

Grace Girls Conference Child Safe Policy

Last updated: 28 February 2025

For review by latest: 1 March 2026

1. Purpose and Scope

The Grace Girls Child Safe Policy (the Policy) outlines the underlying principles that direct our approach to safeguarding children and young persons involved with the Grace Girls Conference. Grace Girls Conference acknowledges child protection is paramount, and every child and young person has the right to be always safe from harm or risk of harm.

The Policy applies to all leaders, volunteers and anyone working on behalf of Grace Girls Conference, and is available on the Grace Girls website and upon request.

2. Principles

The Grace Girls Conference Coordinator takes responsibility for ensuring these principles are reviewed regularly and embedded in the organisation culture at all levels.

No person is to be engaged as a volunteer where there are any prior convictions relating to violent or sexually related offences.

Children or young persons are never to be left alone in an unsupervised environment (ie. one-to-one, closed room, no other persons involved):

- a. With a Grace Girls Conference Volunteer
- b. With other children or young persons

In unsupervised environments, there are to be at least two Grace Girls Conference volunteers present with children or young persons at all times.

3. Dealing with alleged perpetrators of sexual abuse

Instances regarding any actual, alleged, or the reasonable suspicion of abuse of any kind (including, but not limited to sexual, physical, psychological or spiritual abuse) must be reported to:

- a. The Grace Girls Conference Coordinator
- b. Police and/ or other statutory authorities in compliance with mandatory reporting obligations (ie. Child Abuse Report Line)
- c. The insurer

In the event that the Grace Girls Coordinator may be somehow conflicted or lack independence from the circumstances of the actual, alleged or reasonable suspicion of abuse, notwithstanding 3(b-c), the instance must be reported to the Grace Conference Executive Team. Any and all details in relation to reports and/or allegations of physical or sexual abuse are to remain private and confidential.

Where there is an allegation of abuse within the Grace Girls Conference volunteer team, the volunteer will be immediately suspended pending investigation and referred to the authorities listed in section 3b. and c.

Where a Grace Girls Conference volunteer has been found guilty of committing any form of abuse (including, but not limited to sexual, physical, psychological or spiritual abuse) following investigation and/or trial, the volunteer's involvement with the Grace Girls Conference will be immediately terminated.

4. Volunteer Discussion Groups Leader Requirements

Prior to serving at the Conference, Grace Girls Conference volunteers are required to have:

- a. Participated in a formal interview with a member of the Grace Girls Executive team.
- b. Read and agreed with this Policy.
- c. Submitted a current Working With Children Check.
- d. Submitted a current Safer Ministries Clearance or RRHAN-EC Training – Masterclass Certificate or equivalent.
- e. Provided two character/ministry referees to confirm the suitability of the volunteer for working with children and young persons.
- f. Participated in (informal) Child Safe Training Refresher as part of the Discussion Group Leader Training Session.

5. Grace Girls Leader Code of Conduct

In the interests of honouring God, upholding the integrity of the Grace Girls Conference, and protecting children and young persons in our midst the following requirements are to be upheld by Grace Girls Conference volunteers at all times.

1. Alcohol, cigarettes and drugs
 - a. Alcohol, cigarettes and drugs are not to be consumed at any Grace Girls Conference event.
2. Interactions with Conference delegates
 - a. Grace Girls Conference volunteers are prohibited from being alone (ie. one-on-one) in an unsupervised environment with a delegate.
 - b. Grace Girls Conference volunteers should avoid being alone in supervised environments with delegates.
 - c. Any sort of romantic or physical relationship between a Grace Girls Conference volunteer and a delegate is unacceptable.
 - d. Where a Grace Girls Conference volunteer finds themselves attracted to a delegate, or suspects a delegate may be attracted to them, they must make this known to the Grace Girls Conference Coordinator immediately.
 - e. Leaders must not contact delegates outside of the Conference without a conference-related reason.
 - f. When speaking with delegates, Grace Girls Conference volunteers must not make promises to keep conversations a secret as any disclosure of abuse or neglect must be reported.
 - g. Grace Girls Conference Volunteers should encourage support networks and further counselling where appropriate.
3. Physical Conduct
 - a. Grace Girls Conference Volunteers are to avoid physical touch with delegates.
 - b. Any touching between the neck and knees (except in instances of medical or other necessity) is prohibited.

4. Language

Recognising that the way we speak to or about people can impact their sense of belonging, value and safety:

- a. All negative and critical language should be avoided, including jokes at the expense of others.
- b. All derogatory language when speaking to or about other leaders or delegates should be avoided (including, but not limited to, sarcasm, belittling, swearing, innuendo, and racist or sexist remarks).

5. Social and Digital Media

- a. Where possible, the official GraceGirlsSA social media accounts should be used to contact delegates (ie. Instead of Grace Girls Conference volunteers' private accounts).
- b. Direct messaging between Grace Girls Conference volunteers and delegates should be for Grace Conference purposes only.
- c. Grace Girls Conference volunteers are under no obligation to accept delegate friend requests on social media.
- d. Social media site postings should be considered permanent in every instance.
- e. Online representations in any form of Grace Girls Conference Volunteers must accord to appropriate standards of Christian conduct, aligned to this Code.

6. Money

- a. Money is never to be accepted from, or offered to, any delegate.

7. Child Safe Policies

Prior to serving at the Conference, Grace Girls Conference volunteers are required to have:

- a. Participated in a formal interview with a member of the Grace Girls Executive
- b. Read and agreed to this Policy.
- c. Submitted a current Working With Children Check.
- d. Submitted a current Safer Ministries Clearance, RRHAN-EC Training – Masterclass Certificate or equivalent.
- e. Provided two character/ministry referees to confirm the suitability of the volunteer for working with children or young persons.
- f. Participated in (informal) Child Safe Training Refresher as part of the Discussion Group Leader Training Session.

8. Dress Code

- a. Grace Girls Conference volunteers must wear clothes that are modest and appropriate to the context.
- b. Grace Girls or Grace Conference Executive may ask a leader to change if they deem the clothing inappropriate and not aligning with the values of the Conference.