

# St Brigid's Child Safety Code of Conduct for Community members

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## Introduction

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding our students and young people at St Brigid's Catholic Learning Community against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It has been developed in accordance with the [Victorian Government's Ministerial Order No 870](#) to support the school's 'Professional Child Safety Code of Conduct' and defines expectations of parents and those members of the school community, who may, at times, act as volunteers.

## Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish clear expectations for appropriate behaviour by adults towards students & young people. It aims to protect children and reduce any opportunity of abuse or harm to children. This Code of Conduct also provides members of the broader school community with guidance on how best to support students or young people, and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations.

## Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all parents, parent volunteers, members of the school board or parent's association and any other person, who volunteer their services to the school. This code applies to members of the school community who infrequently participate in 'Child Connected Works' at St Brigid's Catholic Learning Community.

## Child Connected Work

Child Connected work is defined as: *'Work authorised by the school's Principal, members of the Leadership Team or the School Board performed by an adult in the school environment while children are present or are reasonably expected to be present'*.

For the purpose of this School Community Child Safety Code of Conduct, 'Child Connected Work' includes activities such as volunteering as a parent helper, guest speaker, members of the school board or parent's association. This also applies to members of the school community who infrequently volunteer their services at working bees, maintenance works, school sporting events, concert rehearsals or other like activities.

## Acceptable behaviours

All parents, parent volunteers, members of the school board or parent's association are responsible for supporting the safety of our students, young people and broader school community by complying with the following 'acceptable behaviours':

- » Adhering to the 'School Community Child Safety Code of Conduct' (this Code) and associated procedures at all times.
- » Taking all reasonable steps to protect students & young people from all forms of abuse.
- » Respecting the privacy of all students & young people and their families
- » Ensuring at all times that those participating in 'Child Connected Works' are never left alone with a student or young person. Where possible students & young people should remain in groups at all times. Where this is not possible, all 'Child Connected Works' must be undertaken in an open and visible environment, in close proximity to a member/s of St Brigid's Catholic Learning Community staff.
- » Treating everyone within the school community with respect including students, young people, staff members, other parents & service providers. This includes listening to and valuing their ideas and opinions.

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- » Listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another student has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child. These disclosures must be reported to the supervising teacher in the first instance, the Principal, a member of the school's Leadership Team or Child Safety Officer immediately.
- » Taking account of the diversity of all students, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disabilities and students and young people who are vulnerable.
- » Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all students & young people in all activities, including those from diverse backgrounds.
- » Maintaining relationships with other school community members and their children that are supportive & respectful.
- » Reporting all child safety complaints, suspected abuse, disclosures or breaches of the School Community Child Safety Code of Conduct to the supervising teacher, in the first instance, a member of the school's Leadership Team or Child Safety Officer immediately.
- » If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring the safety of the student/s or young person/s as soon as possible and then reporting this to the Principal, a member of the school's Leadership Team or Child Safety Officer as soon as possible.

### **Unacceptable behaviours**

All parents, parent volunteers, members of the school board or parent's association must not:

- » Ignore or disregard any child safety complaints, suspected abuse, disclosures or breaches of the 'School Community Child Safety Code of Conduct'.
- » Maintain relationships with other members of the school community that exposes, or has the potential to expose, any student or young person to intimidation, ridicule, abuse, violence, bullying or neglect.
- » Disclose with any member of the school community, including their own children, confidential information obtained as a result of participating in 'Child Connected Works'. (ie... discussing with any person a student's or young person's academic strengths or weaknesses)
- » Develop any 'special' relationships with students or young people that could be seen as favouritism (such as the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- » Exhibit behaviours with students or young people, which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (such as inappropriate sitting on laps).
- » Do things of a personal nature that a student or young person can do for themselves (such as toileting or changing clothes).
- » Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of students or young people.
- » Speak aggressively to, or discipline a student or young person whilst participating in 'Child Connected Works'.
- » Exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking sites or email addresses with students or young people.
- » Have unauthorised contact with students or young people 'on line' via email, social media networking sites, by text message or other means.

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- » Display any behaviour or participate in conversations, in person or 'on-line', which could be construed as inappropriate or disrespectful to those who may overhear or view it. In particular students, young people and those from Aboriginal and diverse cultural backgrounds. This includes displaying opinions or making comments that may degrade, ridicule, intimidate or bully a student, young person or any member of the school community.
- » Use inappropriate language in the presence of students, young people and other Members of the school community.
- » Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or language in the presence of, or with students, young people and other members of the school community.
- » Express personal views on cultures, race, ethnicity, sexuality or disabilities in the presence of students, young people and other members of the school community.
- » Discriminate against any student, young person or member of the school community because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability.
- » Attend the school site under the influence or effects of illegal drugs or alcohol.
- » Consume alcohol without the prior knowledge and consent of the Principal or a member of the Leadership Team on the school premises, at a school event or in the presence of students or young people.
- » Photograph or video a student or young person without the consent of the Principal or a member of the Leadership Team.

#### **Failure to Comply With This Code of Conduct**

Where parents, parent volunteers, members of the school board or parent's association is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this Code of Conduct, St Brigid's Catholic Learning Community will take immediate action to address the concern. Where deemed appropriate, a breach of this Code of Conduct may be referred to Victorian Police.

#### **Acknowledgement**

I have read and understood this Code of Conduct and agree to display behaviours that safeguard students, young people and other members of the school community at St Brigid's Catholic Learning Community against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Principal / Child Safety Officer Name:

Signature:

Date: