



## Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at **St Patrick's Murrumbidgee** against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes and school based policies.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy, Education Board and PFA members at St Patrick's 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, parents, volunteers, contractors, clergy, Education Board and PFA members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

1. adhering to the school's child-safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
2. taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
3. treating everyone in the school community with respect (modelling positive and respectful relationships and acting in a manner that sustains a safe, educational and pastoral environment)
4. listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child have been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
5. 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)
6. promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance policy towards discrimination)
7. promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, encouraging personal self care activities wherever possible, including showering and toileting)
8. ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child, unless consistent with the school roles and responsibilities
9. reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's Executive Leadership or Wellbeing Leader
10. understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)
11. managing any child safety concerns in the first instance using Restorative Practice processes
12. if an allegation of child abuse is made, to follow the relevant school policies and procedures ensuring as quickly as possible, that the child(ren) are safe.



## **Unacceptable behaviours** Staff and volunteers must not:

1. ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
  2. develop any 'special' relationships that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children) beyond the scope of approved Educational Programs with children or unless approved by the Principal for legitimate pastoral purposes
  3. exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical
  4. put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors or enclosing children in rooms without the line of sight of other delegated staff)
  5. 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
  6. engage in open or online discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children
  7. use inappropriate language in the presence of children
  8. express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
  9. discriminate against any child, according to age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
  10. have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school's leadership knowledge (for example, unauthorised after-hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching); accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate as are school approved special circumstances
  11. have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc.) or their family, unless for legitimate school purposes as per the Social Media Policy
  12. use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account, unless for legitimate school purposes as per the Social Media Policy
  13. exchange personal contact details such as phone number (unless authorised for school purposes-Rider of Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by the parent/guardian/student regarding the use of staff personal phone numbers), social networking sites or private email addresses
  14. photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians as per the school's annual consent form
  15. work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
  16. consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children
- (Adapted from Source: VRQA)

## **Regular review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years and following significant incidents. We will ensure that families and children have the opportunity to contribute. Where possible we do our best to work with local Aboriginal communities, culturally and/or linguistically diverse communities and people with a disability.