

Child Safety Code of Conduct



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Riverbend Primary School on 9742 8800.

Purpose

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school.

All Riverbend Primary School staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, school council members and any other adult involved in child-connected work must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by students. It also applies during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the school for student use (for example, a school camp).

Acceptable behaviours

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

- upholding our Riverbend Primary School commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing 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, transgender and intersex (LGBTIQ+) 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 Principal, Assistant Principal or the Inclusion Coordinator.

- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures 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 Riverbend Primary School, staff, volunteers, contractors and member 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 and parental permission has been sought.

Communication

In General

Parents will use courteous and respectable written and spoken language in all communications with students, staff and other parents and members of the school community. No disrespectful, insulting, harassing, aggressive or otherwise offensive language may be used.

Parents will act in the best interests of students, their families and staff members. They will not engage in malicious or judgmental gossip and should ensure that anything they say about others is fair and truthful.

We value our diverse community and respect the rights, religious beliefs and practices of individuals and their families. We respect points of view that are different from our own and all



members of our community must refrain from actions and behaviour that constitutes harassment, discrimination or vilification.

There may be times when it is felt the actions of a member of the school community has infringed the rights of a child. **Under no circumstances is a parent or guardian to approach another child,** whilst they are in the care of our school, to discuss or chastise them because of their actions. Such an approach to the child may be seen to be an assault on the child and may have legal consequences. In addition to this, direct parent/parent contact should be avoided when there has been an incident at the school involving their child/children.

It is appropriate for a parent / caregiver to approach or contact a teacher in the first instance of an incident to seek their intervention in bringing about an equitable and peaceful solution to the situation. If the situation remains unresolved, an approach should be made to the Principal or Assistant Principal.

With School Staff

All school staff are entitled to a safe and happy work environment. This is in the best interests of the students as well as staff themselves. Parents should therefore ensure that their interactions with staff do not create unnecessary stress and anxiety. To ensure this, the following practice is in place at Riverbend Primary School:

- The priority for school staff is the welfare and education of all students in the school. School staff are therefore not required to respond to emails and telephone calls instantaneously. Responses are not expected outside normal working hours or during school holidays unless it is an emergency.
- The time available for parents to meet with staff is limited and must not disrupt the classroom. Parents should be mindful of the teacher's time, communicate the reason for the meeting and allow the teacher time to prepare, unless there is a genuine emergency.

Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All Riverbend Primary School staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member 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 Riverbend Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the principal or assistant principal.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact the regional office on 1800 338 663 or email enquiries@education.vic.gov.au

Approval and review

Created date	20.12.22
Consultation	Staff – 14.03.23 School Council – 16.03.23
Endorsed by	Riverbend P.S. School Council
Endorsed on	16.03.23
Next review date	Before March 2025
Communicated with the community	School Website Sent out yearly via Compass Available in hard copy at the office by request