

## CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Eltham Primary 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.

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 Eltham Primary 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 Eltham Primary School will also 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.

### Acceptable behaviours

**As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the 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 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
- 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 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<sup>1</sup>
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy<sup>2</sup> or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

**School Council and the Principal have the obligation to:**

- Provide a safe learning community to all people who enter our school and provide education services to our children
- Communicate to the school community about Eltham Primary School's zero tolerance of child abuse
- Create, pass, implement and review policies and procedures that promote the Child Safe Standards
- Follow DET and VRQA policies in regards to the Child Safe Standards
- Be role models of child safety in our school
- Ensure the school communicates the Child Safe Standards each year to the school community.

**Parents/carers have an obligation to:**

- Take an active interest in their child's education
- Encourage their child to contribute positively to their educational experience and participate fully in the education program at Eltham Primary School
- Support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment
- Support the school values and norms
- Assist children in developing an understanding of safety and respect
- Model and reinforce positive behaviours
- Ensure their child regularly attends school
- Engage with the school to encourage the partnership between home and school in the education and safety of children
- Inform the school of any medical, social/emotional, educational or family situations that may impact their child at school.

**Staff have the obligation to:**

- Meet the standards of the Victorian Institute of Teaching and adhere to the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct and Ethics
- Teach students an engaging educational program, targeted to their needs and set appropriate and achievable goals
- Be informed, within privacy requirements, about matters relating to students that may impact on the teaching and learning for that student
- Role model positive, appropriate and safe behaviours
- Teach a strong social and emotional learning program, such as PATHS and our school values/agreements
- Encourage the partnership between home and school in the education and safety of children
- Provide adequate supervision in the school grounds
- Report instances of unsafe situations/behaviours including child abuse as per DET policies
- Record and communicate serious and continuous breaches of school rules
- Fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the school norms and behaviour management policy
- Engage with students in appropriate online forums and not engage with students in inappropriate forums across social media.

**Students have the obligation to:**

- Contribute positively to their educational experience and participate fully in the educational program
- Follow teachers' instructions and the school norms
- Respect the rights and property of themselves, other students, school staff, community members, visitors and the school itself.
- Act in a safe and honest manner
- Be responsible and report any incidences of unsafe behaviour to others or themselves to school staff
- Understand that there will be consequences for their actions – either positive or negative
- Understand that in conflict situations they will be given time to reflect on their behaviour, given time/strategies to repair relationships and implement acts of restitution to the other party involved.

**Service providers have the obligation to:**

- Sign in and out of the school each time they visit.
- Act in a safe, respectful and appropriate manner in the school.
- Report any unsafe situations and behaviours to school staff.
- Ensure that they comply with the Child Safe Standards through their regulatory body and show evidence of this to the school.

**Parent/carer volunteers and visitors who are working within the school grounds have an obligation to:**

- Sign in and out of the school each time they visit
- Act in a safe, respectful and appropriate manner in the school
- Report any unsafe situations and behaviours to school staff
- Ensure all of their documentation (eg. Working With Children Check, Insurance) is up to date and a copy given to the school.

This Code of Conduct was endorsed/approved by the Eltham Primary school council for review if legislative or other changes require in the interim or no later than December 2018.

<sup>1</sup> SPAC: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/photoandfilm.aspx> The policy says the school should get consent before taking and publishing photos of a student. This applies every time a photo is taken. The same policy applies for excursions and school activities.

<sup>2</sup> SPAC: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/alcohol.aspx> The policy says the school must obtain school council approval before alcohol can be consumed on school grounds or at a school activity. The policy says staff members should not consume alcohol during camps and excursions. It is silent on whether they can consume alcohol at other school events where students are present, this is a matter that the school needs to decide upon – draft text is provided in the guidance fact sheet