



## STANDARD 3

### *Child Safe Code of Conduct for Preston South Primary School*

#### **Rationale**

- Child Safe Standard 3 requires schools to develop a Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- One of the most effective child safe strategies to help protect children from harm is a Code of Conduct.
- A Child Safe Code of Conduct establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children.
- It lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It spells out professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable relationships.
- If people behave in ways that are unacceptable the Code of Conduct enables the organisation to take action.
- Without a Code of Conduct, it can be very difficult to raise behavioural issues with staff and volunteers.
- If unacceptable behaviour continues, this can seriously compromise the safety of the environment, Swift and appropriate action must be taken when the Code is breached, otherwise people will continue to feel compromised or unsafe.

#### **Purpose**

- To ensure Preston South Primary School complies with the legislative requirements of MO 870.
- To ensure the school demonstrates its commitment to creating a child safe culture.
- To protect children and reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur.
- To provide guidance to staff and volunteers on how to best support children and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations.
- To ensure the school develops and publishes a code of conduct that is compliant with the Child Safe Standard 3.
- To ensure the school discharges its duty of care towards students.

#### **Definitions**

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.

**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** being 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), and including a chaplain or minister of religion. A school leader for child safety should have sufficient status and authority, including leadership support and the ability to direct other staff (where appropriate), to undertake the role effectively.

### **Implementation**

- The safety and wellbeing of children is the highest priority for Preston South Primary School.
- The 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 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 school's Principal and school leadership will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders also will provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.
- The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.
- The school will know it has created a culture of child safety in respect of Standard 3 when:
  - appropriate behaviour with children is clearly defined, accessible and understood by staff, volunteers and visitors, families and children
  - steps staff should take if they identify child safety risks are clearly outlined
  - staff, volunteers and visitors, families and children understand culturally safe behaviour and relationships with Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
  - staff, volunteers and visitors, families and children understand safe behaviour and relationships with children with a disability
  - children and families from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds can access and understand the Code of Conduct
  - efforts have been made to make the code of conduct accessible to children with a disability

### **Child Safe Code of Conduct**

1. This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by adults towards children.
2. It is binding all staff members, volunteers and visitors and external providers working with children on-site or off-site.
3. Staff, volunteers, visitors and external providers are expected to signify that they have read and understood this Code of Conduct by completing the attached statement which will be recorded and filed appropriately.
4. All Preston South Primary School staff, volunteers, visitors and external providers are responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children by:
  - adhering to the Child Safe Policy and other related policies
  - taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
  - treating everyone with respect, including listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions
  - welcoming all children and their families and carers and being inclusive
  - respecting cultural, religious and political differences and acting in a culturally sensitive way
  - modelling appropriate adult behaviour
  - listening to children and responding to them appropriately
  - reporting and acting on any breaches of this Child Safe Code of Conduct, complaints or concerns

- complying with our guidelines on physical contact with children
  - working with children in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about the work you are doing with children
  - respecting the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know
5. Preston South Primary School staff, volunteers, visitors and external providers must NOT:
- seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults
  - ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
  - use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or language with children
  - engage in rough physical games
  - exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with children which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
  - discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
  - 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 school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
  - discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability or sexuality
  - initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, putting on clothes
  - develop 'special' relationships with specific children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention
  - photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes<sup>1</sup>
  - 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.

#### Internet Use

- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking site or email addresses with children
  - have unauthorised contact with children online or by phone
  - contact any child at this school by any form of social media
  - download inappropriate material
6. Staff, volunteers, visitors and external providers should avoid unnecessary physical contact with children.
7. The school has identified that the following are not beyond bounds for physical contact:
- escorting a young, uncertain, primary aged (particularly), by holding the hand
  - rendering first aid
  - comforting a distressed child by holding the shoulders briefly
  - assisting children with disabilities to complete physical tasks e.g. dressing after a swimming class
  - demonstrating/reinforcing a skill in sports coaching by e.g. showing a student how to hold a bat
  - a congratulatory pat on the shoulders
  - shaking hands

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<sup>1</sup> SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/photoandfilm.aspx> . The policy says the school should get consent before taking and publishing photos of a student. This applies every time a photo is taken. The same policy applies for excursions and school activities.

8. Induction procedures or manuals for new staff, volunteers and external providers will include information about the Child Safe Code of Conduct.
9. The school will conduct workshops and training sessions for staff to ensure that everyone involved with the school understands the requirements of the Code of Conduct and are clear what to do when someone breaches it.
10. Other adults will be advised that if they become aware of any risks adults may pose to children, or that children may pose to each other, in both physical and online environments, they should inform a member of the Leadership Team as soon as practicable.
11. So that all members of the school community, including parents and children, are aware of the Child Safe Code of Conduct, it will be displayed prominently in various locations throughout the school and posted on the website.
12. All staff should be aware that unsatisfactory performance procedures in relation to the Child Safe Code of Conduct may be applied as per the Victorian Government Schools Agreement 2013, Schedule 5.
13. If a volunteer or external provider does not comply with the expected standard of behaviour, the Principal will discuss their behaviour with them. Noncompliance can lead to disciplinary action being taken, which may result in the person being asked to leave the organisation.
14. The school will ensure that procedures for raising and managing complaints and consequences for breaching of the Child Safe Code of Conduct, are known and understood by everyone. For specific procedures, please refer to the school's Complaints & Concerns, Parents Policy.
15. For particularly high-risk activities, such as overnight camps, the school will determine whether or not a specific Code of Conduct is required. This could outline additional topics such as sleeping arrangements, personal care, leaving the site, no drugs or alcohol on site, staff-to-child ratio requirements, etc.

**Evaluation**

- This Standard will be reviewed after the completion of the child safe review process and then as part of the school's three-year review cycle or if guidelines change (latest information 15 May 2018).

This document, Standard 3, was first ratified by School Council in Mid 2016.  
This update was ratified in Mid 2018.

References:  
[www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandards.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandards.aspx)  
 Creating a Child Safe Organisation Guide p.26  
 An Overview of the Victorian Child Safe Standards State of Victoria, DHHS November 2015  
 and  
 Protect – Identifying All Forms of Child Abuse in Victorian Schools 2016

**Child Safe Code of Conduct Agreement**

I have read and understood this Child Safe Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it at all times.

Name .....

Signature .....

Date .....

Principal's Name .....

Signature .....

Date ..... Signature of Witness .....