



Mary MacKillop College South Gippsland

Child Safety and Protection - Code of Conduct

Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct

Ratified – June 2019, to be reviewed June 2020.

Central to the mission of Mary MacKillop College is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

1.0 Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at Mary MacKillop College against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, school policies/procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and personnel. The adult/child relationship should be professional at all times. It is recognised that in our setting, staff and volunteers will encounter students in the normal course of family, social and community activities. This Code of Conduct aims to clarify the professional obligations involved. An adult's response to a child's behaviour or circumstance should be commensurate with the child's ages and vulnerability and the adult's responsibility for the care, safety and welfare of the child. The child includes all students of Mary MacKillop College.

All staff, advisory council members, clergy, contractors, volunteers and visitors at Mary MacKillop College 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.

2.0 Acceptable behaviours

All Staff, Advisory Council members, clergy, contractors, volunteers and visitors are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- 2.1 adhering to the school's child-safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times.
- 2.2 taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- 2.3 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).
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 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).

- 2.6 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).
- 2.7 promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities).
- 2.8 ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child.
- 2.9 reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership.
- 2.10 understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.).
- 2.11 reporting any child safety concerns to the school's leadership.
- 2.12 if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe.
- 2.13 Abide by the requirements of the Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme.

3.0 Unacceptable behaviours

Staff, advisory council members, clergy, contractors, volunteers and visitors must not:

- 3.1 ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.
- 3.2 develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children).
- 3.3 exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example, inappropriate sitting on laps).
- 3.4 put children at risk of abuse.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities).
- 3.7 use inappropriate language in the presence of children.
- 3.8 express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children.
- 3.9 discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability.
- 3.10 have contact with a child outside of school without the school leadership's knowledge and/or consent (for example, unauthorised after-hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching); accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street or at community activities, is appropriate.
- 3.11 have any online contact with a child unless necessary for school purposes or as part of a known community or sporting group declared to the College.
- 3.12 use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account.
- 3.13 exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses unless necessary as described above.
- 3.14 photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians.
- 3.15 work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- 3.16 Engage in any conduct that may result in sexual or physical abuse or sexual misconduct with, against or in the presence of a child.
- 3.17 exhibit conduct that is likely to cause significant emotional or psychological harm or significant neglect toward a child.

4.0 Statement of consequences

Breaches of this Code of Conduct by any party may result in disciplinary consequences. Under the relevant Multi Employer Agreement this could include termination of employment. Exclusion from all contact with the College or its activities may also occur.