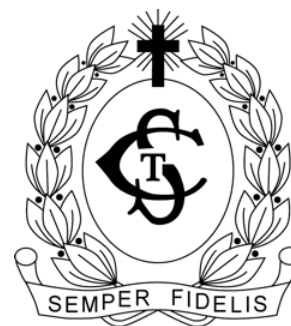


**Safeguarding Children
Code of Conduct
St. Columba's Primary School, Elwood
July 2016**



At St. Columba's we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the gospel ([CECV Commitment Statement to Child Safety](#)).

The person of each individual human being, in his or her material and spiritual needs, is at the heart of *Christ's teaching: that is why the promotion of the human person is the goal of the Catholic school* (Congregation for Catholic Education 1997, n. 9).

At St Columba's our School Mission is to create a warm, friendly, family centred environment where all work together to inspire excellence. We promote, teach and live by the Gospel values of Jesus Christ. We aim to provide a comprehensive curriculum that challenges and enhances individual student learning. We are dedicated to working collaboratively and professionally to achieve a high standard of learning and teaching that empowers students with skills for the future. We recognise the unique qualities of each person and strive to create an environment with a sense of security, happiness and wellbeing. We promote the awareness, tolerance and acceptance of all and are dedicated to the development and dignity of the whole person.

At St Columba's we are committed to creating a nurturing school environment where children are respected, their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe. It is everyone's responsibility to report information about child abuse.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children at St. Columba's Primary 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, BASC staff and board members at St. Columba's 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, BASC staff and board 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
- 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 team
- 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 Principal or Deputy Principal
- 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

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council 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 (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 because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability, or any other forms of discrimination
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the Principal or Deputy Principal's knowledge (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 eg 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, to contact families/ students
- 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.

I, _____, confirm I have been provided with a copy of the above Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____

Date: _____