GOLD COAST ACADEMY OF SPORT

CHILD PROTECTION & CHILD SAFETY POLICY

Organisation: Gold Coast Academy of Sport (GCAS)
Effective Date: 16 February 2026
Review Date: 16 January 2027

1. POLICY STATEMENT

The Gold Coast Academy of Sport (GCAS) is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment where all children and young people feel safe, valued, respected and heard.

The safety, wellbeing and best interests of children are our highest priority.

The GCAS has zero tolerance for child abuse, grooming, exploitation, neglect or misconduct of any kind.

Child protection is at the forefront of our governance, leadership and operational practices. Safeguarding children is embedded across all levels of decision-making.

This policy aligns with: National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (10 Child Safe Standards), Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld), Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld), Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 (Qld), Criminal Code (Child Sexual Offences Reform) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2020 (Qld) and Blue Card Services requirements.

2. PURPOSE

This policy outlines how GCAS:

- Prevents child abuse and harm
- Identifies and mitigates risks
- Responds to disclosures and allegations
- Complies with mandatory reporting obligations
- Promotes a culture of child safety and empowerment
- Ensures compliance with Queensland legislation and 2025–2026 Child Safe Standards

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Employees (full-time, part-time, casual)
- Volunteers
- Coaches
- Board members
- Students
- Contractors and External service providers
- Any person engaged in child-related work with the organisation

This policy applies across: All Academy programs, events and competitions, including school-based programs and online platforms.

4. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 10 CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Standard 1: Child safety is embedded in leadership, governance and culture.
Standard 2: Children participate in decisions affecting them.
Standard 3: Families and communities are informed and involved.
Standard 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected.
Standard 5: People working with children are suitable and supported.
Standard 6: Child-focused complaint processes are in place.
Standard 7: Staff and volunteers are equipped with knowledge.
Standard 8: Physical and online environments minimise risk.
Standard 9: Implementation of child safety is regularly reviewed.
Standard 10: Policies and procedures are documented and accessible.

5. WHEN WORKING WITH SCHOOLS

When delivering programs within schools:

- GCAS adheres to the school's Child Protection and Child Safety policies.
- GCAS follows the school's Code of Conduct.
- Concerns are reported immediately to the school Principal or Child Safety Officer.
- Legislative reporting obligations remain mandatory.
- The higher safeguarding standard applies where discrepancies exist.

6. RECOGNISING HARM

Abuse may include physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, neglect, grooming, or online exploitation.

Signs may include behavioural changes, withdrawal, aggression, fear of certain individuals, or unexplained injuries.

All suspicions must be reported.

7. REPORTING PROCEDURES – QUEENSLAND LEGISLATION

Immediate Danger

If a child is in immediate danger: CALL 000 immediately.

Step 1 – Internal Report

Report immediately to Child Safety Officer, CEO or Board Representative (if allegation involves leadership).

Step 2 – Determine Reporting Obligation

Under Queensland law, reports may need to be made to the Queensland Police Service (QPS), Department of Child Safety, Seniors and Disability Services and/or Blue Card Services (if relevant).

Mandatory Reporting Obligations

Teachers and certain professionals must report reasonable suspicion of:

- Significant harm caused by physical or sexual abuse
- When a parent may not be willing/able to protect
- All adults must report belief of child sexual offence to Police under Criminal Code provisions

Documentation Requirements

Reports must include:

- Child's name, age, gender
- Nature of concern

- Identity of suspected person (if known)
- Any other relevant information

Staff must not investigate beyond forming reasonable suspicion.

8. CONFIDENTIALITY

Information is shared on a need-to-know basis only. Records are securely stored. Reprisals are strictly prohibited.

9. BREACHES

Breaches may result in: Suspension, Termination, Notification to authorities and/or Blue Card cancellation

10. CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT (APPENDIX A)

All GCAS personnel must:

Always:

- Treat children with dignity and respect
- Maintain professional boundaries
- Report concerns immediately
- Supervise appropriately
- Use approved communication platforms

Never:

- Engage in physical punishment
- Use degrading language
- Develop secret or inappropriate relationships
- Exchange personal contact details without authorisation
- Transport a child alone without approval
- Engage in private digital messaging
- Ignore suspected abuse

Breach of this Code may result in termination and reporting to authorities.

11. CHILD SAFETY RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN (APPENDIX B)

Risk Identification

Potential risks include:

- One-on-one unsupervised situations
- Transport arrangements
- Online communication misuse
- Inadequate supervision
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Photography misuse

Risk Mitigation Strategies

- Enforce supervision ratios
- Open and observable environments
- Approved communication systems only
- Blue Card compliance
- Mandatory training
- Parental consent for media
- Clear transport guidelines

Monitoring

- Annual risk review
- Incident tracking
- Staff performance oversight

12. REPORTING FLOWCHART (APPENDIX C)

1. Concern arises or disclosure made
2. Is the child in immediate danger? YES: Call 000 , NO: Continue
3. Report internally to Child Safety Officer/CEO immediately
4. Determine legal reporting obligation
    - If sexual abuse or likely sexual abuse: Report immediately to Queensland Police Service

- If reasonable suspicion of significant harm and parent unable/unwilling: Report to Department of Child Safety
- If adult believes child sexual offence committed: Report to Police under Criminal Code
- If staff member involved: Notify Blue Card Services

5. Document all actions taken

6. Maintain confidentiality and provide support

13. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if Legislation changes, An incident occurs or Risk assessments identify gaps.

The Gold Coast Academy of Sport is committed to embedding child safety as a core organisational value. Protecting children is a responsibility shared by all.