



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 9826 07111 or at mhs@mhs.vic.edu.au.

1. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND VALUES

1.1 Shared statement of commitment

As a school, we recognise that the quality of our relationships, the example we set, and the way we work together contribute significantly to the learning, wellbeing and development of our students. Melbourne High School (MHS) is committed to providing a professional, respectful and supportive work environment where staff and students can prosper and feel safe and valued. The leadership team is committed to fostering a positive work environment, where positive and acceptable behaviours in line with our values are encouraged and any negative or unacceptable behaviours are appropriately addressed. To enact this commitment in practice, this Code of Conduct outlines the expectations of behaviour at Melbourne High School (or 'the School').

1.2 Scope

This Code of conduct applies to all MHS staff which includes employees, Council members and Council employees, volunteers, and contractors. It applies in all work- and work-related environments, including school events, functions, school run trips as well as digital environments.

The MHS Code of Conduct is informed by the MHS values, the Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct, the Victorian Institute of Teaching Code of Conduct and the MHS Child Safety Code of Conduct. The MHS Code of Conduct is an overarching document which incorporates the other codes, as relevant, and provides guidance on the standards of professional conduct expected of anyone employed or engaged by MHS.

1.3 Values

Central to how we do our work are Melbourne High School's values, by:

Integrity- Adhering to a set of ethical principles: acting with honesty and consistency in all aspects of life; honouring commitments.

Courage- Facing challenges and adversity with bravery; standing up for one's beliefs; taking risks in the pursuit of personal and academic growth.

Respect- Treating others with dignity and consideration: fostering mutual understanding and cooperation: caring for our environment.

Compassion- Acting with empathy and understanding for the experiences, feelings and needs of others; offering support and care when needed.

In addition to the MHS values, as a government school, employees are also bound by the [Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct](#). The Code describes the behaviours that exemplify the values contained in the Public Administration Act 2004, which are:

Responsiveness - Delivering high-quality, timely services and providing frank, fearless advice to the government.

Integrity - Being honest, open, and transparent in all dealings, and managing conflicts of interest appropriately.

Impartiality - Making decisions based on merit, without bias, favouritism, or self-interest.

Accountability - Taking responsibility for actions, decisions, and the use of public resources.

Respect - Treating colleagues, stakeholders, and the public with dignity and fairness.

Leadership - Leading by example, fostering a positive workplace culture, and building public trust.

Human Rights - Identifying and upholding the rights of individuals as outlined in the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006.

For details regarding expected behaviours of public sector employees refer to the VPS Code of Conduct in **Attachment A**. Some of the topics covered in the Code include expectations around confidentiality, conflict of interest, financial probity, gifts and benefits and other employment.

As stipulated in the VPS Code of Conduct, the code and relevant policies and procedures also apply to contractors or consultants where the contractors:

- supervise public sector employees;
- undertake work that is of a similar nature to the work undertaken by public sector employees at a premise or location generally regarded as a public sector workplace; or
- use or have access to public sector resources or information that are not normally accessible or available to the public.

2. CHILD SAFETY

2.1 All staff including employees (whether permanent, fixed term or casual), volunteers and contractors of Melbourne High School, have to abide by the MHS Child Safety Code of Conduct (**Attachment B**). The Child Safety Code of Conduct lists acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.

2.2 All staff must report any child safety concerns as per the MHS Child Safety Responding to and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedure. Teachers, nurses, psychologists and any other mandatory reporters must report reasonable suspicions of child physical or sexual abuse to authorities. For more information refer to the MHS Child Safety Policy available on the MHS website.

2.3 All staff working with students owe a duty of care to those students and must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm to students (for details refer to the Duty of Care Policy).

3. PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR AND WORKPLACE RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 Responsibilities- all staff

In line with the above values, and in addition to any contractual or legal obligations, as an employee, volunteer or contractor of Melbourne High School, you have the following overarching workplace responsibilities:

- 3.1.1 Adhere to the MHS Child Safety Code of Conduct (Attachment B);
- 3.1.2 Implement the MHS Student Wellbeing and Engagement strategies outlined in the applicable Policy (Attachment D);
- 3.1.3 Understand and act on mandatory reporting situations (for details, see <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/protecting-children/policy>) where applicable;
- 3.1.4 Perform duties to the best of your ability and be accountable for your performance;
- 3.1.5 Comply with all reasonable and lawful directions of the School and those given by your supervisor;
- 3.1.6 Carry out duties in a professional, competent and conscientious manner, while seeking suitable opportunities to improve knowledge and skills, including where applicable through participation in relevant professional development;
- 3.1.7 Act honestly and in good faith in fulfilling your duties, including being transparent in your dealings with the School and the public where applicable;
- 3.1.8 Take steps to ensure that your conduct cannot be perceived (in so far as reasonably practicable) as inappropriate, or in conflict with professional expectations;
- 3.1.9 Be courteous and responsive in dealing with your colleagues, students, parents/ carers and members of the public, including respecting individual differences and treating everyone fairly and equitably;
- 3.1.10 Ensure all communications (email, messaging, Compass, Teams, Canvas etc.) are professional and appropriate, and for legitimate use, ensuring it does not breach anti-discrimination or privacy legislation or the department's Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Resources;
- 3.1.11 Arrive at School at agreed times or in line with the Victorian Government Schools Agreement and Departmental policies;
- 3.1.12 Work collaboratively with your colleagues and ensure that your conduct whilst employed is consistent with the values of the School and does not damage the reputation of the School;
- 3.1.13 Respect the School's property, and the property of other members of the School community;
- 3.1.14 Support and comply with all School codes of conduct, policies, procedures, and any legal, industry or professional requirements that apply to your role (including under work health and safety laws);
- 3.1.15 Support, within the scope of your role, the delivery of high-quality education to the School's students;

- 3.1.16 If directed or required attend all staff briefings, meetings or professional development activities and avoid making personal appointments during scheduled meeting and activities, unless urgent;
- 3.1.17 Respond to communication from staff, students and parents in a timely manner, ideally within 2 working days;
- 3.1.18 Treat all with respect and without discrimination and role model respectful and non-discriminatory behaviour towards all people, staff and students alike, promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal people, people with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, people with a disability, and people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer, questioning and asexual (LGBTIQA+);
- 3.1.19 Model ethical behaviour and embrace the values of MHS;
- 3.1.20 Notify daily organiser of any absences or time in lieu as soon as possible, in accordance with applicable policies and procedures, and wherever possible ensure that work is left for replacement teacher in Compass;
- 3.1.21 Notify MHS of anything that could affect or exclude you from ability to do work for the School (e.g. Cancellation of WWCC or professional registration, criminal charges).

3.2 Unacceptable behaviours

The following behaviours will not be tolerated at Melbourne High School:

- Any form of abuse or violence and aggression whether physical or verbal (e.g. Through threatening words, conduct or gestures) directed at any staff, students, parents or members of the School community
- Any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students (including bullying, child abuse, discrimination, grooming, sexual harassment, victimisation, neglect, sexual misconduct, sexual offences, physical violence, reportable conduct or victimisation) or behaviour that exposes students to such behaviour
- Disrespectful, rude or insulting behaviour (including but not limited to sarcasm, derogatory remarks, inappropriate familiarity, behaviour that is passive aggressive such as silent treatment, gossip, deliberate inefficiency etc.)
- Bullying, discrimination, sexual harassment, or vilification or behaviour that is perceived to constitute any of the above. For definitions of these behaviours, refer to the applicable policy available in the Department's Policy and Advisory Library.

3.3 Melbourne High School teacher additional responsibilities

As well as abiding by the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Code of Professional Ethics and Code of Conduct (**Attachment C**), teachers at MHS will:

- 3.3.1 Arrive at School in time to check extras and be prepared for, and informed about, the activities for each day (in line with the Victorian Government Schools Agreement and Departmental policies);
- 3.3.2 Complete tasks in a timely manner adhering to due dates, such as report writing, service awards, calendar entries, form teacher duties, VCE results, requests from the

leadership team, subject coordinators, SLCs, the directors of sport and music, the daily organiser, the careers coordinator and others as they arise;

- 3.3.3 Arrive to class punctually and well prepared;
- 3.3.4 Provide collegial support in consistently enforcing School rules and initiatives, such as uniform, lateness, use of mobile phones in line with Departmental Policy on use of IT Resources, submission of work by the due dates and observance of the School rules;
- 3.3.5 Punctually attend yard duty and be proactive in student management;
- 3.3.6 Provide careful and appropriate supervision of students with regards to age, individual needs and the specific environment (for details refer to the Supervision of Students Policy);
- 3.3.7 Inform students regularly of their progress and to return set work in a reasonable timeframe;
- 3.3.8 Show care and concern for each individual student and treat all students with respect, consistency and fairness;
- 3.3.9 Communicate with parents/ carers when appropriate.

All staff should expect

- To be treated with common courtesy by the students and other staff;
- To be provided with an appropriate working environment;
- The co-operation and support of colleagues and the School administration;
- The co-operation and support of parents/ carers;
- To be provided with the opportunity for involvement in the School-based decision-making process;
- In the case of teachers, that students will come to class properly prepared, willing to engage with the lesson, and carry out reasonable directions from the teacher.

3.4 Volunteers and contractors expectations

Volunteers and contractors are expected to uphold the same standards of conduct as paid staff members and are expected to:

- 3.4.1 Adhere to the MHS Child Safety Code of Conduct (Attachment B);
- 3.4.2 Perform their duties to the best of their ability and be accountable for their performance;
- 3.4.3 Maintain all required checks (e.g. Working with children checks) and registrations/licences (e.g. White card) for the nature of the work they are performing and notify the School of anything that may impact their ability to perform their work;
- 3.4.4 Follow reasonable instructions given by supervisor;
- 3.4.5 Comply with lawful directions;
- 3.4.6 Be courteous & responsive in dealing with staff, students, parents and members of the public (if applicable);
- 3.4.7 Work collaboratively with staff and colleagues;
- 3.4.8 Ensure that their conduct is consistent with the values and expectations of the School and does not damage the reputation of the School;
- 3.4.9 Comply with all School policies, procedures and rules as available on the School's website, distributed and/or explained to them;
- 3.4.10 Undertake any training, orientation or induction as required by the School.

- 3.4.11 Maintain confidentiality regarding information seen or heard while working as a volunteer;
- 3.4.12 Report any suspected or incidents of child abuse using the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and Procedures, found at mhs.vic.edu.au under "about:information and policies" and the department procedures: [Child Abuse \(including grooming\) – Identification and Response: Policy | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/child-abuse-identification-and-response-policy)
- 3.4.13 Take reasonable care for their own health, safety and wellbeing and that of others who may be affected by their actions or omissions while volunteering. This includes participating in and completing all applicable induction activities, based on what task/s are being performed.

Volunteers and contractors have a right to:

- Receive respect, cooperation and support from fellow workers;
- Receive recognition and feedback from supervising staff members;
- Be assigned suitable projects, tasks or jobs based on their skills and abilities;
- Decline to perform tasks that they feel unable to do or would rather not do; and
- Be provided with sufficient information and instruction to perform their duties adequately and safely;
- Volunteer School workers are covered by the Department's worker's compensation policy if they suffer personal injury in the course of engaging in School work.

4 HEALTH AND SAFETY

4.1 Responsibilities – general

Work Health and Safety is of fundamental importance to Melbourne High School and is everyone's responsibility. Employees, volunteers and contractors all share the responsibility to look after their own health and safety whilst conducting work for the School and ensure they do not do any act or omission which may endanger their or other's health and safety. Any perceived risks, near misses or incidents are to be promptly reported to the designated Health and Safety representatives or supervisors so these can be addressed. For further information refer to the department's OHS policies available at <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/occupational-health-safety-wellbeing-management/policy>.

4.2 Drugs, alcohol and smoking

All staff, volunteers and contractors are also responsible for ensuring that their capacity to perform their duties is not impaired by alcohol or drugs and that the use of such substances does not put at risk their, or any other person's, health and safety.

While doing work for the School, you must:

- 4.2.1 Not attend work under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, or any substance (including prescription medication taken other than as directed) that impairs your capacity to perform your duties safely and effectively;
- 4.2.2 Not consume alcohol or illegal drugs, or misuse prescription medication, while at work;

- 4.2.3 Not bring, possess or store alcohol, illegal drugs, or misused prescription medication onsite at MHS or at any location where the School is operating (including camps, rowing sheds, etc.), unless authorised or required for medical purposes;
- 4.2.4 Notify your supervisor if you are taking prescribed medication that may reasonably affect your capacity to perform your duties safely;
- 4.2.5 Take action to resolve any alcohol or other drug-related problems that may affect your work;
- 4.2.6 Not give, supply or traffic illegal drugs, or improperly supply prescription medication, to students or other employees, or encourage or condone their misuse;
- 4.2.7 Not supply or administer prescription or non-prescription drugs to students unless authorised to do so;
- 4.2.8 Not purchase alcohol for, or give alcohol to, any School student (or to any other person under the age of 18 years) or encourage or condone the use of alcohol by students of any age;
- 4.2.9 Not give or supply tobacco, tobacco products, vaping devices or substances, or the like, to any School student;
- 4.2.10 Not smoke or vape within School premises and within 4 metres of any pedestrian access to School premises (includes all School grounds) or at School events and excursions held off premises;
- 4.2.11 Consult with your direct Supervisor or the Principal if you are concerned about working with other employees who may be adversely affected by drugs or alcohol and report any knowledge of any other employee who may have illicit drugs or alcohol in their possession whilst on-site at MHS.

5 RECORD KEEPING

Accurate record keeping and reporting are an important part of our legal and regulatory obligations as a School. Records can be either hard copy (such as paper file or register) or electronic (such as a database, digital file or email). Staff must create and maintain full and honest records of their activities, decisions and other business transactions and be aware that they may have to produce these as evidence in court. It is expected that all staff keep contemporaneous records and document files correctly, namely, in the right time period, with the right names, actions, and nature of the situation.

Schools must retain and manage records for the minimum retention periods outlined in the School records retention guide. Records must only be disposed of with written approval of the School's principal after their minimum retention period has been met. Certain records may be routinely disposed of as part of Normal Administrative Practice without formal approval from the School principal, such as duplicate copies, working documents and drafts.

6 CONFIDENTIALITY

While working for Melbourne High School, in whatever capacity, you may become privy to confidential or sensitive information related to the School, its staff, students or their families. Confidential information includes information about the affairs, processes, dealing, finances, organisation and personnel, including students, parents and staff, of MHS.

Confidential Information may be used solely for the purpose of performing your duties with MHS and may only be disclosed:

- based on a need to know (and only to the extent that each has a need to know);
or
- If this has been approved by the School, as relevant; or
- that is required by law to be disclosed.

Confidential Information is not to be imparted deliberately or carelessly to any person at any time who is not authorised by the principal to receive it. This obligation continues both during and after the persons employment or engagement with the School.

Where a staff member is in possession of documents, software, computers or telecommunication devices containing confidential information or material, the staff member is responsible for the security of these items at all times. A staff member must immediately notify the principal of any suspected or actual unauthorised use, theft, copying or disclosure of, or any data breaching involving, Confidential Information.

7 CONSEQUENCES OF BREACH

The consequences of the breach of the MHS Code of Conduct will depend on the nature and seriousness of the breach and the frequency (whether isolated incident or repeated breach) and may include:

- Request to undergo a medical assessment to establish fitness for duty
- Counselling on appropriate behaviours (by supervisor or Principal)
- Formal education and training (E.g. The Department's Respectful workplace relationships training)
- Formal warning following appropriate disciplinary procedures
- Suspension from duties (temporary measure that may be taken during investigation)
- Termination of employment (e.g. For serious misconduct)
- Notification to appropriate agencies, such as VIT, CCYP, the department, or Victoria police where appropriate or required (e.g. Reportable conduct)
- Any other action deemed appropriate or necessary by the Principal.

8 RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES

- Melbourne High School Statement of Purpose
- Melbourne High School Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Melbourne High School Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Melbourne High School Child Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Melbourne High School Induction Handbook
- Melbourne High School Sexual Harassment and Workplace Bullying policy
- Melbourne High School Volunteer Policy

Department policies:

- [Acceptable Use Policy for ICT Resources | education.vic.gov.au](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/acceptable-use-policy)



- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Duty of Care Policy](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination](#)
- [Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Management in Schools: Policy | education.vic.gov.au](#)
- [Privacy and Information Sharing](#)
- [Records Management – School Records](#)
- [Sexual Harassment](#)
- [Supervision of Students: Policy](#)
- [Volunteers in Schools](#)
- [Volunteer OHS Management](#)
- [Working with Children and Other Suitability Checks for School Volunteers and Visitors](#)
- [Workplace Bullying](#)

9 ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A. Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct. Available at https://www.vpsc.vic.gov.au/files/2025-12/VPSC_Code_VPSE_WEB.pdf

Attachment B. MHS Child Safety Code of Conduct. [2025 Child Safety Code of Conduct.docx](#)

Attachment C. [The Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Conduct](#), [The Victorian Teaching Profession's Code of Ethics](#)

Attachment D. MHS Wellbeing and engagement strategies

10 REVIEW AND APPROVAL

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| Code of Conduct last reviewed | June 2026 |
| Consultation | 16 June 2026 |
| Approved by | Principal |
| Next scheduled review date | June 2028 |

Agreement

I,

Agree to abide by this Code of Conduct, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct (Attachment B), and where applicable Victorian Public Sector Code of Conduct (Attachment A), VIT Code of Conduct (Attachment C) or other relevant professional code of conduct.

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Signature

Date:



MHS STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

June 2026

ATTACHMENT A. VICTORIAN PUBLIC SECTOR CODE OF CONDUCT.

Available at https://www.vpsc.vic.gov.au/files/2025-12/VPSC_Code_VPSE_WEB.pdf

ATTACHMENT B. MHS CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Purpose

At Melbourne High School, the safety and wellbeing of our students is our highest priority. Our Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines the standards of behaviour we expect from all adults when working with or around children and young people in our school community. All staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, school council members, and anyone else involved in child-connected work must follow the Child safety Code of Conduct.

The Code applies across all settings: in-person and online, during and outside of school hours, and at any location where school activities take place, such as camps and excursions. Grounded in our core values of *integrity, respect, courage, and compassion*, the Code helps ensure that every student at Melbourne High School feels safe, supported, and valued.

Acceptable behaviours

As Melbourne High School staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other members of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding our commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety Policy
- treating students and families in our school community with respect in our school environment and outside our school environment as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they disclose that they or another child or student has been abused, or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or student
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer, questioning and asexual (LGBTIQA+) students
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership and Child Safety Officer and Student Wellbeing team
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy and procedures (available at www.mhs.vic.edu.au) 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 Melbourne High School staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other members of our school community involved in child-connected work, we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts)
- display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context
- ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance



- treat a child or student 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 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
- consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present
- have contact with any student outside of school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum, or professional guidance, or in accordance with the Melbourne High School Communication Guidelines.

Breaches of the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All Melbourne High School staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other members 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 via email: sevr@education.vic.gov.au or phone: 1300 338 738.

Approval and review

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| Created date | August 2025 |
| Consultation | Consultation on this policy is mandatory |
| Endorsed by | School Council |
| Endorsed on | Tuesday 19 August 2025 |
| Next review date | August 2027 |



ATTACHMENT C

[THE VICTORIAN TEACHING PROFESSION'S CODE OF CONDUCT](#)

[Document_VIT_Code_of_Ethics.pdf](#)



MHS STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

June 2026

ATTACHMENT D. MHS WELLBEING & ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

See MHS Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy on the MHS website. [Information and Policies - Melbourne High School](#)