

## Code of Conduct Policy

### Background

Huntingdale Primary School is a part of the Victorian Government state school system. We have a diverse range of children and cultures at the school. We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people including international students, regardless of their age, culture, beliefs, socio-economic circumstances, disability, family living situation, child rearing practices or educational level. **We have a zero tolerance approach to child abuse.**

The Child Safe Standards came into effect on August 1 2016. All Victorian schools must comply with Ministerial Order No. 870 - Child Safe Standards to create and maintain a child safe organisation.

This Code of Conduct Huntingdale Primary School's approach to creating a respectful organisation where children and young people including international students are safe and feel safe. It sets out the school's expectations for all adults and the appropriate behaviour with and around children. It is the right of all members of the community to experience a safe and supportive school environment. The 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).

### Purpose

To ensure Huntingdale Primary School:

- Communicates to all staff, volunteers and other adults contracted, employed or engaged by the school that they are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children.
- Is compliant with Department of Education and Training (DET) and the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) policies and procedures, the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 and Ministerial Order No. 870.
- Maintains the DET values of leadership, respect, human rights, integrity, impartiality, responsiveness and accountability.

### Implementation

- The Principal has the overall responsibility of implementing this policy.



### **Actions**

- All adults must take responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to a Principal Class Officer.
- If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.
- If the Code of Conduct is breached, it could result in:
  1. Notification to the police (all)
  2. Notification to DET's Conduct and Ethics Branch (DET employees)
  3. Report to the employer (outside agencies)
  4. Call to parents (students)
  5. Report to the Department of Health and Human Services.
  6. The Code of Conduct being reviewed by School Council after a serious breach

### **Acceptable Behaviours**

All adults in at Huntingdale Primary School are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment 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.
- Exhibit our four core values- Kindness, Creativity, Personal Best and Courage.
- 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 a Principal Class Officer, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection.
- 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.
- Encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.



## **Unacceptable Behaviours**

All adults 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 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) unless it is an educational contact e.g. Edmodo, See Saw
- 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.
- Consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.

Additionally School Council, the Principal, students, staff, parents/carers and visitors have obligations.

### ***School Council and the Principal have the obligation to:***

- Provide a safe learning community to all people who enter our school and provide educational services to our children.
- Communicate to the school community about Huntingdale Primary School's zero tolerance of child abuse.
- Create, pass, implement and review policies and procedures that promote the Child Safe Standards.
- Follow DET and VRQA policies in regards to the Child Safe Standards.
- Be role models of child safety in our school.
- Ensure the school communicates the Child Safe Standards each year to the school community.



***Students have the obligation to:***

- Contribute positively to their educational experience and participate fully in the educational program.
- Exhibit our four core values- Kindness, Creativity, Personal Best and Courage.
- Follow teachers' instructions and the school norms.
- Respect the rights and property of themselves, other students, school staff, community members, visitors and the school itself.
- Act in a safe and honest manner.
- Be responsible and report any incidences of unsafe behaviour to others or themselves to school staff.
- Understand that there will be consequences for their actions- either positive or negative.
- Understand that in conflict situations they will be given time to reflect on their behaviour, given time/strategies to repair relationships and implement acts of restitution to the other party involved.

***Parents/carers have an obligation to:***

- Take an active interest in their child's education.
- Encourage their child to contribute positively to their educational experience and participate fully in the educational program at Huntingdale.
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment.
- Support the school values and norms.
- Assist children in developing an understanding of safety and respect.
- Model and reinforce positive behaviours.
- Ensure their child regularly attends school.
- Engage with the school to encourage the partnership between home and school in the education and safety of children.
- Inform the school of any medical, social/emotional, educational or family situations that may impact their child at school.
- Report any instances of abuse that they know of to the police or Department of Health and Human Services.

***Staff have the obligation to:***

- Meet the standards of the Victorian Institute of Teaching and adhere to the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct and Ethics.
- Teach students an engaging educational program, targeted to their needs and set appropriate and achievable goals.
- Be informed, within privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that may impact on the teaching and learning for that student.
- Teach a strong Student Wellbeing Program including 'Play is the Way', our school values and understanding safe/unsafe situations.
- Role model positive and appropriate behaviours.
- Encourage the partnership between home and school in the education and safety of children.
- Provide adequate supervision in the school grounds.
- Report instances of unsafe situations/behaviours including child abuse as per DET policies.
- Record and communicate serious and continuous breaches of school rules.
- Fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the school norms and behaviour management policy.
- Engage with students in appropriate online forums e.g. School Network, Edmodo and not engage with students in inappropriate forums such as Facebook.



**Visitors and volunteers have an obligation to:**

- Sign in and out of the school each time they visit.
- Act in a safe, respectful and appropriate manner in the school.
- Report any unsafe situations and behaviours to school staff.
- Ensure all of their documentation (e.g. Working with Children Check, Insurance) is up to date and a copy given to the school.

**Service providers have the obligation to:**

- Sign in and out of the school each time they visit.
- Act in a safe, respectful and appropriate manner in the school.
- Report any unsafe situations and behaviours to school staff.
- Ensure that they comply with the Child Safe Standards through their regulatory body and show evidence of this to the school.

**Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually or as needed to comply with DET policy changes.

**Document Status**

<b>Reviewed</b>	<b>School Council Ratification</b>	<b>Next Review</b>
October 2018	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	20 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
9 March 2020- Principal Added reference to international students	N/A	March 2023