



Child Safety Code of Conduct

A Child Safety Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships. For more detailed guidance refer to the School's Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.

When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is educated about the Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the School environment becomes much more transparent and people are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safety Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct set out below is designed to stand alone. The Code is made available to all staff, volunteers, families and students.

Acceptable Behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and School Advisory Board members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's child safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone in the school community with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the School's Leadership (or Child Safety Officer if the school has appointed someone to this role)
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*
- reporting any child safety concerns to the School's leadership (or Child Safety Officer if the school has appointed someone to this role)

- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

Unacceptable Behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and School Advisory Board members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example, inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging, etc) unless related specifically to an approved educational purpose
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account with a child
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses with a child
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- use illegal drugs on school grounds or at any school event
- consume alcohol at school or at school events in the presence of children (unless on those occasions where appropriate authorisation has been given).

Our Child Protection Program includes a ***Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy*** that provides detailed guidance for all staff and volunteers (direct and indirect) on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults at St Catherine's.

Report Any Concerns

The Program also includes information for members of the School Advisory Board, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our School's nominated Child Protection and Safety Contact Officers.

It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Third party contractors, external education providers, indirect contact volunteers, students, parents or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact one of the School's Child Protection and Safety Contact Officers.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a "needs to know basis".

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, the Police should be contacted on 000.

Implementation Date: August 2016

Review Date: July 2021