



**Safeguarding Children and Young People
Code of Conduct
St. Mary's Catholic Primary School
April, 2019**

**St. Mary's is:
A Dynamic Community
Of Empowered Learners
Engaging Justly in the World**

At St Mary's, we believe that each person's wellbeing is nurtured through experiences of belonging, building relationships with others, being accepted and valued and by being positively engaged in the community. We acknowledge the importance of providing opportunities for all members of the school community to develop an awareness of their wellbeing and responsibilities and a commitment to becoming valuable members of the global community. We believe in the importance of implementing prevention and intervention strategies which promote positive behaviour within the school and protect the safety of all students.

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, School Advisory Board and other parent body 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, volunteers, contractors, clergy, School Advisory Board and other parent body 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, School Advisory Board and other parent body members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any ‘special’ relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism or amount to ‘grooming’ behaviour (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical and not justified by the educational context (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact which 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
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other matter
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances

TEAR OFF SECTION-----

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to St. Mary’s Child Safety Officer Liz Sullivan and/or leadership.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name: Name:

Signature: Signature:

Date: Date: