



Child Safe Code of Conduct – Staff, Volunteers and Other Adults

Scope

In accordance with the ethos of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (VIC) Ltd (ASV), and to comply with Ministerial Order 870, this Code of Conduct is to be adhered to by members of the ASV community, including:

- The ASV Board of Directors;
- School Councils;
- The senior leadership team of each school;
- Teachers and all other staff members;
- Volunteers;
- International Student Homestay Parents / Families;
- Contractors; and
- Other visitors to ASV Schools.

Rationale

Seventh-day Adventist Schools in Victoria (ASV) provide a values-based education which focuses on the development of the whole child and where the home and school work together harmoniously to provide this education. In this context, there is a legislative and moral imperative that there is a zero tolerance for any forms of child abuse and where the school through its teachers provide duty of care and further take every precaution to avoid abuse happening. To ensure the health, safety and overall wellbeing of all students, ASV will comply with the Child Safe Standards, introduced by Ministerial Order 870.

This Code of Conduct, which is particularly associated with Standard 3 of the Child Safe Standards detailed in Ministerial Order 870, outlines the expected standards for appropriate behaviour with and in the company of children in the school environment. The Code of Conduct is to ensure appropriate behaviour with children in ASV institutions and to protect children from abuse. This Code of Conduct does not replace any legislative or regulatory obligations or other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular staff at the School. For example, the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics provides clarity regarding professional behaviour expected of teachers at all times.

Appropriate Behaviour

All staff, volunteers, and other adults within the ASV community 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 the School are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, and wellbeing of children by:

- adhering to the School Child Safe Policy at all times and upholding the School 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 reporting that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- guarding the cultural safety, participation and advancement of children who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander



- guarding the cultural safety, participation and advancement of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- guarding the safety, participation and advancement of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the School's/ASV system leadership
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- supporting children to actively participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially concerning issues that are important to them.

Inappropriate Behaviour

Staff, volunteers and other personnel 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)
- put children at risk of abuse
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes (age & context appropriate)
- 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 inappropriate personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child without the family or schools knowledge, outside of our organisations communication guidelines. Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate
- have any online contact with a child or their family outside of school sponsored websites. When contacting families outside of school sponsored websites for Church or Community partnerships, staff should refer to the Church or Community Groups Child Safe Policy and Code of Conduct for appropriate contact guidelines
- take or store images of children on your personal phone/device. When taking photographs/videos of children, staff must use a school supplied device and upload images to the shared Year Book Google Drive, school shared drive or a school owned device (e.g. staff laptop, iPad, school phone etc...). Please refer to the schools eSmart Policy for guidelines around staff expectations with technology
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

Ratified by Heritage College School Council February 2017

Acknowledgement

By observing these standards, you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this Code of Conduct to the College's/ASV leadership.

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: ____/____/____