

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Code of Conduct



All students enrolled at St Clare's have the right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children in our care will always be our first priority and we do not and will not tolerate child abuse. We aim to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where children are free to enjoy life to the full without any concern for their safety. There is particular attention paid to the most vulnerable children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability. (St Clare's Child Safety Policy)

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at St Clare's School against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and school board members at St Clare's School are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects and protects the wellbeing and safety of its members. We believe that each person is made in the image and likeness of God and the inherent dignity of all should be recognised and fostered.

Therefore all staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and school board members are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to this code of conduct 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 (modelling positive and respectful relationships and acting in a manner that sustains a safe, educational and pastoral environment)
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child have 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 policy towards discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- Letting a staff member know when you are working alone with a child
- reporting any child safety concerns and/or allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe.
- only giving personal contact details (eg mobile phone number) to parents under very particular circumstances (eg district sports)

Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- be alone with a child unnecessarily
- 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 (for example, by locking doors)
- 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 contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school's leadership or child safety officer's (if the school has appointed someone to this role) knowledge and/or consent or the school governing authority's approval (for example, unauthorised after-hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching); accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate
- have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc.) or their family (unless necessary e.g. by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work)
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- exchange personal contact details such as social networking sites or email addresses
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.

I, _____, confirm I have been provided with a copy of the above Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____ Date: _____