

CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT (STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT)



CODE OF CONDUCT

PURPOSE

Our *Child Safety Code of Conduct* sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school. All Richmond West 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 staff and students. It also applies during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the school for student use (for example, a school camp).

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

Our school has three core values, and we expect all people who enter our school to exhibit these: **Belonging, Resilience and Striving for Personal Success**. Our values are linked to all learning areas and to personal and communal responsibility within and outside the classroom.

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, visitors, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*
- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, 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
 - o Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
 - o students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - o students with a disability
 - o students who are unable to live at home
 - o lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTIQ+) students.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures and the [PROTECT Four Critical Actions](#).

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- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult.

Unacceptable behaviours

As staff, visitors, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work **we must not:**

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to ‘grooming’ behaviour (for example, by offering gifts)
- display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context
- ignore an adult’s overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance
- treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- 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 schoolwork or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child or student in a school environment except in accordance with the [Photographing, Filming and Recording Students policy](#) or where required for duty of care purposes
- consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present
- have contact with any student outside of school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought.

Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All Richmond West 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 Richmond West Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the child safety officer (principal) and/or Student Wellbeing Officer. If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact the [relevant regional office](#) where the

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person nominated above is the principal who must then take on responsibility for ensuring our school follows these procedures.

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Richmond West Primary School is committed to respecting every person's right and protecting the safety, wellbeing and welfare of all people associated with the school. 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 young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

Richmond West Primary School is committed to promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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. All staff, parents, carers, community members and students have a right to be treated with courtesy and dignity and to participate in a school that is safe, secure, supportive and free from bullying, harassment, discrimination, racism and intimidation.

The 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 Code of Conduct outlines the responsibilities of our staff members, parents, carers, community members, and students. The Code of Conduct is designed to promote appropriate and positive conduct and to prevent poor or anti-social behaviours.

The principal and school leaders of Richmond West Primary School will support the implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide an inclusive, safe and orderly school and other learning environments. The principal and school leaders of Richmond West Primary School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively. We will not tolerate anti-social behaviour at our school or towards our staff or students. It is an offence to behave in a disorderly, violent or offensive way on Department premises or fail to leave the premises if directed to do so by the principal, or their nominee.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

To successfully embed a culture of child safety, Richmond West Primary School has a commitment to **zero tolerance of child abuse** supported by the school council. This commitment is open and transparent, and shared by all members of the school community, including staff, school employees, contractors and volunteers, parents and families, visitors and students.

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Note: Corporal punishment is prohibited in our school and will not be used under any circumstances.

COMMUNICATION

Richmond West Primary School is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the school community through:

- Ensuring that the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Code of Conduct (this document), and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures are available on the school website and through the COMPASS communication portal
- Once per term reminders in the school newsletter and through online posts of our school's commitment to child safety
- Ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at staff meetings for discussion
- Ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at school council meetings for discussion

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Related School Policies:

- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Digital Learning Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Yard Duty and Supervision Policy

Related DET Resources

- For more information about these offences and reporting obligations see: [Protecting Children — Reporting and Other Legal Obligations](#).
- [Child Safe Standards Action List](#)
- [PROTECT website](#)
- [Four Critical Actions for Schools Ministerial Order 1359](#)

This Code of Conduct and Statement of Commitment must be read in conjunction with:

- [The law of the Commonwealth](#) or of the relevant state or territory
- [The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct](#)
- [Complaints Misconduct and Unsatisfactory Performance Procedures](#).

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed every two years as part of the school's review cycle, or if DET regulations change. Following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether Richmond West Primary School's Code of Conduct requires modification to better protect

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the children under their care. School council consultation and approval will also be sought if any significant changes are made.

Last reviewed	August 2022
Approved (Mandatory)	Principal, School Council
Consultation (Recommended)	School staff/School Council August 2022
Next scheduled review date	August 2024