

OAKLEIGH SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

Purpose:

Oakleigh South 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.

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children. Our commitment to enforcing appropriate behaviour with children in our school will help to protect children from abuse.¹

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.

Teaching staff at Oakleigh South Primary School are already governed by the *Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct and Ethics* (as published by the Victorian Institute of Teaching) and adherence to the VIT Code needs to continue. However, a Code of Conduct which addresses the specific requirements of the Victorian Child Safety Standards, and which applies to **all staff**, is regarded as an important aspect of embedding an organisational culture of Child Safety.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and parents/carers of Oakleigh South Primary School are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of Oakleigh South Primary School are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to *Oakleigh South Primary School Child Safe Policy* at all times / upholding Oakleigh South Primary School's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability and children who are vulnerable (for example, during personal care activities)

¹ The Victorian Child Safe Standards aim to protect children from abuse in organisations, including physical violence, sexual offences, serious emotional or psychological abuse and serious neglect.

- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to OAKLEIGH SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL'S Child Safety Officers Sue Jackson and Erik Albers, or Principal nominee, and ensure any allegation be reported to the police or child protection
- reporting any child safety concerns to OAKLEIGH SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL'S Child Safety Officers Sue Jackson and Erik Albers or Principal nominee
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them

Staff, contractors, volunteers and any other members of the school community involved in child related work must not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometimes, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to OAKLEIGH SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL'S Child Safety Officers Sue Jackson or Erik Albers or Principal nominee.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

**The Child Safe Code of Conduct was reviewed and updated by
Oakleigh South Primary School Council on February 20, 2019.**