



St. Mary's Child Safety Code of Conduct Safeguarding Children and Young People

Central to the mission of St Mary's Primary School is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at St Mary's Primary 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 board/school council members at St Mary's Primary School are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They 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 and clergy 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
- Adhering to the to Parish Policy for Social Functions and Use of [Parish School Functions and Alcohol Management Policy](#)
- 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 or that of another child
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, 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)
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership team
- Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic.)
- Model the responsible use of alcohol at school, or at school events in the presence of children

Unacceptable behaviours

All staff and clergy 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 (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
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 school without the school's leadership knowledge and/or consent of the school governing authority's approval (for example, 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 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 phone number, 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 illicit drugs
- Consume alcohol in an irresponsible way, at school, or at school events in the presence of children
- Consume illicit drugs at school or in the presence of children

(adapted from Source: VRQA)

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

Signed: _____

Date: _____