



St Matthew's Catholic Primary School

95 WILLIAM ST, FAWKNER, VICTORIA 3060

POLICIES

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Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy

(Standard 3: A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children)

Purpose:

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children at St Matthew's Catholic Primary School 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.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and visitors at St Matthew's Catholic Primary 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.

Statement of Policy:

Acceptable Behaviours

All Staff, volunteers (including Parent Committees and Board members), visitors, clergy and contractors of St Matthew's School are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to the School's Child Protection - Reporting Obligations Policy and upholding the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria statement of commitment to child safety at all times;
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse;
- 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);
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another student have been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another student;
- 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 student's self-identification);
- 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);
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities);
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a student;
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the School Leadership Executive Team;
- reporting any child safety concerns to the School Leadership Executive Team;
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.);
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe

Unacceptable Behaviours

All Staff, volunteers (including Parent Committees and Board members), visitors, clergy and contractors of St Matthew's School are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children and must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (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);
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a student 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 student because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability;
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the Principal or Deputy Principal'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, is appropriate;
- have any online contact with a student (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc.) or their family (unless necessary e.g. by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting children with their school work. The Principal must be 'Cc'd into any online correspondence)
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account;
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses;
- photograph or video a student without the consent of the parent or guardians;
- work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.
- leave personal medication anywhere, where children can gain access
- transport students in private vehicles and Parish bus without explicit permission of parents and the Principal

Associated Documents:

- Child Protection - Reporting Obligations Policy
- Child Safe Policy
- CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety
- PROTECT – Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

Further Information:

- **Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority**
Child safe standards website (all schools): www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafestandards
- **Catholic Schools**
CECV Industrial Relations (03) 9267 0228
Catholic Education Melbourne, Student Wellbeing Information Line (03) 9267 0228
Website: www.cecv.catholic.edu.au
- **The Victorian Institute of Teaching**
For Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics and information about employer responsibilities to report action taken against registered teachers in response to allegations and concerns about registered teachers.
Website: www.vit.edu.au

Document Authorisation:

Mr Robert (Bob) Brown
ST MATTHEW'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

Reviewed: August 2017

Board Chair: Mr Robert (Bob) Brown

Principal: Mr Robert (Bob) Brown

*Next Review Date: August 2019

*Policy placed in Staff Handbook and staff alerted each year to the policy



St Matthew's Catholic Primary School *Commitment Statement to Child Safety*

St Matthew's School commits to providing **a safe and nurturing culture** for all children at St. Matthew's School through:

1. Upholding the primacy of the safety and wellbeing of children and any young people.

At all times, the ongoing safety and wellbeing of all children and young people will be the primary focus of care and decision-making, with particular attention paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

To create and maintain a safe and nurturing culture, schools will actively and continually develop and review all policies, processes and practices, informed by emerging thinking and evidence.

2. Empowering families, children, young people and staff to have a voice and raise concerns.

Our school, in partnership with families, will ensure children and young people, are engaged and active participants in decision-making processes, particularly those that have an impact on their safety.

This means that the views of staff, children, young people and families are taken seriously and their concerns are addressed in a just and timely manner. Children and young people are also provided with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and maintain their personal safety and wellbeing.

3. Implementing rigorous risk-management and employment practices.

St Matthew's School will systematically and continually identify and assess risks to child safety and will eliminate (where possible) or reduce all potential sources of harm. Effective risk management will be embedded in school life through effective, transparent and well-understood policies, procedures and practices.

St Matthew's School will employ highly competent and professional staff who are informed and challenged to maintain the safety of all children. The high-quality of staff appointments will be upheld through rigorous employment and staff review processes and practices.

St. Matthew's School will stay abreast of current legislation and will meet their legislative duties to protect the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in their care, including the Victorian Child Safe Standards (Victorian Government 2016), mandatory reporting, grooming, failure to disclose and failure to protect requirements.