Heathmont College
Child Safety Code of Conduct

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact Heathmont College at – (03) 9871 4888.

Heathmont College 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.

Purpose

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school and 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 Heathmont College 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 Heathmont College will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All Heathmont College staff, contractors, volunteers, and any other member of the school community involved in child related work, are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

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

All staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the Heathmont College school community involved in child-connected work, are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- always upholding our Heathmont College commitment to child safety and adhering to our Child Safe Standard: Code of Conduct.
- 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 (LQBTIQ+) 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 any member of the principal team or the wellbeing 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 Child-Safety-Responding-and-Reporting-Obligations-Policy_NOV_2021.pdf (heathmont.vic.edu.au) 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 Heathmont College 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 content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting.
- 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
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances
- 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 Heathmont College 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 Heathmont College Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the principal.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact The Area Director of the Outer Eastern Metropolitan Region through the Department website https://www.vic.gov.au/contact-us-department-education or directly via the school' SEIL.

Approval and review

Created date	November 2023
Consultation	Presented and discussed at school council 2023 and at a staff meeting in April 2024
Endorsed by	Kerryn Sandford
Endorsed on	24 November 2023
Next review date	October 2025