

Parent and Spectator Code of Conduct

1. Purpose

Geelong Aquatic Centre is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where children can participate in swimming programs with confidence. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to outline the standards of behaviour expected of parents, guardians, spectators and visitors attending the centre.

Children learn best in environments that are calm, respectful and supportive. Adults attending the facility play an important role in shaping this environment through the way they communicate, interact with children and engage with staff.

This Code supports the centre's obligations under the **Victorian Child Safe Standards** and reflects the centre's commitment to protecting children from physical, emotional and psychological harm. Information about the Victorian Child Safe Standards can be found at:

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

Guidance relating to child safety in aquatic environments is also provided by **Royal Life Saving Australia**:

<https://www.royallifesaving.com.au/about/news-and-updates/news/2023/apr/new-draft-guidelines-for-child-safety-in-aquatic-facilities>

2. Scope

This Code applies to all parents, guardians, spectators and visitors attending Geelong Aquatic Centre programs or events. It applies to behaviour within the facility, including pool deck areas, viewing areas, reception and change rooms. It also applies to interactions with staff or other families that occur in connection with centre programs, including communication through digital platforms or social media where the centre community is involved.

3. Commitment to Child Safety

Geelong Aquatic Centre recognises that children have the right to feel safe, respected and supported while participating in aquatic activities. The centre maintains policies and procedures designed to prevent harm and to respond appropriately when concerns arise.

Organisations that provide services for children have both a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that children can participate in activities free from abuse, neglect or mistreatment.

Parents and spectators are important partners in maintaining this environment. Behaviour by adults that is aggressive, intimidating or distressing can affect not only their own child but also other children present.

The centre therefore expects all adults attending programs to contribute to an environment that promotes safety, respect and positive learning.

4. Behaviour Expectations

Parents and spectators are expected to behave respectfully toward children, instructors, staff and other families at all times. Communication should be appropriate in tone, language and manner, recognising that swimming lessons are shared learning environments where many children are present.

Adults attending the centre should support the instructional process by allowing instructors to manage lessons without interference. Instructors are trained to guide children through learning challenges, including moments when children may become frustrated or distressed during lessons.

Parents are encouraged to support their children positively and to model behaviour that reflects patience, encouragement and respect. Adults should also respect the inclusive nature of the centre community and recognise that children participating in programs may have diverse needs, abilities or backgrounds.

Respectful conduct is a core expectation of community environments that support children's learning and wellbeing.

5. Behaviour That Is Not Acceptable

Behaviour that undermines the safety, wellbeing or dignity of children, staff or other patrons is not acceptable within the facility.

Examples of behaviour that may breach this Code include aggressive or abusive language, intimidation, threats, or actions that humiliate or belittle a child. Conduct that disrupts lessons, interferes with instructors or causes distress to other children may also be considered inappropriate.

Parents and spectators should not attempt to discipline or confront children who are not their own. Concerns about behaviour during lessons should instead be raised with centre staff or management so they can be addressed appropriately.

Any form of harassment, bullying or threatening behaviour directed toward staff, children or other families will be treated seriously and may result in action being taken by the centre.

Physical contact with children must always be appropriate and respectful. Contact that causes distress, embarrassment or discomfort is not acceptable.

6. Use of Technology and Social Media

Parents and spectators are expected to use technology and social media responsibly when engaging with the centre community.

Photographs or recordings should not be taken of children who are not their own without permission from the child's parent or guardian. Images or recordings of staff, families or lessons should not be shared publicly without appropriate consent.

Online communication should remain respectful and should not involve the publication of confidential information or material that may harm the reputation or wellbeing of members of the centre community. These expectations align with widely adopted community standards for respectful engagement within educational environments.

7. Raising Concerns or Complaints

Geelong Aquatic Centre encourages families to raise concerns when they arise so that they can be addressed constructively.

Concerns relating to lessons, instructors or the facility environment should be raised respectfully with centre staff or management rather than during a lesson itself. Staff may not always be able to address concerns immediately while supervising children in the water, but concerns will be reviewed and responded to as appropriate.

Parents should recognise that the centre has a responsibility to balance the needs and interests of all participants when making decisions about programs or operations.

8. Responding to Behaviour Concerns

Where behaviour does not meet the expectations outlined in this Code, staff may intervene to maintain a safe and respectful environment.

Depending on the circumstances, the centre may take one or more of the following steps:

- provide a reminder about expected behaviour

- request that the behaviour stop
- escalate the matter to a supervisor or manager
- ask the individual to leave the pool area temporarily
- formally document the incident

These actions are intended to support a calm and safe learning environment for all children participating in the centre's programs.

9. Consequences for Breaches of the Code

Where behaviour continues to fall outside the expectations of this Code, Geelong Aquatic Centre may take further action.

This may include issuing a formal warning, restricting a person's access to certain areas of the facility, requiring communication with the centre to occur through a nominated representative, or suspending participation in programs.

In serious or repeated cases, the centre may determine that continued participation in programs is not appropriate.

Geelong Aquatic Centre reserves the right to refuse entry to, or request the departure of, any person whose behaviour is considered unsafe, disruptive or inconsistent with this Code.

10. Related Policies

This Code should be read in conjunction with the centre's broader child safety framework, including the Geelong Aquatic Centre Child Safe Policy, our commitment to child safety statement, and reporting child safety concerns procedures.

All staff follow detailed safeguarding procedures outlined in the Geelong Aquatic Centre Employee Handbook, including incident reporting, supervision requirements and emergency response procedures.

These policies collectively support the centre's commitment to providing safe and respectful environments for children and families.

11. Acknowledgement

By enrolling a child in programs at Geelong Aquatic Centre or attending the facility as a parent or spectator, individuals acknowledge that they have read and agree to comply with this Code of Conduct.