



**CLYDE**  
GRAMMAR

## Student Participation and Empowerment Policy and Procedures

### Rationale

Clyde Grammar has a definitive ethos, which is to deliver exceptional, high quality, affordable education, embedded with Christian faith and values.

At Clyde Grammar, our passionate, dedicated staff acknowledge the importance of providing a safe stimulating environment where children are excited to come to school every day and eager to learn in a safe and nurturing environment.

Our key objective is to provide rich, engaging learning experiences in accordance with the Victorian Curriculum, that cater for the person needs and growth of each individual child.

CSV and **Clyde Grammar** are committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and participation of all children and young people under our care.

The Clyde Grammar Board, the School's governing authority, has approved Clyde Grammar School's Student Participation and Empowerment Policy and Procedures, as set out in the Policy Administration section, below.

To be a child safe environment, the School must enable and empower students to understand their rights and to participate in all the different decisions that affect them, not just those relating to child safety and wellbeing. Standard 3 of the Victorian Child Safe Standards is that children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

To implement this Standard, Ministerial Order 1359 places specific obligations on the Clyde Grammar Board to ensure that:

- the School informs students about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation
- the School recognises the importance of friendships and encourages support from peers
- the School's Staff and Volunteers are aware of the signs of harm, and facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns
- the School have strategies to develop a culture that facilitates participation and responds to students' input
- the School provides opportunities for students to participate and is responsive to their contributions.

### Aim

Clyde Grammar has developed a suite of policies including our Student Participation and Empowerment Policy that provides key elements of our approach to protecting children from abuse. It forms the foundation of the School's procedures, practices, decision-making processes and ultimately the School's culture with respect to child safety.

Clyde Grammar places a high priority on promoting the empowerment of our students and their participation in all decisions that affect them, not just those relating to child safety and wellbeing. Establishing an environment of trust and inclusion at the School enables students to speak up if they have concerns.

Clyde Grammar recognises that students may not disclose child safety incidents or concerns to the School because they:

- do not recognise behaviours as inappropriate, abusive or grooming behaviour; or
- do not know how to raise their concerns or make a complaint.

Having simple and accessible information for students about inappropriate behaviours and about the School's reporting and responding processes assists all students to develop the appropriate knowledge and skills to identify and communicate when they do not feel safe.

This Policy and its Procedures set out the policies, procedures, strategies and practices that the School uses to encourage the participation and empowerment of all students, to establish a child-friendly culture in which students are respected and taken seriously, to promote friendship and encourage peer support, and to provide opportunities for students to participate in decisions that affect them and to respond to their contributions.

### Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers and contractors of Clyde Grammar, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people.

### Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Child Safety Principles

- All personnel of Clyde Grammar are responsible for supporting the safety of children by adherence to all child safe standards and obligations outlined by the Department of Education and Training (PROTECT), to ensure behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.
- Clyde Grammar should be a safe, inclusive and supportive environment that involves and communicates with children, young people and their parents/carers. The school is committed to supporting and encouraging students to use their voice to raise and share their concerns with a trusted adult at any time of need. The school will promote the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly to children, per the **School Curriculum**.
- By embedding a child safe culture, Clyde Grammar ensures that risks to Child Safety are identified early, and steps are taken to address and reduce such risks, both in the physical environment and online environments.
- Regular, ongoing training and education are important to ensure that everyone at Clyde Grammar understands stated policies and procedures, how to identify child abuse, and the steps to be taken where a child's safety is at risk.

Clyde Grammar School are committed to ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and participation of all children and young people under our care. We have zero tolerance for child abuse.

Clyde Grammar Board have a moral, legal and mission-driven responsibility to create nurturing school environments where children and young people are respected and their voices heard, and where they are safe and feel safe.

Ministerial Order 1359, the Clyde Grammar Statement of Commitment to Child Safety set out the principles that guide the Clyde Grammar Board in the development and regular review of the Student Participation and Empowerment Policy and Procedures.

### Principles of Participation

The following three key principles underpin the School's approach to participation of students in decisions at or by the School that affect them:

- Empowerment: which involves students having greater control or say over their lives through participation.
- Purposeful Engagement: which involves students taking on valued roles, addressing issues that are relevant to them, and influencing real outcomes.
- Inclusiveness: which involves ensuring that all students are able to participate.

## Implementation

This Policy and its Procedures are made available to all Staff, Volunteers, and Contractors, via the School's intranet. They are included in induction training and in ongoing refresher training for Staff and relevant Volunteers and Contractors. For more information, refer to **Child Safeguarding Training and Supervision Policy and Procedures**.

They are also available in hard copy by request.

## Definitions

Of particular importance to this Policy and its Procedures are the following key definition:

| Term                           | Definition  |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Decisions that affect students | Of particular relevance to this Policy and its Procedures is the requirement that students are able to participate in decisions that affect them.<br>"Decisions that affect students" are not limited to those relating to child safety and wellbeing. They include decisions about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organisational planning</li> <li>• delivery of services</li> <li>• management of facilities</li> <li>• learning and assessment environments.</li> </ul> |
| Pastoral care                  | "Pastoral care" is the support given to students for their development as a person. It relates to the total care of students and involves tending to both the academic and non-academic needs of students, including their spiritual, emotional and social wellbeing.   |
| Resilience                     | "Resilience" is the ability to cope and thrive in the face of negative events, challenges or adversity.   |

## Policy

### Participation

1. As part of creating and maintaining a child safe environment at the School for all students, the School ensures that all students:
  - are engaged and involved in decisions that affect them
  - can express their views and raise concerns
  - have their views and opinions taken seriously
  - are educated about their rights
  - are included in policy consultation and development.



2. The School provides multiple age-appropriate platforms, set out in the **Procedures** below, to regularly seek students' views about, and to enable students to participate in, decisions that affect them.
3. The School actively seeks to understand what makes students feel safe in our organisation. We encourage students to provide feedback about child safety concerns and issues at the School, and implement strategies, set out in the **Procedures** below, to obtain feedback from its students.
4. The School takes all student contributions seriously, and documents and actively looks for ways to implement improvements to its child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures and practices that reflect these contributions.
5. The School is honest with students about the extent of their involvement in decision-making and gives feedback on how their views have been taken into account and if, and if so how, they have been actioned.

### Developing and Maintaining a Child-Friendly Culture

1. The School is a child safe and child-centred organisation. We are committed to providing a safe, supportive and social environment, where students feel nurtured as they learn.
2. The School's physical environments promote students' feelings of inclusion, participation and empowerment.
3. The School recognises the importance of friendships and peer support in helping students people feel safe and be less isolated. We actively support students to develop and sustain friendships and to receive support from peers through both formal programs and informal mechanisms, set out in the **Procedures** below.
4. The School is committed to ensuring that the information and procedures that we have to enable students to raise, and to respond to, child safety concerns are age-appropriate, simple, and accessible for all students, including students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with disability, LGBTIQ+ students and other vulnerable students. For more information, refer to **Child Safeguarding Complaints Management Policy and Procedures**.
5. The School openly displays contact details for independent child advocacy and child helpline services throughout the School.
6. The School provides training and information to Staff, and relevant Volunteers and Contractors, about identifying signs of child abuse and other harm, and about how to help and encourage students to participate in decisions and to raise concerns. For more information, refer to **Child Safeguarding Training and Supervision Policy and Procedures**.
7. The School takes a leadership role in raising community awareness of children's rights, child abuse and other harm and its prevention including by:
  - actively promoting and participating in civic engagement activities and campaigns which promote whole of community awareness of children's rights, child abuse and other harm, and prevention
  - encouraging students at the School to become involved in these activities and campaigns.



## Pastoral Care

### 1. Standards of Behaviour for Students Attending the School

The School:

- has a **Student Code of Conduct**, developed in consultation with students, that sets out standards of behaviour for all students attending the School, including behaviours relating to child safeguarding. The School promotes the Student Code of Conduct within the School
- has policies on Bullying Prevention and Intervention, Social Media – Student Usage and Harassment (Student Against Student). For more information, refer to our **Student Code of Conduct Policy**
- disciplines students who do not uphold these standards of behaviour using our student disciplinary procedures, but also supports these students to address and mitigate behaviours that are not in line with the Code and any underlying factors
- encourages students to tell a trusted adult, whether it's a parent/carer or other family member, a trusted teacher or a Child Safeguarding Officer, when they feel unsafe as a result of or are otherwise impacted by the behaviour of other students.

### 2. Child Safety and Wellbeing Curriculum

The School delivers age-appropriate information and education to all students about:

- healthy and respectful relationships (including sexuality and consent)
- child abuse awareness and the right to be safe
- children and young people's rights to make decisions about their body and their privacy
- how they can raise concerns about abuse
- resilience and coping with adversity
- the School's response to child safety incidents and concerns, including that any concerns students raise will be taken seriously and responded to appropriately
- our Child Safeguarding (Safety and Protection) Policy and Procedures, Child Safeguarding (Responding and Reporting Obligations) Policy and Procedures, Child Safety Code of Conduct and Student Code of Conduct.

## Procedures

### Participation

To encourage and enable students to participate in decisions that affect them, the School uses the following platforms and methods:

- Through classroom discussions

To encourage and enable students to provide feedback specifically about safety and wellbeing concerns and issues, including when reviewing our child safeguarding policies, procedures and practices, the School employs a number of strategies, including:

- Through classroom discussions

## Developing and Maintaining a Child-Friendly Culture

The formal programs used at the School to support students to develop and sustain friendships and receive support from peers include:

- House System
- Home Groups
- Peer discussions

The School has incorporated child friendly information and resources in the curriculum and student diary.

## Pastoral Care

### 1. Child Safety and Wellbeing Curriculum

The School includes the following topics in the curriculum for each year level:

#### Healthy and Respectful Relationships, Sexuality and Resilience

The teaching of healthy and respectful relationships, including sexuality, and skills relating to resilience assists students to grow and develop into healthy, mature adults, capable of realising their full potential.

Healthy and respectful relationships, sexuality and resilience education at the School is:

- enshrined in core pedagogical practices that are age-appropriate, respectful, sensitive of culture and family background and differentiated to support the learning and developmental needs of the child or young person
- endorsed by the Clyde Grammar Board.

#### Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention

The School's curriculum includes age-appropriate education for students on child safety awareness and child abuse and harm prevention, to build their capacity to:

- identify when they feel safe and unsafe and when they are at risk, including when online
- identify safe and unsafe touching (using the anatomical names for their body parts)
- promote their personal safety (avoiding harm where possible)
- seek help, using their identified safety networks
- overcome barriers to disclosure, for example guilt or disbelief.

The School considers best practice when providing access to or selecting providers of child abuse and harm prevention education.

## 2. Child Safeguarding Information and Communication

To ensure that students can identify inappropriate behaviour and know how to raise concerns, the School provides child-friendly versions of the following Policies and Procedures to all students:

- **Through our classroom discussions taught in religion and values education**

The School also provides all students with information about the above topics, as well as other child safety and wellbeing topics, through age-appropriate curriculum.

### Responsibilities

In addition to relevant roles and responsibilities as set out in **Child Safeguarding Responsibilities**, the following people have particular responsibilities under this Policy and its Procedures.

| Role             | Responsibilities  |
|------------------|---|
| <b>Principal</b> | <b>The Principal</b> is responsible for implementing this Policy and its Procedures and managing the involvement of relevant communities in School decisions and reviews. |

### Breach of Student Participation and Empowerment policy and procedures

Clyde Grammar enforces this Policy and its Procedures. In the event of any non-compliance, we will instigate a review that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

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

For more information, refer to **Compliance and Breach (Child Safeguarding) Policy and Procedures**.

### Regular review

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents if they occur. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.

#### Related Legislation:

Ministerial Order No. 1359, clause 7  
Victorian Child Safe Standards, standard 3

#### Related Clyde Grammar Policies:

Duty of Care  
Mandatory Reporting  
Student Welfare  
Negligence  
On-Site Supervision



### Policy Administration

|                           |  |
|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Status</b>             | Subject to final Board Approval  |
| <b>Person Responsible</b> | The Principal  |
| <b>Approver(s)</b>        | The CSV Board is responsible for ensuring that the policy and its procedures are reviewed and updated as needed, and for approving this policy |
| <b>Approval Date</b>      | TBC  |
| <b>Version Number</b>     | 1.0  |
| <b>Version History</b>    | Created 2022   |
| <b>Review Frequency</b>   | A review of this policy and its procedures is conducted at least every 2 years or earlier if required, such as due to changes in legislation   |
| <b>Next Review Date</b>   | January 2023   |
| <b>Risk Rating</b>        | High   |
| <b>Location</b>           | CompliSpace  |