Safety Policy and the Child Protection Program to be effectively implemented within the School and are responsible for holding the Headmaster and senior staff team accountable for effective implementation.
 - 3.2 **The Headmaster-** The Headmaster is responsible, and will be accountable for, taking all practical measures to ensure that this Child Protection and Safety Policy and the School's Child Protection Program are implemented effectively and that a strong and sustainable child protection culture is maintained within the School.
 - 3.3 **The School's Child Protection Officers-** A number of senior staff members are nominated as the School's Child Protection Officers. Our Child Protection Officers receive additional specialised training with respect to child protection issues. They





are the first point of contact for raising child protection concerns within the School. They are also responsible for championing child protection within the School and assisting in coordinating responses to child protection incidents.

- 3.4 **Staff Members-** All staff are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of the key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Protection Officers.
- 3.5 **Direct Contact Volunteers-** All Direct Contact Volunteers, as defined in this policy, are required to be familiar with the content of our Child Protection and Safety Policy, our Child Protection Program and their legal obligations with respect to the reporting of child abuse. It is each individual's responsibility to be aware of key risk indicators of child abuse, to be observant, and to raise any concerns they may have relating to child abuse with one of the School's Child Protection Officers.
- 3.6 **Indirect Contact Volunteers-** Indirect Contact Volunteers (or Indirect Volunteers) are those Volunteers who are involved in provide support and services whilst not directly assisting a specific group of students. Examples of Indirect Contract Volunteer activities may include assisting with School administrative functions.
- 3.7 **Third Party Contractors-** All Third-Party Contractors (service providers) engaged by the School are responsible for contributing to the safety and protection of children in the School environment. Third Party 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.
- 3.8 **Direct Contact Contractors-** Direct Contact Contractors are:
- those who have direct contact** with students during the normal course of their work;
 - those who may be in a position to establish a relationship of trust with a student notwithstanding that unsupervised access to students would be rare (for example full-time maintenance personnel); and
 - any contractors whom a school is legally required to screen.

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

Examples of Direct Contact Volunteer activities may include volunteers involved in School camps and excursions, coaching sporting teams or assisting in learning activities.



- 3.9 **Indirect Contact Contractors-** Indirect Contact Contractors are those contractors who do not meet the definition of 'Direct Contact Contractor'. All service providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program. The School may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the service provider.
- 3.10 **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 children in the School environment. All External Education Providers engaged by the School are required by the School to be familiar with our Child Protection and Safety Policy and our Child Protection Program. Ballarat Grammar may include this requirement in the written agreement between it and the External Education Provider.

Part 6- Staff Selection

1. Ballarat Grammar endeavours to ensure that the selection process for recruitment of new staff and volunteers is rigorous in regard to an applicant's suitability to undertake child-connected work. This procedure outlines the steps involved in the recruitment process that ensure natural justice for all applicants seeking employment or voluntary work at the School.
2. Procedures
 - 2.1. **Position Descriptions-** As each employment vacancy arises, the position description undergoes a review and includes the statement emphasising zero tolerance (in bold on page one of this document). Details of essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety will also be included. Position descriptions will be available to all applicants, both electronically via the website and in hard copy by request.
 - 2.2. **Shortlisting of Applicants-** Shortlisted applicants will be asked to confirm that they have read and understood the position description in the first instance and that they understand the child safety practices and code of conduct of the School. Background searches will be conducted using, for example, Google, Facebook and LinkedIn. Applicants will be asked to provide the contact details of at least two referees, a current or most recent employer and a direct supervisor/manager.
 - 2.3. **Interview Process-** Interviewees will be advised that the selection process will involve a rigorous background check. Proof of current Victorian Institution of Teaching (VIT) registration or a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) will be required, as well as proof of qualifications, including original transcripts, and registrations, as appropriate. The interview panel will emphasise that all staff are required to have the duty of care to protect the safety, health and wellbeing of all children in their care at all times. Any apparent gaps in the employment history of an interviewee will be thoroughly investigated.
 - 2.4. **Reference Checks-** Reference checks will include:
 - 2.4.1. Confirmation that previous employment details provided by the interviewee are accurate;
 - 2.4.2. Questions regarding any direct supervision of children by the interviewee in their current or previous employment;





- 2.4.3. Asking the referee if they would employ the interviewee again; and
- 2.4.4. Shortlisted applicants are required to submit two forms of personal identification, and the HR Co-ordinator will ensure that names and addresses are the same as those provided by the applicant
- 2.5. **Interviews-** The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right person for Ballarat Grammar and in identifying any people who may pose a risk to students in our care.
 - 2.5.1. The interview process should include sufficient time to plan and prepare for the interview, forming the panel with the right mix of staff experience and skills to carry out the interview, ensuring that all panel members are clear on what the position requires. An open-ended style of behavioural-based questioning should enable the interviewers to assess the applicant's values, attitudes and understanding of professional boundaries and accountability. Some useful questions may include:
 - 2.5.1.1. 'Tell us about why you want to work with children?'
 - 2.5.1.2. 'Describe a time when you had to manage a child whose behaviour you found challenging?'
 - 2.5.1.3. 'Tell us about a time when you had to comfort a distressed child?'
 - 2.5.2. Staff are encouraged to take notice of their own thoughts and feelings when interacting with the applicant. Ask for more information if the applicant does not provide sufficient information in his or her responses.
 - 2.5.3. Did you notice any warning signs such as:
 - 2.5.3.1. Unexplained lengthy gaps in employment history;
 - 2.5.3.2. The applicant says they do not value or 'need' supervision; and/or
 - 2.5.3.3. The applicant is evasive or inconsistent in their answers.
- 2.6. **Employment Contract-** Each letter of offer and letter of acceptance contains the statement emphasising zero tolerance. New staff sign the letter of acceptance to acknowledge their acceptance of the position and the expectations of the School, in particular, in relation to child safety. This includes a six-month review on all aspects of their role.
- 2.7. **New Staff Induction-** The Director of Staff introduces new staff to all aspects and expectations of the School. This includes directing them to the Staff Portal as an important source of information about what is required of all staff, particularly a thorough understanding of policies and procedures, including child safe standards. All staff will continue to be educated on their role in ensuring Ballarat Grammar remains committed to zero tolerance for child abuse.
- 2.8. **Financial Induction-** All new staff are required to undertake a financial induction and medical health check. This induction involves the staff member working through a check list that they sign and submit to the relevant area manager following this induction. The check list includes a list of particular policies that they must be aware of and adhere to, including the Child Protection Policy.
- 2.9. **Volunteers-** Refer to the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct. Proof of current Working with Children certification is required and a check list must be signed and submitted to acknowledge that the Child Protection Policy has been read and understood.



Part 7- Reporting Child Protection Concerns

1. Our Child Protection Program provides detailed guidance for directors of the Board of Directors, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our School's nominated Child Protection Officers. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.
2. Staff, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, Volunteers, students, parents/guardians and other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse or grooming are asked to contact the School's Senior Child Protection Officer, Mark Warwick, by emailing Mark.Warwick@bgs.vic.edu.au or phoning 03 5338 0846.
3. Communications will be treated confidentially on a "need to know basis".
4. **Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000.**

Part 8- Policy & Program Review

1. Ballarat Grammar is committed to the continuous improvement of our Child Protection Program. The Program is regularly reviewed for overall effectiveness and to ensure compliance with all child protection related laws, regulations and standards.
2. The School has communicated to the School community, including the School board, about how it has put the child safety strategies into practice and the changes that are being made by:
 - 2.1 Publishing information on the School's website;
 - 2.2 Making parents aware via the School newsletter;
 - 2.3 Providing information in School information sessions;
 - 2.4 Making staff aware during professional development days;
 - 2.5 Email notification;
 - 2.6 Staff employment inductions; and
 - 2.7 Student pastoral care sessions.
3. It is the responsibility of the Senior Child Protection Officer to regularly monitor and review the effectiveness of the Child Protection and Safety Policy to ensure it is working in practice and revise the policy when required.

Part 9- Breach of Policy

1. All staff employed by Ballarat Grammar are expected to enact all policies in support of student and community learning, health, safety and wellbeing.



Appendix 1 – School Environments

	<u>CEEd</u>	JS	MT ROWAN	SS	CITY CITE	WCPA	BOARDING House
Teachers/CRT	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Teacher Assistants	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
After Care Staff	●	●	●			●	
Camp Aust Staff	●	●	●	□		●	
Maintenance staff	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Transport staff & other drivers	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Health Ctr Staff	●	●	●	●		●	●
Music Staff	●	●	●	●		●	●
Admin Staff	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
BG Ed Services Staff	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Farm staff	●	●	●	●		●	●
Parent helpers	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
GAP students	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
PST	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Visitors	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Family	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Private Tutors		●	●	●	●	●	●
VCAL				●		●	●
Canteen helpers/Kitchen	●	●	●	●		●	●
Indigenous Program		●	●	●		●	●
Work Experience	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Exam Invigilators				●		●	
Swimming Instructors	□	●	●	●			
School Competitions		●	●	●		●	
Sport		●	●	●			●
Contractors/Sub-contractors	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Careers Expo		●		●		●	
Community Service		●	●	●		●	●
Board of Directors	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Exchanges		●	●	●	●	●	●
Guardians		●	●	●		●	●
Emergency Services	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Home Stay		●		●	●	●	●
External Users		●	●	●	●	●	●
Virtual		●	●	●	●	●	●
International trips		●	●	●	●	●	●
Psychologist appointments		●	●	●	●	●	●
SBA/VET External placements				●		●	●
OEG/Outdoor Ed/Camps		●	●	●		●	●
Excursion venues	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Incursion staff/visitors	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Public transport	●	●	●	●			●
Health Appointments	●	●	●	●	●		●