



## **Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy**

**October 2023**

### **Purpose**

The Grainger Wind Symphony Inc. (GWS) is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our members and associates. We are committed to the safety, participation, and empowerment of all children. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe and inclusive environment for children with a disability.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously and consistently with our policies and procedures. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety which we follow rigorously. We are committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks through adhering to robust policies and procedures.

We inform all members of their obligations to act ethically towards children and their roles and responsibilities in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children in all areas of our organisation's activities. We provide all members with information about our policies and procedures and require they read and accept these when they become members of the Grainger Wind Symphony.

### **Scope**

This policy applies to all members and associates of the Grainger Wind Symphony. This includes all players, volunteers and guests who participate in our organisation's activities.

Our child-safe procedures include the following:

1. Membership of GWS is generally restricted to people aged 18 and over. In the occasional case that a person aged under 18 performs as a member with GWS then that person must be accompanied by a parent or guardian at all rehearsals, performances, and associated activities. Parents/guardians are to stay in the room with the child for the duration of all GWS rehearsals/performance/associated activities and will be provided with GWS policies, procedures and the Code of Conduct. GWS will engage respectfully with children and their families, will seek parental consent for

relevant activities and invite feedback regarding children and families' experiences with GWS in order to inform the development of child safe policies and procedures.

2. All members of Grainger Wind Symphony must obtain and maintain a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) when joining or rejoining GWS. Teachers with a current VIT Registration are exempted. All members are required to provide their WWC or VIT details to GWS and include GWS in the list of organisations associated with their WWC Check. Detailed information about the requirement for a WWC Check or VIT Registration is provided on the GWS website along with instructions on how to obtain a WWCC Check and when and how to inform GWS of the relevant details.
3. GWS participates in annual combined performances with schools. GWS will provide WWCC details to schools upon request and will provide each GWS member the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct. All GWS players and associates participating in activities with schools must have a current WWCC or VIT registration must abide by all school Child Safety Codes of Conduct.
4. It is a condition of membership of GWS that players read all the GWS Policies and accept them before commencing to participate in GWS activities. As part of the GWS registration process and enrolling to play in events, players will be asked to affirm their commitment to these policies. Details of the policies are available on the GWS website.
5. GWS are committed to notifying the Police and other relevant authorities if there are any instances or allegations of harm or abuse regarding children associated with any GWS activity. Any such instances or allegations must be reported to the GWS President who will inform the GWS Committee and notify authorities on behalf of GWS. Children's privacy and dignity will be considered paramount and all proceedings will be child-focused.
6. GWS provides education and information on child safety to members through links to resources on the GWS website, through regular updates of the GWS Child Safety Policy by the Committee, and through its member registration process.

### **Child Safe Standards**

GWS is committed to upholding the 11 Child Safe Standards in force in Victoria:

Standard 1	Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
Standard 2	Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
Standard 3	Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Standard 4	Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
Standard 5	Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
Standard 6	People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
Standard 7	Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.
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.
Standard 9	Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
Standard 10	Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
Standard 11	Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

<https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/>

### Responsibilities

1. Any concerns or allegations regarding the harm and abuse of children are to be reported to the GWS President who will inform the GWS Committee, notify appropriate authorities, and ensure the GWS response is child-focused.
2. The GWS Committee will review the Child Safety Policy every two years and update as required.
3. All GWS members and associates are required to actively uphold and support the GWS Child Safe Policy and treat all children and their families with respect.

### Definitions

- *Child/children*: persons under 18 years of age
- *Child abuse*: GWS adheres to the Child Safe Standards' definition of 'child abuse' drawn from the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic). This includes: a sexual offence committed against a child, grooming for sexual conduct with a child under the age of 16 under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), physical violence against a child, causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child, serious neglect of a child
- *Harm*: 'Harm' is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, sexual, emotional and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event. It can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.
- *Cultural safety*: cultural safety is about creating an environment that is safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. This means there is no assault, challenge or denial of their identity and experience. Cultural safety is about shared respect, shared meaning and shared knowledge.

- *Safe and inclusive environment*: a safe and inclusive environment is one that is free of threat of emotional or psychological harm and allows children of all abilities to be included in activities.

### **Relevant Legislation and Standards**

- Worker Screening Act 2020
- Child Safe Standards (2023) under the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)*
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

### **Resources**

- A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation (Commission for Children and Young People, April 2023) <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/resources/New-CSS/A-guide-for-creating-a-Child-Safe-Organisation-27.04.23.pdf>
- National Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Template (Child Safe Organisations: National Principles) [https://childsafeforhumanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/inline-files/CSO%20Child%20Safety%20and%20Wellbeing%20Policy%20template\\_0.pdf](https://childsafeforhumanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/inline-files/CSO%20Child%20Safety%20and%20Wellbeing%20Policy%20template_0.pdf)

### **Related organisational policies and Procedures**

- GWS Code of Conduct
- Discrimination, Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Rules

### **Policy Status and Review**

This policy was approved and adopted at 9.00pm on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> October after comments were invited from members in September 2023.

Any questions regarding the policy and procedures may be directed to members of the GWS Committee.

The policy will be reviewed every two years by the GWS Committee. The next review date will be August 2025.