

TITLE: Child Safety Code of Conduct

DATE DEVELOPED: June 2024

REVIEW DATE: June 2026

ENPS MISSION: We maximise the potential of all; empowering independence, excellence, innovation and engagement with the world.

Critical Engagement
with the World

Academic Excellence

Inclusive Learning
Environment

Personal and Social
Wellbeing

PURPOSE

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

All Essendon North 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 Essendon North 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 Essendon North Primary School commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety 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, intersex, queer/questioning and asexual (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 our Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal

- 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 Essendon North Primary School, staff, volunteers, contractors and members 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 Essendon North 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 Essendon North Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the Principal, contact South Western Region, 1300 333 232.

The contact details for regional offices are here, under the heading [Regional Contact List](#).

APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Policy developed	June 2024
Consultation	School Council Junior School Council Child Safety Standards communicated in Issue 10 of the ENPS Newsletter, July 2024
Approved by	School Council and Principal
Approved on	24th of June, 2024
Next review date	24th of June, 2026

HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS



If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Essendon North Primary School on (03) 9379 3979.

Child Safety Code of Conduct Agreement

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Essendon North Primary School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal. Please contact Connor Smith, Alice McKenzie or Kate Barletta in person via the school office, by phone on 9379 3979 or email to essendon.north.ps@education.vic.gov.au. If the breach or suspected breach relates to the Principal, contact South Western Region, 1300 333 232.

If a child is in immediate danger contact Triple Zero (000).

FOUR CRITICAL ACTIONS FOR SCHOOLS

Responding to Incidents, Disclosures and Suspicions of Child Abuse

YOU MUST TAKE ACTION

As a school staff member, you play a **critical role** in protecting children in your care.

- You **must** act, by following the Four Critical Actions, as soon as you witness an incident, receive a disclosure or form a reasonable belief* that a child has, or is at risk of being abused.
- You **must** act if you form a suspicion/ reasonable belief even if you are unsure and have not directly observed child abuse (e.g. if the victim or another person tells you about the abuse).
- It is strongly recommended that you use the **Responding to Suspected Child Abuse template** to keep clear and comprehensive notes, even if you make a decision not to report.

*A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

1 RESPONDING TO AN EMERGENCY	2 REPORTING TO AUTHORITIES / REFERRING TO SERVICES	3 CONTACTING PARENTS/CARERS	4 PROVIDING ONGOING SUPPORT							
<p>If there is no risk of immediate harm go to Action 2</p> <p>If a child is at immediate risk of harm you must ensure their safety by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> separating alleged victims and others involved administering first aid calling 000 for urgent medical and/or police assistance to respond to immediate health or safety concerns identifying a contact person at the school for future liaison with Police. <p>Where necessary you may also need to maintain the integrity of the potential crime scene and preserve evidence.</p>	<p>As soon as immediate health and safety concerns are addressed you must report all incidents, suspicions and disclosures of child abuse as soon as possible. Failure to report physical and sexual child abuse may amount to a criminal offence.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Q: Where does the source of suspected abuse come from?</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <th style="background-color: #009688; color: white;">WITHIN THE SCHOOL</th> <th style="background-color: #009688; color: white;">WITHIN THE FAMILY OR COMMUNITY</th> <th style="background-color: #009688; color: white;">OTHER CONCERNS</th> </tr> <tr> <td style="background-color: #e0f2f1;"> <p>VICTORIA POLICE You must report all instances of suspected child abuse involving a school staff member, contractor, volunteer or visitor to Victoria Police.</p> <p>You must also report internally to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Employee Conduct Branch DET Incident Support and Operations Centre. <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Diocesan education office. <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or school chairperson Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978. <p>All allegations of reportable conduct must be reported as soon as possible to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Employee Conduct Branch <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diocesan education office <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commission for Children and Young People on 1300 782 978. </td> <td style="background-color: #e0f2f1;"> <p>DHHS CHILD PROTECTION You must report to DHHS Child Protection if a child is considered to be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in need of protection from child abuse at risk of being harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has had, or is likely to have, a serious impact on the child's safety, stability or development. <p>VICTORIA POLICE You must also report all instances of suspected sexual abuse (including grooming) to Victoria Police.</p> <p>You must also report internally to:</p> <p>GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team DET Incident Support and Operations Centre. <p>CATHOLIC SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or leadership team Diocesan education office. <p>INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> School principal and/or chairperson. </td> <td style="background-color: #e0f2f1;"> <p>If you believe that a child is not subject to abuse, but you still hold significant concerns for their wellbeing you must still act. 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They may advise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not to contact the parents/carer (e.g. in circumstances where the parents are alleged to have engaged in the abuse, or the child is a mature minor and does not wish for their parent/carer to be contacted) to contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information (this must be done as soon as possible, preferably on the same day of the incident, disclosure or suspicion) how to communicate with all relevant parties with consideration for their safety. 	<p>Your school must provide support for children impacted by abuse. This should include the development of a Student Support Plan in consultation with wellbeing professionals. This is an essential part of your duty of care requirements.</p> <p>Strategies may include development of a safety plan, direct support and referral to wellbeing professionals and support.</p> <p>You must follow the Four Critical Actions every time you become aware of a further instance or risk of abuse. This includes reporting new information to authorities.</p>
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By reading and signing this documentation, I acknowledge my responsibilities in relation to the Child Safety Standards and [Ministerial Order 1359](#), and adhere to the ENPS Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

**It is understood that staff may have pre-existing relationships/connections with ENPS families, or their own child/ren attend ENPS, therefore will conduct themselves in a professional capacity, in line with our ENPS policies and practices.*