

Child Safe Code of Conduct

Holy Family School is committed to providing a safe environment for all students and young people and will take active steps to protect them. To achieve this the school has developed and actively enforces Child Safe Strategies to ensure that any person involved in 'child connected work' is aware of their obligations & responsibilities for ensuring the safety of all children under their care. In accordance with requirements of the [Victorian Government's Ministerial Order No 870](#), Holy Family School's Code of Conduct provides explicit expectations of the behaviours and expectations expected of all community members as documented in the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at Holy Family School against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and Education Board members at Holy Family 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, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's child-safe policy and upholding the school's 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 child have 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 children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child'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 staff meetings, PSG's, etc.)
- 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 child(ren) are safe.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Principal.
- reporting any child safety concerns to the Principal.
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a child

Processes for staff who are required to work alone with a child

It is expected that staff to whom this relates will observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children. This may include (but is not limited to) Holy Family School leadership, psychologists, counsellors and speech pathologists. Specific expectations for staff who, through the nature of their work, are required to work alone with a child include:

- ensuring that the student is comfortable to work alone with the staff member, and make explicit the student's right to terminate the session if they wish.
- where possible, placing the student closest to the exit
- ensuring that relevant school staff (e.g. class teachers) are aware of the student's whereabouts
- where a home visit is required, that a parent or guardian be present and give approval for a visit; that the Principal give approval for such a visit; and that the student is only spoken with in an open, visible space.

Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board members 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
- 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
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities, staff personal mental health issues)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- Must not express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children contrary to Catholic Church Teaching.
- discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have any online contact with a child that is not via the College provided email service (including by social media, personal email, instant messaging etc.) or their family. Note online contact via Holy Family School provided email service may only be for school related matters
- 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 child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol at school or at school events in the presence of children without the permission of the Principal
- Disclosure of Staff/Student Interactions

It is Holy Family School's policy that all staff are encouraged to declare any interactions with students outside school hours. These interactions may include instances where the staff member is:

 - related to the student;
 - friends with the student's parents or family; or
 - given parental consent to interact with the student for academic or sporting purposes outside of school hours and has notified the Holy Family School principal .

Holy Family School maintains records of all declarations made by staff members related to their interactions with students, or relationships with students, that exist outside of school hours or School premises. These records are kept for a period of seven years.