



CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Child Safe Standard 3



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the school office.

RATIONALE

Ascot Vale Heights School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. 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 young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

AIM

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 or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of Ascot Vale Heights School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of Ascot Vale Heights School will provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, 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.

IMPLEMENTATION

Ascot Vale Heights School (AVSS) is committed to child safety. We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently. We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously.

The school is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

We are committed to providing a safe environment for children with a disability, the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Any major changes in behavior that are observed in children should be documented and reported to the

Christine Monahan the Child Safety Officer for Ascot Vale Heights School. In her absence, refer to the Principal, Nance Sidoti and /or Assistant principal, Megan Retallick, Leading teacher, Susanne Andriesz.

Acceptable behaviour:

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the Ascot Vale Heights School community involved in child-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 policy
- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment 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 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 students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of vulnerable 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
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership and/or child safety officer
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
- 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, contractors, and any other member of the Ascot Vale Heights 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 schoolwork 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.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

Available publicly on our school’s website Included in staff induction processes and staff training

- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Reminders in our school newsletter

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	18/08/2021
Approved by	School Council – 26/10/2021
Next scheduled review date	August 2023

REFERENCES

Department of Education and Training – Child Protection Reporting Obligations

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/childprotection/Pages/safeenviro.aspx>