CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY AND AGREEMENT

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact the school office on (03) 5278 3620

1. RATIONALE:

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school.
All Nelson Park 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. This policy applies to both the Libau and Illinois Campus and any differences between campuses is specified.

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).

2. ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS:

As Nelson Park 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:

a. Always upholding our Nelson Park School commitment to child safety and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
b. 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.
c. 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.
d. 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 (LQBTIQA+) students.
e. 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.
f. Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the wellbeing officer or PCO member.

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g. 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.
h. If child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

3. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS:

As Nelson Park staff, volunteers, contractors, and member of our school community involved in child-connected work we must not:

a. Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm.
b. Develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts).
c. Display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context.
d. Ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student.
e. Discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance.
f. Treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, or ethnicity.
g. 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.
h. 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.
i. Consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present.
j. 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.

4. BREACHES TO THE CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT:

a. All Nelson Park 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.
b. In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the Department of Education and Training or Victoria Police. Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.
c. All breaches and suspected breaches of the Nelson Park School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the principal and a member of the PCO team.

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d. If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal contact Robyn Marr robyn.marr@education.vic.gov.au.

5. EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's two-year review cycle.

Policy last reviewed	25/03/2024
Approved by	Principal / School Council
Next scheduled review date	MAY 2026

CODE OF CONDUCT

Purpose

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

All staff, volunteers, contractors, visitors and school council members at Nelson Park 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 of appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

Acceptable Behaviours

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

Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers and School Council members of Nelson Park 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 Nelson Park School are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing, and empowerment of children by:

- Adhering to Nelson Park School child-safe policy at all times / upholding Nelson Park 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 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 children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal 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 (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 Nelson Park School Child Safety Officer (Libby Gatgens) / leadership, and ensure any allegation is reported to the police or child protection.
- Reporting any child safety concerns to Nelson Park School Child Safety Officer (Libby Gatgens) / leadership.

- 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.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958.
- 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.

Staff and volunteers 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 or changing clothes.
- 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.
- Have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.
- Have any online contact with a 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).
- Develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour.
- Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context.
- Ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate.
- Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students.
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or personal email addresses.
- Communicate directly with a student and/or a student's family members 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 in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes.
- In the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events under any circumstances.

By observing these standards, you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to Nelson Park School Child Safety Officer Principal Libby Gatgens / leadership.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000 or 112 (from a mobile phone).

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name: …….....

Signature: ……

Date: …….....

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

Signed: _____Date: _____