



MARY IMMACULATE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct - 2020

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at Mary Immaculate 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 Advisory Council members at Mary Immaculate 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 and all members of the Mary Immaculate School community are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's Child Safe Policy and upholding the school's commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and harm
- 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 unless this is consistent with their school roles and responsibilities
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school principal or in her absence, a member of the Child Safe Team
- 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 principal or in her absence, a member of the Leadership Team
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) is/are safe by following school procedures for reporting allegations or mandatory reporting requirements
- have a current Working With Children Check when working in a voluntary capacity at a school activity or event, where children are present.



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Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and all members of the Mary Immaculate School community must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse or harm
- 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 discriminatory views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, religion, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family in person, online or by phone, that is inconsistent with our school's policies and procedures (for example, Child Safety Policy, Social Media Policy)
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or personal email addresses with any child without the consent of their parent or guardian
- photograph or video a child without the consent of their parent or guardian - as per our Image Permission Form
- engage in child-connected work whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol at school events in the presence of children unless with the permission of the Principal.

Definitions

A full list of definitions for Ministerial Order No. 870 is available at www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafes.

- **Child abuse** includes—
- any act committed against a child involving—
 - a sexual offence or
 - an offence under section 49B(2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming)
- the infliction, on a child, of—
 - physical violence or
 - serious emotional or psychological harm
- serious neglect of a child.

Child-connected work means work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.



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School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems)
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

School staff means:

- in a non-government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:
 - directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
 - a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary)
 - a minister of religion¹.
- **school governing authority** means:
 - the proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor; or
 - the governing body for a school (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of a school or the ETR Act; or
 - the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the ETR Act.

Explanatory note: There is a wide variety of school governance arrangements. Depending on the way a school is constituted and operated, the governing body for a school may be the school board, the school council, or some other person or entity. The school governing authorities may share or assign responsibility for discharging the requirements imposed by this Order, in accordance with the school's internal governance arrangements.



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I, _____, confirm that I
have read, understood and agree to comply with the above
Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____

Date: _____