



Rationale

Central to the vision and core values of St. Therese's School is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of students and young people and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding students and young people at St. Therese's School against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, visitors, volunteers, contractors, clergy and school board members at St. Therese's 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 student safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of students, as noted below.

Acceptable Behaviours

All staff, visitors, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board members are responsible for supporting the safety of students by:

- adhering to the school's Child Safe Policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to student safety at all times
 - taking all reasonable steps to protect students from abuse
 - treating everyone in the school community with respect (modelling positive and respectful relationships and acting in a manner that sustains a safe, educational and pastoral environment)
 - listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another student have been abused, or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another student
 - promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student's self-identification)
 - promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance policy towards discrimination)
 - promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
 - ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a student
 - reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership or Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator
 - understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)
 - reporting any student safety concerns to the school's leadership, Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator or OH & S Officer (if appropriate)
 - if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student/s are safe.
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Unacceptable Behaviours

All visitors, volunteers, contractors and board members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students)
- exhibit behaviours with students which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example, inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put students at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with students or do things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of student (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of students
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students
- discriminate against any student, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have any online contact with a student (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) to communicate with a student
- exchange personal contact details (such as phone numbers, social networking site usernames, email addresses, etc.) with a student
- photograph or video a student without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with students while under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs
- consume alcohol or take illicit drugs at school (other than school sanctioned social events where, if staff choose to consume alcohol, they do so responsibly).

(Adapted from Source: VRQA)

Acknowledge

St. Therese's School is required to provide a copy of the above document to visitors, volunteers or contractors before they can work at St. Therese's School. To acknowledge your receipt of this document, please visit this link

<http://bit.ly/stscca>

Alternatively, you may acknowledge the Code of Conduct when signing in at the Front Office.

Evaluation

This Policy will be reviewed as part of a cyclical process in accordance with the School Improvement Plan (SIP).

Document Control

| Version | Author | Purpose/Change | Date |
|---------|----------------------------|-------------------------|------|
| 0.1 | Various STS L'ship Members | Initial policy drafting | 2016 |

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| 0.2 | Various STS L'ship Members | Various changes made throughout doc | Pre 2019 |
| 1.0 | D Parry | Changed to include "Visitors" | Mid 2019 |
