



Code of Conduct

In this Code of Conduct, words in *italic* text are defined terms which have the specific meanings set out in *Gowrie Victoria Policies and Procedures – Definitions and Abbreviations*.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct (Code) outlines the principles and standards that everyone must follow when representing Gowrie Victoria in both internal and external settings. The Code reflects Gowrie Victoria's purpose, values and commitment to child safety, and connects these principles to expected professional conduct.

Gowrie Victoria is committed to upholding the principles and maintaining the standards set out in this Code.

Scope

This Code applies to all *Board members, staff members, volunteers, students on placement and contractors/labour hire employees* of Gowrie Victoria.

Policy Statement

Our culture is defined by our behaviours that reflect our values. Our values are:

- curiosity
- authenticity
- commitment

In our interactions with children, families, colleagues, students, community and other stakeholders we follow five principles:

Principle 1 – We promote high quality early childhood education and care

This means we:

- acknowledge and respect families as children's primary educator
- acknowledge each child and student as capable learners
- provide children with agency and voice about their learning
- hold children at the centre of our decision making
- build respectful relationships with children and students to understand how they learn and use this as a basis for responding appropriately

- take an holistic approach to include each child's and student's support network in their learning and development.

Principle 2 – We keep children safe

This means we:

- recognise our duty of care towards children and students, and our commitment to ensure their cultural, physical, and psychological safety
- acknowledge the importance of culture for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and all children and families from diverse cultural backgrounds
- respect diversity and reject racism and all forms of discrimination
- implement all aspects of the 11 Child Safe Standards
- acknowledge our obligation to act on any concerns that a child is physically or psychologically at risk, including making reports to external bodies.

Principle 3 – We build strong relationships and promote strong teamwork

This means we:

- focus on the best outcome for children, students, and the organisation, recognising it is about 'what' is right, not 'who' is right
- clearly articulate the principles and evidence that inform our decision-making to support us to achieve the right outcome
- work as a team to ensure we are objective and consistent in our relationships and messaging with children, families, students, colleagues, and other people
- have clear expectations, are solutions-focused and hold each other to account
- seek to understand each other's points of view by asking genuine questions and practicing active listening
- are thoughtful and courageous in giving and receiving feedback, and assume good intent
- are not afraid to ask for help, offer help or accept help
- are open to new and different partnerships and build mutually beneficial relationships because we are all better together.

Principle 4 – We recognise we all have a role to play in our learning community

This means we:

- are conscious of our own bias and recognise and value the uniqueness of each individual in our diverse learning community
- share knowledge within our teams and across the organisation
- recognise our collective expertise and embrace trying new things
- take considered and informed risks, learn from our mistakes, and celebrate achievements
- actively reflect on our behaviour and practice.

Principle 5 – We act honestly and professionally

This means we:

- always perform our duties to the best of our ability and always act within the requirements and intent of all relevant legislation, regulations, policies, and procedures
- are always fit for work and take responsibility for ensuring we have the capacity to provide quality early childhood education and care
- provide an environment free from the use or effects of tobacco, illicit drugs, vaping substances and devices and alcohol
- creating a positive and welcoming environment, free from harassment, bullying, and discrimination
- disclosing to management any potential or actual conflicts of interest that may impact on designated duties at Gowrie Victoria and withdrawal from any related decision-making
- maintaining confidentiality and not disclosing personal or confidential information unless required to perform duties or to comply with a legal obligation.

Breaches of the Code

Gowrie Victoria will investigate a complaint or allegation of behaviour that is contrary to the behaviours and standards set out in the Code. A breach of the Code may result in:

- counselling
- a written warning
- termination of employment.

Authorisation

Approved by	Chief Executive Officer
Name	Karen Weston
Signature	
Date	29/8/2025

References

Policy Status	Mandatory
NQS Quality Area	Regulation 168 (2)(i)(i) QA 2 Children’s Health and Safety QA 4 Staffing Arrangements QA 7 Governance and Leadership
Relevant Legislation	Education and Care Services National Law 2010 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

	Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic) Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)
Related Professional Frameworks	Standard 1 of the Child Safe Standards United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Early Childhood Association Code of Ethics Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics Victorian Institute of Teaching Code of Ethics Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Conduct Australian Institute of Teaching Professional Standards
Related Policy	Child Safe Policy 2025 The Use of Technology Policy 2025 Interactions with Children Policy Family and Community Engagement Policy Cultural Awareness and Inclusion Policy Work Health Safety Policy
Related Procedure	Statement of Commitment to Child Safety Procedure Child Safe Reporting Procedure Child Safe Investigation Procedure Underperformance, Misconduct and Serious Misconduct Procedure

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Policy Reviewed	August 2025	Next Review	August 2028
Version Number	V4.08.25		
Modifications	Updated in response to legislative changes 1 Sept 2026 and 1 Jan 2026, to align with the requirements of a child safe organisation.		