



Child Safe Standard 3

Child Code of Conduct

UNIVERSITY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

PURPOSE:

At University Park Primary School (UPPS), all children have the right to feel safe and be safe. We share a common belief that all children can learn to a high standard and all children want to learn. We support the development, learning and achievement of every student in our school. Together, in collaboration with parents and the community, we undertake the actions necessary to support the development, learning and achievement of every child.

This policy reflects child protection legislation, Department policy, other school policies and procedures, professional standards, codes and ethics, as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The purpose of Child Safe Standard 3, Child Code of Conduct, is to safeguard children and young people at University Park Primary School against all forms of abuse or neglect. This Policy describes acceptable behaviours expected from all school staff so as to ensure a child safe environment is developed and maintained. The UPPS “Child Code of Conduct Agreement” (attached), is intended to be implemented as an integral part of this policy.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, and contractors in the school environment, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people. This policy also applies to school council members where indicated. This policy will apply to the school environment (refer to Definitions section) and covers both school and outside of school hours.

DEFINITIONS:

The Act: Child Safety and Well Being Act 2005

Child or young person: A person who is under the age of 18 years.

Aboriginal Child: A person under the age of 18 who: is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent, identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, and is accepted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Community

Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds: A child or young person who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents’ identification on a similar basis

Child Safe Organisation: In the context of the child safe standards, a child safe organisation is one that meets the child safe standards by proactively taking measures to protect children from abuse

Cultural Competency: A set of congruent behaviours, attitudes and policies that come together in a system, agency or among professionals that enable them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations

Cultural Abuse: Actions and attitudes that deliberately ignore denigrate or attack the culture of a person or community. The positive recognition and celebration of cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity. A culturally safe environment does not ignore, challenge or deny cultural identity

Cultural Safety for Aboriginal Children: Cultural safety upholds the rights of Aboriginal children to:

- Identify as Aboriginal without fear of retribution or questioning
- Have an education that strengthens their culture and identity maintain connections to their land and country maintain their strong kinship ties and social obligations be taught their cultural heritage by their Elders
- Receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner. Be involved in services that are culturally respectful

Cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds: An environment, which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for children; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their cultural or linguistic identity, of who they are and what they need. Efforts need to be made to ensure the culturally and/or linguistically diverse children and their families receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner, including in relevant community languages

Children with a Disability: A disability can be any physical, sensory, neurological disability, acquired brain injury, intellectual disability, or developmental delay that affects a child's ability to undertake everyday activities. A disability can occur at any time in life. Children can be born with a disability or acquire a disability suddenly through an injury or illness. Some disabilities may be obvious while others are hidden

Organisation: The *Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005* (the Act) will provide that the standards apply to 'applicable entities', which are defined in the Act as: an unincorporated body or association (however structured) an individual who carries on a business and engages contractors, employees or volunteers to assist in the business in providing services or facilities

Child Abuse: For the purposes of these standards, abuse constitutes any act committed against a child involving: physical violence, sexual offences, grooming, serious emotional or psychological abuse or serious neglect. For further information regarding child abuse refer: Ministerial Order 870-Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools 2016

Child physical abuse: Generally, child physical abuse refers to the non-accidental use of physical force against a child that results in harm to the child. Physically abusive behaviours include shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, kicking, biting, burning, strangling and poisoning. The fabrication or induction of an illness by a parent or carer (previously known as Munchausen syndrome by proxy) is also considered physically abusive behaviour. (Safe Schools Hub)

Child sexual abuse: Any sexual activity between a child under the age of consent (16) and an adult or older person (i.e., a person five or more years older than the victim) is child sexual abuse.

Child sexual abuse can also be:

- any sexual behaviour between a child and an adult in a position of power or authority over them (e.g., a teacher); the age of consent laws does not apply in such instances due to the strong imbalance of power that exists between young people and authority figures, as well as the breaching of both personal and public trust that occurs when professional boundaries are violated
- any sexual behaviour between a child and an adult family member, regardless of issues of consent, equality or coercion
- sexual activity between peers that is non-consensual or involves the use of power or coercion
- non-consensual sexual activity between minors (e.g., a 14-year-old and an 11-year-old), or any sexual behaviour between a child and another child or adolescent who, due to their age or stage of development, is in a position of power, trust or responsibility over the victim. Sexual activity between adolescents at a similar developmental level is not considered abuse. (Safe Schools Hub)

Child-connected work: Child-connected work means work authorised by the school, school council, or Secretary of the Department of Education and Training and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present

Child safety: Child safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse

Child protection: Statutory services designed to protect children who are at risk of serious harm. (Safe Schools Hub)

Mandatory Reporting: The legal requirement to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect is known as mandatory reporting. Mandated persons include teachers, nurses, police, psychologists, psychiatrists and medical practitioners. (Safe Schools Hub)

Reasonable Belief: When staff are concerned about the safety and wellbeing of a child or young person, they must assess that concern to determine if a report should be made to the relevant agency. This process of considering all relevant information and observations is known as forming a 'reasonable belief'. A 'reasonable belief' or a 'belief on reasonable grounds' is not the same as having proof but is more than mere rumour or speculation. A 'reasonable belief' is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds.

School environment: School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, homestays, and other school activities or events)

School staff: School staff means an individual working in a school environment who is:

- employed by the Department of Education and Training
- directly engaged or employed by a school council, or
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary)

POLICY:

The Child Safe Standard 3, Child Code of Conduct, has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at University Park Primary School against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect.

All staff, volunteers, contractors and School Council members at University Park Primary School are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and follows the school's core values. They are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children and young people, as noted below.

The Principal and school leaders at University Park Primary School will support the implementation and monitoring of the Child 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 University Park Primary School will provide information and support to enable the Child Code of Conduct to operate effectively. The purpose of the UPPS Child Code of Conduct, Child Safe Standard 3, is to safeguard children and young people and reduce any opportunities of abuse or harm to occur. It provides the framework for understanding how to avoid or better manage unacceptable behaviours and situations.

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors and school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's child safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect students from abuse
- treating everyone in the school community 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 or that they are worried about their safety/or the safety of another child
- 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 (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse and/or child safety concerns to a member of the school leadership
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958
- ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) is safe, if an allegation of child abuse is made
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching, any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.
- following the school wide discipline policy when managing student behaviour

Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors and School Council members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment of specific children)
- exhibit or initiate behaviours with children that may be construed as unnecessarily physical contact (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- engage in open discussion 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 age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child outside or their family outside the school without the school's leadership knowledge or consent of school council (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching)
- have any online contact with the child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary e.g., by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their schoolwork)
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or personal email addresses
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at school or school events in the presence of children.

The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct (3b) is provided as an attachment to this policy.

MORE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES:

Commission for Children and Young People (2015) *A Guide for Creating a Child Safe Organisation 2.0*

Department of Health and Human Services (2015) *Code of conduct: Child safe standards toolkit: resource three*

Department of Training and Education – School Policy Advice Guide:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/alcohol.aspx>. accessed: 11 July 2016

Department of Training and Education – School Policy Advice Guide:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/photoandfilm.aspx> accessed: 11 July 2016

[Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people](#)

[Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations](#) - elearning module (log-in required)

State of Victoria (2010) *Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people*: A joint protocol of the Department of Human Services Child Protection, Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Licensed Children's Services and Victorian Schools

Victorian Institute of Teaching (2013) *Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics*

Victorian Government, Education & Reform Act 2006, Gazette No. S2, January 2016, *Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools*, Ministerial Order No. 870.

Victorian Registration and Qualification Authority (2016) *Information Sheet. Child Safety Standard 3: Child safety code of conduct - acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.*

Further information on [child safe standards](#) can be found on the Department of Health and Human Services' website <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/projects-and-initiatives/children,-youth-and-family-services/creating-child-safe-organisations>.

Additional resources for organisations in the child safe standards toolkit can be found on the [Department of Health and Human Services website](#): <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards>. In particular, [An Overview to the Victorian child safe standards](#), has information to help organisations understand the requirements of each of the child safe standards, including examples of measures organisations can put in place, a self-audit tool and a glossary of key terms: <[www](#).

REVIEW CYCLE AND EVALUATION:

This policy was last updated June 2021 and is scheduled for review in June 2022 and or in accordance with the UPPS review schedule. In addition to annual evaluation this policy will be reviewed as part of any risk event follow up.

This policy was last updated in June 2021 and is scheduled for review in June 2022



Child Code of Conduct Agreement

UNIVERSITY PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

June 2021

At University Park PS, all children have the right to feel and be safe. We share a common belief that all children can learn to a high standard and all children want to learn. We support the development, learning and achievement of every student in our school. Together, in collaboration with parents and the community, we undertake the actions necessary to support the development, learning and achievement of every child. The school's motto of 'Learning Together - Achieving Success' is reflected in its team approach to teaching and learning.

At our school, we deliver a holistic approach to education underpinned by high expectations taking into account the individual, academic, emotional and social needs of our students. We provide our students with the technological, social and academic requirements to become life-long learners and productive adults in the community.

Our vision

At University Park Primary School our vision is to work collaboratively to ensure every individual learns to their full potential and is a respectful and responsible member of the community.

Our values

Collaboration, Learning, Responsibility, Respect, Honesty

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at University Park PS against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, volunteers, contractors and School Council members at University Park Primary School are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and follows the school's core values. They are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors and school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's child safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect students from abuse

- treating everyone in the school community 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 or that they are worried about their safety/or the safety of another child
- 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 (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse and/or child safety concerns to the school's leadership
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958
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- engage in open discussion 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 age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child outside or their family outside the school without the school's leadership knowledge or consent of school council (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching)
- have any online contact with the child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary e.g., by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their schoolwork)
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or personal email addresses
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at school or school events in the presence of children.

All staff will be expected to also be familiar with the "The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct (Attachment 1)

I, _____, confirm I have been provided with a copy of the above Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

(CHILD CODE OF CONDUCT ATTACHMENT 1)

Section 3b) The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct

PRINCIPLE 1.2: Teachers treat their students with courtesy and dignity

Teachers:

- a) work to create an environment which promotes mutual respect
- b) model and engage in respectful and impartial language
- c) protect students from intimidation, embarrassment, humiliation or harm
- d) enhance student autonomy and sense of self-worth and encourage students to develop and reflect on their own values
- e) respect a student's privacy in sensitive matters, such as health or family problems, and only reveal confidential matters when appropriate. That is:
 - if the student has consented to the information being used in a certain way
 - to prevent or lessen a serious threat to life, health, safety or welfare of a person (including the student)
 - as part of an investigation into unlawful activity
 - if the disclosure is required or mandated by law
 - to prevent a crime or enforce the law
- f) refrain from discussing students' personal problems in situations where the information will not be treated confidentially
- g) use consequences commensurate with the offence when disciplining students.

PRINCIPLE 1.5: Teachers are always in a professional relationship with the students in their school, whether at school or not

Teachers hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students. The following examples outline some of those limits.

A professional relationship will be violated if a teacher:

- a) has a sexual relationship with a student
- b) uses sexual innuendo or inappropriate language and/or material with students
- c) touches a student without a valid reason
- d) holds conversations of a personal nature or has contact with a student via written or electronic means including email, letters, telephone, text messages or chat lines, without a valid context
- e) accepts gifts, which could be reasonably perceived as being used to influence them, from students or their parents.

A professional relationship may be compromised if a teacher:

- a) attends parties or socialises with students
- b) invites a student or students back to their home, particularly if no-one else is present.

PRINCIPLE 1.6: Teachers maintain a professional relationship with parents (guardians and caregivers)

Teachers should be respectful of and courteous to parents. Teachers:

- a) consider parents' perspectives when making decisions which have an impact on the education or wellbeing of a student
- b) communicate and consult with parents in a timely, understandable and sensitive manner
- c) take appropriate action when responding to parental concerns.

PRINCIPLE 1.7: Teachers work in collaborative relationships with students' families and communities

Teachers recognise that their students come from a diverse range of cultural contexts and seek to work collaboratively with students' families and communities within those contexts.

PRINCIPLE 1.8: Collegiality is an integral part of the work of teachers

Teachers demonstrate collegiality by:

- a) treating each other with courtesy and respect
- b) valuing the input of their colleagues
- c) using appropriate forums for constructive debate on professional matters
- d) sharing expertise and knowledge in a variety of collaborative contexts
- e) respecting different approaches to teaching
- f) providing support for each other, particularly those new to the profession
- g) sharing information relating to the wellbeing of students.

PRINCIPLE 2.1: The personal conduct of a teacher will have an impact on the professional standing of that teacher and on the profession as a whole

Although there is no definitive boundary between the personal and professional conduct of a teacher, it is expected that teachers will:

- a) be positive role models at school and in the community
- b) respect the rule of law and provide a positive example in the performance of civil obligations
- c) not exploit their position for personal or financial gain
- d) ensure that their personal or financial interests do not interfere with the performance of their duties
- e) act with discretion and maintain confidentiality when discussing workplace issues.

PRINCIPLE 3.1: Teachers value their professionalism, and set and maintain high standards of competence

Teachers complete their duties in a responsible, thorough and timely way.

PRINCIPLE 3.2: Teachers are aware of the legal requirements that pertain to their profession.

In particular, they are cognisant of their legal responsibilities in relation to:

- discrimination, harassment and vilification
- negligence
- mandatory reporting
- privacy
- occupational health and safety
- teacher registration.