

Child Safe Code of Conduct (Child Safe Standard 3)



Reviewed by: School Council

Date reviewed: October 2021

Date of next review: August 2023

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Rationale:

Mount Beauty Secondary College 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 young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

Aims:

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 be used in conjunction with child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

Implementation:

The Principal and school leaders of Mount Beauty Secondary College 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 of Mount Beauty Secondary College will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and 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.

The Code of Conduct should be included in the staff handbook and provided to staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work during the induction process.

Policy and Procedures:

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, 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 safe policy when the school has a policy in place
- 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership or
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable behaviours

As staff, 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
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- 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
- treat a child 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 school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes¹
- take illicit drugs or smoke within 4m of an entrance or on the school grounds
- must not consume alcohol in the school environment, or at other school organised events where students are present unless:
 - it is in line with school policy²
 - it is appropriate and in line with the type of event to be consuming alcohol, such as at dinner events on licensed premises, like the Year 12 Graduation, school fundraising or other events
 - alcohol should be consumed in moderation
 - duty of care obligations are expected at these events
 - must remain professional at all times.

Review Process:

The Code of Conduct should be reviewed every two years, in the year of a school review, and following significant incidents if they occur.

References:

PROTECT | The Department of Education and Training | ©2016 Adapted from the exemplar Code of Conduct Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools, Ministerial Order No. 870

Related Policies and Documents:

- MBSC Staff Code of Conduct
- MBSC Alcohol Policy [Alcohol](#)
- Victorian Institute of Teaching [Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics](#)
- [School Policy & Advisory Guide – Duty of Care](#)
- [School Policy & Advisory Guide – Child Protection Reporting Obligations](#)
- [DET Child Wellbeing and Safety Framework](#)
- MBSC Mandatory Reporting Policy
- MBSC Photographing and Filming Policy [Photographing and Filming Students](#)

¹ 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.

² SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/alcohol.aspx> . The policy says the school must obtain school council approval before alcohol can be consumed on school grounds or at a school activity. The policy says staff members should not consume alcohol during camps and excursions. It is silent on whether they can consume alcohol at other school events where students are present, this is a matter that the school needs to decide upon – draft text is provided in the guidance fact sheet

- MBSC Cyber-Bullying Prevention Policy
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/governance/pages/socialmedia.aspx>

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.

Proprietor in relation to a government school, means the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

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 governing authority means, in the case of a government school:

- the Secretary; or
- a school council, as authorised by or under the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**; or
- the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school or under the **Education and Training Reform Act 2006**.

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 lead 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.

Aligning the CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT to other professional codes

Please refer to this document to align this Code of Conduct with Public Sector, Teachers, Psychologists, Nurses and Speech Pathologists.

[ChildSafeStandard3_AligningCodeConduct.docx](#)