

Melbourne High School Child Safety Code of Conduct



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this Code of Conduct, please contact Reception on 98260711.

Purpose

Melbourne High School community is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our responsibility is to provide a safe, supportive and enriching environment; one 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 Melbourne High School will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide an inclusive, safe and orderly school and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of Melbourne High School will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

Scope

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.

Code of Conduct

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors, 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 Safety and Wellbeing 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 or student, have been abused or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or student
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from 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 Child Safety Officer: Student Wellbeing Coordinator
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse, in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures and the [PROTECT Four Critical Actions](#).
- 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, visitors, 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
- 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 or student in a school environment except in accordance with the [Photographing, Filming and Recording Students 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 policy¹ or take illicit drugs under any circumstances
- have contact with any student outside school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and when parental permission has been sought.

Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All Melbourne High School staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-connected work who breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the Department of Education and Training Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy

and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Melbourne High School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal and Student Wellbeing Coordinator.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact the DET regional office (email: sevr@education.vic.gov.au phone: 1300 338 738)

CODE OF CONDUCT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Code of Conduct last reviewed	08/2022
Consultation	Wellbeing Team – 13/07/22 Student Leadership Group (SRC, School Captains, SWAG leader)
Endorsed	School Council 21/05/2024
Next scheduled review date	08/2024

¹ The MHS policy states that staff members should not consume alcohol during any school activity where students are present and prior approval of School Council is required before alcohol can be consumed on school grounds or at a school activity.