



Child Safe Code of Conduct

All staff, contractors, volunteers, visitors and children of Burwood Heights Primary School and Kindergarten are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below. The child safe standards require Burwood Heights Primary School and Kindergarten to have a code of conduct that establishes clear expectations and promotes appropriate behaviour with children in the school and kindergarten environments, to ensure the safety of all children. A code of conduct can help enforce appropriate behaviour with children, and help protect children from harm or abuse.

Our code of conduct outlines expected standards for appropriate behaviour in the school environment and online conduct. The code of conduct is used:

- to promote child safety in the school and kindergarten environments
- as part of induction training for all staff and children as well as contractors, volunteers and visitors if relevant to their time on the school grounds
- as part of refresher training for all staff and children as well as contractors, volunteers and visitors if relevant to their time on the school grounds
- to inform parents/carers and other persons associated with the organisation what behaviour they can expect from the organisation's leadership and others on the school grounds
- to role-model appropriate behaviour to children
- to support and inform organisational protocols and reporting procedures should breaches of the code be suspected or identified
- to be included as a reference in employment advertisements and contracts to ensure compliance
- to support the school's child safe strategies, policies and procedures.

All personnel of Burwood Heights Primary School and Kindergarten are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to Burwood Heights Primary School and Kindergarten child safe policy at all times and upholding the Burwood Heights Primary School and Kindergarten statement of commitment to child safety at all time. This means:
- taking all reasonable steps to protect all children from abuse
- treating everyone 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 and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning their self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and international students (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)
- promoting the safety of vulnerable children (for example, being sensitive to individuals' circumstances)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the police or child protection as appropriate and to the School Principal. Personnel are to report according to the protocols outlined in **PROTECT - FOUR CRITICAL**

ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS in Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse (this document is available in staff policy manuals and the school website)

- ensuring as quickly as possible that if an allegation of child abuse is made, the child/children are safe
- encouraging children to voice their opinions and perspectives, and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues of significance

Any person on school grounds MUST NOT:

- 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, sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors or working in a withdrawal space with no windows)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves (for example, 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
- where possible, be alone with a child
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, on the basis of culture, race, ethnicity, gender or disability
- have any online contact with a child or their family via email and social media sites (without Principal's prior consent)
- ignore, disregard or fail to report **ANY** suspected or disclosed child abuse

Any breaches of this code must be immediately reported to the Principal.

This **Code of Conduct** should be read in conjunction with the school's **Child Safe Policy and Child Safe Strategies**. As with the Child Safe Policy, the **Code of Conduct** will be reviewed every 2 years or following significant incidents should they occur.

Further information on child safe standards can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services website www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/projects-and-initiatives/children,-youth-and-family-services/creating-child-safe-organisations

Additional resources for organisations in the child safe standards toolkit can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards. In particular, An Overview to the Victorian Child safe has information to help organisations understand the requirements of each of the child safe standards, including examples of measures organisations can put in place, a self-audit tool and a glossary of key terms: www.dhs.vic.gov.au/_data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc

Registered schools can contact the Department of Education and Training: child.safe.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au

Early childhood services operating under the *National Quality Framework* or *Children's Services Act 1996* should contact: licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au

Licensed children's services enquiry line: 1300 307 415

*Ratified by School Council
March 2021*