



Code of Conduct: School staff

St. Benedict's Vision Statement

St. Benedict's is a Christ-centred Catholic primary school where we prepare children to be successful and lifelong learners. We are a safe, respectful and inclusive community where we act justly and value diversity.

Together we work and pray.

1. PURPOSE

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at St. Benedict's 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 board/school council members at St Benedict's 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.

2. THE CODE OF CONDUCT

(This Code of Conduct is sighted and signed by each staff member every year)

Principles for adult's behaviour in undertaking child-connected work

- The adult/child relationship should be professional at all times
- An adult's response to a child's behaviour or circumstance should be commensurate with the child's age and vulnerability and the adult's responsibility for the care, safety and welfare of the child
- An adult should not be alone with a child unless there is line of sight to other adults
- An adult should not initiate or seek physical contact or contact with children outside school.

All staff, volunteers, parents, anyone on school property and board/school council members are responsible for supporting 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
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, 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 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 of 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 alone with a child

- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership (or child safety officer if the school has appointed someone to this role) understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958
- reporting any child safety concerns to the school's leadership (or child safety officer if the school has appointed someone to this role)
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

Staff and volunteers **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 which 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)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school's leadership or child safety officer's (if the school has appointed someone to this role) knowledge and/or consent or the school governing authority's approval (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 child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary e.g. by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work)
- 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 whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs

I _____, in the position of _____ confirm

that I have been provided with a copy of the Code of Conduct as stated in this document.

Signed _____ Date _____

Witnessed by _____ Position _____

3. EMBEDDING THE CODE

The school will ensure all school staff (employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy) and parents are informed about the Code and its implications on an ongoing basis. It should be supported by supervision, professional development and to inform parent/carers of the expected behaviour for the school's leadership, staff, contractors and volunteers to support and inform the school's protocols and reporting procedures.

4. 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.

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 staff means:

- in a government school, an individual working in a school environment who is:
 - employed under Part 2.4 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (ETR Act) in the government teaching service or
 - employed under a contract of service by the council of the school under Part 2.3 of the ETR Act or
 - a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).
- in a non-government school, 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)
 - a minister of religion¹

¹ minister of religion has the same meaning as in the Working with Children Act 2005.

- **school governing authority** means:

- the proprietor of a school, including a person authorised to act for or on behalf of the proprietor; or
- the governing body for a school (however described), as authorised by the proprietor of a school or the ETR Act; or
- the principal, as authorised by the proprietor of a school, the school governing body, or the ETR Act.

5. EVALUATION

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

6. RATIFICATION

(Policy Name safety standards-code of conduct draft developed by: Assistant Principal 13/7/16)

Updated	November 2017
Responsible Person	Staff
Date for Review	2021