



CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

Mount Waverley Heights Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children (including students enrolled in the International Student Program). Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment, which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes of ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leadership team of Mount Waverley Heights Primary School will support the implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide an inclusive, safe and orderly school and all its learning environments. The Principal and school leadership team of Mount Waverley Heights Primary School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, visitors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Legislative Responsibilities

Mount Waverley Heights Primary School takes our legal responsibilities seriously including:

- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to the police
- **Failure to protect:** people of authority in Mount Waverley Heights Primary School will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so
- Any personnel who are mandatory reporters must comply with their duties

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in children related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's Child Safe Environment Policy
- treating students and families in the school community with respect, both within and outside the school environment, as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling us 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 students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability

- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Principal or Assistant Principal
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm

Unacceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, visitors, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work, we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc.) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances

The Mount Waverley Heights Primary School Council endorsed this Code of Conduct in June 2020.

Mount Waverley Heights Primary School Code of Conduct Acknowledgement

I _____ agree to abide by the Mount Waverley Heights Primary School Code of Conduct. I have read and am aware of my responsibilities outlined in the Mount Waverley Heights Primary School Child Safe Environment Policy.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Status: Reviewed: September 2021

Ratified: October 2021 **Next Review:** June 2022