

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

Proprietor	Global Village Learning Ltd (ABN 52 090 773 470)
School	Global Village Learning, New Gisborne Campus
Policy owner	Board of Directors
Responsible officer	Principal, with Campus Lead for day-to-day implementation
Date adopted	30 August 2024 (reviewed March 2026)
Review cycle	Every two years
Next review	March 2028
Regulatory context	Ministerial Order No. 1359; Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic); Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic); Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic); Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

1. Purpose

The Global Village Learning Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our school's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

This Policy provides an overview of our school's approach to implementing Ministerial Order No. 1359 which sets out how the Victorian Child Safe Standards apply in school environments.

It informs our school community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of young people across all areas of our work.

2. Scope

This Policy:

- applies to all school staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with young people. It also applies to school board members where indicated.
- applies in all physical and online school environments used by young people during or outside of school hours, including other locations provided for a young person's use, such as a school camp, and those provided through third-party providers
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and codes, listed in the Related Policies section below.

3. Statement of commitment to child safety

Global Village Learning is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our young people are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and young people.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to young people in our school environments.

We promote positive relationships between young people and adults and between young people and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal young people, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international young people, young people with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+, and other young people experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting young people based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, is not tolerated at our school.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our school has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our young people, families, staff and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 School leadership team

Our school leadership team, comprising the Executive Director, Campus Lead and Hub Leaders, is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented in accordance with Ministerial Order No. 1359.

The Executive Director and Campus Lead will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of young people, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all young people are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between young people and adults, and between young people
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the school community including at leadership team meetings, staff meetings and school board meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff and volunteers to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, young person wellbeing and prevention of, and responding to, abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

4.2 School staff and volunteers

All staff and volunteers will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the school, and always follow the school's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures, including following the Four Critical Actions for Schools

- ensure young people's views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of young people.

4.3 School Board

In performing the functions and powers given to them under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic), school board members will:

- champion and promote a child safe culture with the broader school community
- ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at school board meetings
- undertake annual training on child safety
- approve updates to, and act in accordance with, the Child Safety Code of Conduct to the extent that it applies to school board employees and members.

At Global Village Learning, school board employment duties are delegated to the Executive Director who is bound by this Policy.

4.4 Specific staff child safety responsibilities

Global Village Learning has nominated a Child Safety Champion to support the Executive Director and Campus Lead to implement our child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training.

The Executive Director, Campus Lead and Child Safety Champion are the first points of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

The Campus Lead is responsible for monitoring the school's compliance with this Policy. Anyone in our school community should approach the Campus Lead if they have any concerns about the school's compliance with this Policy.

The Campus Lead is responsible for informing the school community about this Policy and making it publicly available.

Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures, and the Child Safety Risk Register.

Our school has established a Child Safety and Wellbeing Team and a Young Person Reference Group on child safety. The Child Safety and Wellbeing Team meet regularly to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safety and wellbeing. The Young Person Reference Group provides an opportunity for young people to provide input into school strategies.

Our Risk Management Committee monitors the Child Safety Risk Register.

5. Child Safety Code of Conduct

The Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and young people. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that young people also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults in the school.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

6. Managing risks to child safety and wellbeing

At our school we identify, assess and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online school environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices, and in our activity-specific risk registers, such as those developed for off-site overnight camps, adventure activities, and facilities and services contracted through third-party providers.

Our Child Safety Risk Register is used to record identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Our school leadership team monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

7. Establishing a culturally safe environment

At Global Village Learning we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe school where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every young person can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal young people, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety, and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal young people and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our school planning, policies and activities.

We adopt the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our school community:

- equip staff, young people, 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 young people
- adopt measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted and not tolerated
- address any instances of racism within the school environment with appropriate consequences
- actively support participation and inclusion in the school by Aboriginal children, young people and their families
- ensure school policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families
- develop and endorse a policy or statement detailing the strategies and actions the school will take.

8. Young person empowerment

To support child safety and wellbeing at Global Village Learning, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages young people and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between young people are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support in the school to ensure a sense of belonging through the following strategies:

- inform children and young people about all their rights, including to safety, information and participation
- recognise the importance of friendships and encourage support from peers to help young people feel safe and be less isolated
- attune staff and volunteers to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns
- develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people
- provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and for the school to be responsive to their contributions to strengthen confidence and engagement.

9. Family engagement

Our families and the school community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Global Village Learning we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our school's child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices and encourage them to raise any concerns and ideas for improvement. We do this by:

- seeking input from families and the community through Compass, the school website, newsletters, other communications, school board, young person, staff and parent meetings
- making all of our child safety policies and procedures available for young people and parents via our school website
- providing updates in newsletters and Compass news items to inform families and the school community about any significant updates to our child safety policies or processes, and strategies or initiatives that we are taking to ensure young person safety
- displaying PROTECT Child Safety posters across the school.

10. Diversity and equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our young people, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international young people
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

11. Suitable staff and volunteers

At Global Village Learning, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training and supervision practices to ensure that all staff, contractors and volunteers are suitable to work with children.

11.1 Guide recruitment

When recruiting Guides, we follow the Global Village Learning Staff Recruitment Policy. When engaging Guides to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications, the person's history of working with children, and references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

11.2 Guide induction

All newly appointed Guides will participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct

- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedures
- any other child safety and wellbeing information that school leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

11.3 Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This is done through regular Guide PLP Meetings and coaching conversations with senior leadership.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with our school policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

11.4 Suitability of volunteers

All volunteers are required to comply with the Child Safety Code of Conduct and the Volunteer Policy, which describes how we assess the suitability of prospective volunteers and outlines expectations in relation to child safety and wellbeing induction and training, and supervision and management.

12. Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training is delivered at least annually and includes guidance on:

- the school's child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices
- completing the Protecting Children – Mandatory Reporting and Other Legal Obligations online module annually
- recognising indicators of child harm, including harm caused by other children and young people
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

13. School Board training and education

To ensure the school board is equipped with the knowledge required to make decisions in the best interests of young person safety and wellbeing, and to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in our school environment, the board is trained at least annually. 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 school environment
- Global Village Learning child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes and practices.

14. Complaints and reporting processes

Global Village Learning fosters a culture that encourages staff, volunteers, young people, parents and the school community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the Code of Conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding, documented in our Complaints and Grievance Policy. The Complaints and Grievance Policy is available on our school website.

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers, including school board employees, must follow the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures. As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant school staff have been informed, we ensure our school follows:

- the Four Critical Actions for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child
- the Four Critical Actions: Young Person Sexual Offending for complaints and concerns relating to young person sexual offending.

Our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Bullying Prevention Policy cover complaints and concerns relating to young person physical violence or other harmful behaviours.

15. Communications

Global Village Learning is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website, including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct, and Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- displaying PROTECT posters around the school
- updates in our school newsletter, Compass and school website
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school leadership meetings, staff meetings and school board meetings.

16. Privacy and information sharing

Global Village Learning collects, uses and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws and other relevant laws.

17. Records management

We acknowledge that good records management practices are a critical element of child safety and wellbeing and manage our records in accordance with our Data Management Policy.

18. Review of child safety practices

At Global Village Learning, we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures and practices.

We will:

- review and improve this Policy every two years or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns and safety incidents to improve policy and practice

- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with school staff and our school community.

19. Related policies and procedures

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related school policies, procedures and codes. These can be found on our school website and include:

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Complaints and Grievance Policy
- Data Management Policy
- Digital Learning Policy
- Gender and Diversity Policy
- Procurement Policy
- Staff Recruitment Policy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Supervision and Duty of Care Policy
- Visitor Policy
- Volunteer Policy.

Endorsement

Endorsement by Board	March 2026
Review date	March 2026
Next review date	March 2028