

MCHS CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

PURPOSE

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school. Monash Children's Hospital School (MCHS) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of MCHS will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly schools and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of MCHS will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

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

Monash Children's Hospital School is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. **The school has zero tolerance for child abuse.** The school is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to cultural safety of Aboriginal children, young children, children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability or significant health condition.

Every person involved in the school has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role s/he plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

Acceptable behaviours / MCHS Commitment to Child Safety

In its planning, decision making and operations Monash Children's Hospital School will:

- uphold our Monash Children's Hospital School commitment to child safety at all times and adhere to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy;
- take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
- value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
- foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children. This will be supported by all staff understanding their child safety role, being mindful of and building respectful and safe relationships between children and their teachers and other school staff;
- respect diversity in cultures and child rearing while keeping child safety paramount;
- provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
- engage only the most suitable people to work with children and high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;
- ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise issues. Our school is structured around health conditions and will be based on the various paediatric wards and or mental health units and so all children will be able to forge

respectful relationships in their paediatric wards/mental health units/day treatment units with multiple teachers thereby giving them opportunities to seek support from a number of significant others in their immediate day to day learning environment.

- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities.
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- 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, trans and gender diverse, intersex, queer, questioning and asexual (LGBTIQA+) students
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school's leadership (Principal / Assistant Principals)
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable Behaviours

As Monash Children's Hospital 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.

Breaches to the child safety code of conduct

All Monash Children's Hospital 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 Monash Children's Hospital School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal, Colin Dobson.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the Principal, contact Assistant Principals, Kate Cooper or Sarah-Jane George.

FOR VISITOR USE:

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:	
Name:	_____
Organisation:	_____
Working with Children Card number:	_____
Signature:	_____
Date:	_____

APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Created date	13 th May 2025
Consultation	Consultation and Endorsement by School Council in May 2025
Endorsed by	Colin Dobson, Principal
Endorsed on	28 th May 2025
Next review date	28 th May 2026