



MONTPELLIER PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHILD SAFE STANDARD 3 – CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

LEGISLATION

On 26 November 2015, the Victorian Parliament passed the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015, which amended the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 to introduce the Child Safe Standards that would apply to all organisations involved in child related work in Victoria.

Ministerial Order 870 - Child Safe Standards - Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools provides guidance on how the Standards apply to a school setting. It came into effect on 1 August 2016.

PURPOSE

Montpellier Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment, which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

- The Child Safety Code of Conduct is read in conjunction with the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.
- The Child Safety Code of Conduct is part of induction training for new staff and volunteers and as part of refresher training for existing leadership members, staff and volunteers (including non-teaching staff and ICT staff etc.)
- All staff are provided access to Ministerial Order 870, VIT Code of Conduct, and Extract Memo 199
- A Child Safe Code of Conduct has been created and endorsed by School Council.
- Parents and Community have access to the documents on the school website.
- Parents/carers and other persons associated with the school are informed of behaviour they can expect from the school's leadership, staff, contractors and volunteers
- The Code of Conduct supports and informs school protocols and reporting procedures should breaches of the code be suspected or identified
- Reference to the Code of Conduct is included in employment advertisements and contracts to ensure compliance.

The school leaders of Montpellier Primary School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly school and other learning environments.

The school leaders of Montpellier Primary School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All non-teaching staff and volunteers will read and comply with the Child Safety Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below, before working with students at Montpellier Primary School. All teaching staff will read and comply with the Child Safety Code of Conduct at all times.

Acceptable Behaviour

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- upholding the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct and adhering to the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media
- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, 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 students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds – having a zero tolerance of discrimination
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to leadership, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- reporting any child safety concerns to the Principal, Assistant Principals or Chaplain
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant school activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

Unacceptable Behaviour

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (eg: inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometime, eg: while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
- put children at risk of abuse (eg: by locking doors, leaving them alone with an unknown person)

- volunteers must not be alone with a child unless there is a line of sight to other adults
- 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 (eg: personal social activities, relationship issues)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- have contact with a child or their family outside of our school without leadership knowledge and/or consent (eg: babysitting)
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc., unless necessary (providing families with e-newsletters, classroom sites)
- photograph or video a child without the permission of parents/carers
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

When signing into the school, all individuals are acknowledging and accepting their understanding and acceptance of this document and the school's Child Safe Standards.

By observing the Child Safe Code of Conduct you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the school leadership.

Note: This information should be read in conjunction with the school's other policy documents. This advice does not replace any legislative or regulatory obligations or other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular staff at the school.

The VIT provides clarity regarding professional behaviour expected of teachers at all times. The code specifies behaviour unacceptable for a professional relationship between a teacher and a student.

"Teachers are always in a professional relationship with their students in their school whether at school or not."

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated and ratified on 16/09/19 following review and development by School Council. It is scheduled for review in September 2021