

CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT



Child abuse is unacceptable.

Ensuring children's safety is a top priority for the Victorian Government.

PURPOSE

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school.

All Frankston Heights Primary School staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, school council members and any other adult involved in child-connected work must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by students. It also applies during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the school for student use e.g., a school camp.

What is child abuse?

Child abuse

Child abuse includes:

- physical violence inflicted on a child
- sexual offences committed against a child
- grooming of a child by an adult
- family violence committed against or in the presence of a child
- serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.

The definition of child abuse is broad and can include student to student incidents and concerns, as well as behaviour committed by an adult.

Frankston Heights Primary School aims to create a culture where protecting children from abuse is part of everyday thinking and practice. We all have a responsibility for keeping children safe.

All registered schools are required to develop strategies to embed a culture of child safety at the school. At Frankston Heights Primary we will:

- embed a culture of child safety
- allocate roles and responsibilities to ensure child safe practices are adhered to
- inform the school community about the strategies being employed at the school.

What is organisational culture and how does it relate to child safety?

Embedding an organisational culture of child safety is critical to reducing the risk of child abuse in schools.

To successfully embed a culture of child safety, a commitment to **zero tolerance of child abuse** must be led by the school council. This commitment must be shared, openly and transparently,

by all members of the school community, including staff (school employees, contractors and volunteers), parents and families, visitors and the child.

All staff, volunteers and school council members of Frankston Heights Primary School are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children.

ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

Frankston Heights Primary School staff, volunteers, contractors and members of our school community involved in child-connected work are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to the school's Child Safety Policy and upholding the Child Safety Code of Conduct at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect at all times
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTIQ+) students
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to Frankston Heights Primary School's Child Safety Officer (Assistant Principal), and ensuring any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our Mandatory Reporting Policy and Procedures and the PROTECT Four Critical Actions.
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

Frankston Heights Primary School staff, volunteers, contractors and members of our school community involved in child-connected work must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism or amount to grooming (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)
- 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 culture, race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexuality, age or vulnerability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate
- have any online contact with a child or their family except where the communication is related to schoolwork or extra curricula activities (for example providing families with e-newsletters, providing schoolwork on Seesaw or Google classroom)
- consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present.

NB: These procedures are not intended to:

- prohibit or discourage school or any staff from reporting an allegation of **child abuse** to a person external to the school
- state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities of the allegation
- require staff to make a judgement about the truth of the allegation of **child abuse** or
- prohibit staff from making records in relation to an allegation or disclosure of **child abuse**.

In the case of an allegation of **child abuse**, you will:

- inform appropriate authorities about the allegation (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);
- protect within reasonable means any child connected to the alleged **child abuse** until the allegation is resolved;
- make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of **child abuse** and the school's response to it; and
- phone 000 if you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse.

Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All Frankston Heights Primary School staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-connected work who breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the Department of Education and Training Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Frankston Heights Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal and the school's Child Safety Officer.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the Principal, contact South Eastern Regional Office of the Department of Education and Training on 1300 338 738.

APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Created date	August 2022
Consultation	Education sub committee - September 2022 School Council - September 2022 School Community (via Sentral) – October 2022
Endorsed by	School Council – September 2022
Endorsed on	September 2022
Next review date	September 2024

COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY POLICY AND CODE OF CONDUCT



I agree to adhere to Frankston Heights Primary School Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct.

In fulfilling my roles and responsibilities I understand that this does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if I reasonably believe that a child is at risk of child abuse.

In the case of an allegation of **child abuse**, I will:

1. immediately inform appropriate authorities about the allegation (including but not limited to mandatory reporting);
2. protect within reasonable means any child connected to the alleged **child abuse** until the allegation is resolved; and
3. make, secure, and retain records of the allegation of **child abuse** and the school's response to it.
4. phone 000 if I believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse.

Name:

Signature:

Date: