

Child Safe Protection Code of Conduct



MERENDA HILLS
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

RATIONALE

Gilson College provides a values-based education which focuses on the development of the whole child and where the home and school work together harmoniously to provide this education. In this context, there is a legislative and moral imperative that there is a zero tolerance for any forms of child abuse and where the school through its teachers provides duty of care, and further takes every precaution to avoid abuse happening.

To ensure the health, safety and overall wellbeing of all students, Gilson College complies with the original Child Safe Standards, introduced in 2016 by Ministerial Order 870, and will comply with the newly released 2021 Standards due for implementation by July 1, 2022.

This Code of Conduct, which is particularly connected with Standard 3 of the original 2016 Child Safe Standards, detailed in Ministerial Order 870. The Code outlines the expected standards for appropriate behaviour with and in the company of children in the school environment.

It is also linked with 2021 Child Safe Standard 6: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice; Child Safe Standard 8: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training and Child Safe Standard 11: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

This Code of Conduct is provided for staff to ensure appropriate behaviour with children at Gilson College and to protect children from abuse. It does not replace any legislative or regulatory obligations or other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular staff at the School. For example, the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics provides clarity regarding professional behaviour expected of teachers at all times.

SCOPE

In accordance with the ethos of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (VIC) Ltd (ASV), and to comply with Ministerial Order 870, this Child Safe Protection Code of Conduct is to be adhered to by members of the Gilson College community, including:

1. The Gilson College Council
2. The Senior Leadership team of the school
3. Teachers and all other staff members
4. College students who are 18+ years old
5. Volunteers
6. International Student Homestay Parents/Families, including all adults in these homes

7. Contractors; and
8. Other visitors to School's campuses.

IMPLEMENTATION

Appropriate Behaviour

All staff, volunteers, and other adults within the Gilson College community, including College students who are 18+ years old, are required to observe Child Safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children and young people 17 years of age and under, as noted below.

All personnel of the School are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, and wellbeing of children by:

1. adhering to the College *Child Safe Protection Policy* at all times and upholding the College *Child Safe Statement of Commitment* to child safety at all times
2. taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse of any type
3. treating everyone with dignity and respect
4. listening and responding to the views and concerns of children and young people, particularly if they are reporting or disclosing that they or another child have been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
5. guarding the cultural safety, dignity, participation and advancement of children who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
6. guarding the cultural safety, dignity, participation and advancement of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
7. guarding the safety, dignity, participation and advancement of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
8. guarding the safety, dignity, participation and advancement of all vulnerable children
9. ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
10. reporting any allegations of child abuse to authorities such as police and DFFH – Child Protection, Child First, and the Gilson College Child Protection Officers and Leadership team.
11. if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren)/young person/people is/are safe
12. supporting children and young people to actively participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially concerning issues that are important to them.

Inappropriate Behaviour

Staff, and other adults within the Gilson College community, including College students who are 18+ years old, volunteers, contractors, consultants, stakeholders and other personnel **must not:**

1. ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.
2. develop any special relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
3. exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
4. put children or young people at risk of abuse of any type
5. do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
6. engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children or young people (for example, personal social activities)
7. use inappropriate language in the presence of children or young people

8. express inappropriate personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children or young people
9. discriminate against any child or young person because of culture, race, ethnicity, gender, or disability
10. have uninvited (by parent/carer) contact with a child young person or their family outside of our organisation. Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate
11. have any personal online or other electronic contact with a child or young person, or their (students') family members, via social media platforms, or by phone. (Official College sponsored networking websites, platforms and phone communications excepted.)

Acknowledgement

By observing these standards, you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this Child Safe Protection Code of Conduct to the College/ASV leadership.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse, phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Child Safe Protection Code of Conduct.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

This code of conduct was shared with Taylors Hill staff in Oct 2021

This code of conduct was shared with Mernda staff in Oct 2021

This code of conduct was checked by ADCOM Sept 2021

This code of conduct was ratified by the College Council Oct 2021

This code of conduct was updated Sept 2021

This code of conduct is due for review in Sept 2023