



## CHILD SAFETY POLICY

### RATIONALE

Melba College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making. Melba College has a commitment to **zero tolerance of child abuse** and full compliance with ministerial Order 870 and Child Safety Standards

We support and respect all children as well as our staff and volunteers. Melba College is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard when decisions are made that affect their lives. We are committed to protecting the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We want all students and young people at Melba College to feel safe, be safe, be happy and empowered.

Every person involved in Melba College has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role they play individually and collectively to ensure the wellbeing and safety of all students and young people. Their safety is at the forefront of all we do and every decision they make. We have legal and moral obligations, which we follow rigorously, to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure all students and young people feel safe and supported at Melba College and to also:-

- prevent child abuse by identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.
- ensure that processes and procedures are in place to protect students and young people from child abuse.
- value and empower students and young people in decision making processes.
- ensure that all staff (including contractors), volunteers, visitors to the school and parents/carers, understand the school's child safety guidelines and how to behave appropriately with and towards students and young people.
- comply with Ministerial Order No. 870 and the Child Safety Standards
- comply with reporting obligations under child protection law and criminal law.

### DEFINITIONS

Child safety:

Encompasses matters related to protecting all students and young people from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

Child abuse:

Includes any act committed against a child involving:

- a sexual offence
- an offence under section 49B(2) of the **Crimes Act 1958** (grooming)
- the infliction, on a child, of:
  - physical violence or
  - serious emotional or psychological harm
  - serious neglect of a child.

School staff:

Includes individuals working in a school environment who are:

- employed under Part 2.4 of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (ETR Act)
- in the government teaching service; or
- employed under a contract of service by the council of the school under Part 2.3 of the Education and Training and Reform Act 2006; or
- volunteers or contracted service providers (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary).

Child-connected work:

Includes all work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child safety encompasses:

- matters related to protecting all children from child abuse
- managing the risk of child abuse
- providing support to a child at risk of child abuse
- responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

School environment:

Includes any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including:

- a campus of the school;
- online school environments (including email and intranet systems); and
- other locations provided by the school for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events).

Child:

Includes any child enrolled as a student of Melba College or person under the age of 18 years

Student:

Includes any person enrolled as a student of Melba College or other registered School

Young person:

Includes any person enrolled as a student of Melba College, at another registered School or under the age of 18 years

Definitions taken from the VRQA website:

<http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafef/Pages/default.html>

## GUIDELINES

Melba College is committed to child safety. In all its planning, decision-making and operations Melba College will:

- 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;
- Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices 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 have 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 such issues;
- Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
- Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk; and
- Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Melba College's school council and leadership team will rigorously monitor the school's adherence to this child safety policy.

- Melba College Principal will take primary responsibility for ensuring college wide compliance with all Child Safety policies and Code of Conduct.
- Assistant Principal Wellbeing and Engagement and Assistant Principal Compliance will assist the Principal in all Child Safety matters.
- All of our staff (including contractors and volunteers) must agree to abide by the school's Child Safety Code of Conduct which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.
- Melba College has specific policies and procedures in place to support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve our commitments.
- Melba College is committed to supporting and enabling our staff and volunteers through provision of regular training and education on child abuse risks.
- Child Safety will be a standard agenda item for school council and school meetings.
- Melba College has procedures in place to enable all staff and volunteers as well as parents/carers, students and young people, to raise any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns.
- The Assistant Principal Wellbeing and Engagement will assume the role of the primary Child Safety Officer, acting as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.

This policy covers all school environments both during and outside of school hours, including any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the School Council or the Principal.

- In implementing the minimum child safety standards Melba College will take account of the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, and children who are vulnerable; and make all reasonable efforts to accommodate these matters.
- Melba College is committed to lifelong learning by providing an inclusive, supportive and nurturing community in which diversity is valued and celebrated underpins our commitment to child safety and the Child Safety Standards.
- Melba College will make reasonable efforts to communicate our child safety policies and procedures to the Melba College community.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Our Students:

- This policy is intended to empower students who are vital and active members of the Melba College community.
- Melba College will involve students when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. Melba College staff will listen to their views and respect what they have to say. We will promote diversity and tolerance at this school and promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all students. We will promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and Torres Strait islanders. We will promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds. We will work to ensure that children with a disability are safe and can participate equally.
- Melba College staff will endeavour to deliver appropriate education about child abuse awareness and prevention to the students.
- Melba College staff will endeavour to promote the Child Safe Standards in ways that are readily accessible, easy to understand, and user-friendly for students.

Strategies for educating students will be articulated in the Melba College Student Engagement & Wellbeing Policy.

Melba College take all reasonable steps to employ skilled people to work with students. We develop selection criteria and advertisements which clearly demonstrate our commitment to child safety and an awareness of our social and legislative responsibilities.

When recruiting staff and volunteers we are aware that we have ethical as well as legislative obligations.

Melba College will ensure that:

- all people engaged in child-connected work, including volunteers, who are required to hold a Working with Children Check will do so and will also provide evidence of this check
- when employing staff Melba College will carry out reference checks and police record checks
- all teachers employed at Melba College are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- the Assistant Principal Wellbeing and Engagement who undertakes the role of the primary Child Safety Officer, will be informed of all school employment decisions, volunteer placements and visitors to Melba College.

## STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

This policy as well as our **Child Safety Code of Conduct** guides the Melba College staff, volunteers and visitors on how to behave with children in our organisation. All staff, volunteers and visitors must agree to the **Child Safety Code of Conduct** which specifies the standards of conduct required when working with children.

## TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone in our school understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility. Training includes developing skills to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse.

We also support our staff and volunteers through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse, promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, promote the cultural safety of

children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds and to develop their skills to make adjustments to provide a safe, inclusive environment for children with a disability.

New employees and volunteers will be regularly supervised. This is to ensure they understand the school's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse. It is also for the purpose of checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate with reference to the school's **Child Safety Code of Conduct**.

All staff will receive Child Safety and Duty of Care training on the Welcome back to school on Day 1 of each year. Training will be conducted by the Principal and the Assistant Principal Wellbeing and Engagement who undertakes the role of the primary Child Safety Officer.

## **ALLEGATIONS, CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS**

Our school culture aims for all staff and volunteers as well as parents/carers and children to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns. We are aware that some people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds may face barriers reporting allegations of abuse or that for some communication in English may be a barrier. We will endeavour to be sensitive to these issues and meet people's needs where possible. Melba College has protocols and procedures in place to enable all staff and volunteers as well as parents/carers and children, to raise any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns.

Depending on the severity and urgency of the matter any inappropriate behaviour will be reported through appropriate channels which may include:

- The Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) – Child Protection
- Victoria Police

## **LEGISLATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES**

Melba College takes its legal responsibilities most seriously including, including but not limited to, its failure to disclose and its failure to protect.

- **Failure to disclose:** Reporting child sexual abuse is a community wide responsibility. All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 have an obligation to report that information to police.

In response to the Betrayal of Trust Report (<https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/fcdc/article/1788>), the Victorian Government has introduced criminal offences to protect children from sexual abuse. Under these reforms a failure to report, or take action in relation to suspected child sexual abuse can now constitute a criminal offence.

This offence applies to all adults (not just professionals who work with children) who:

- form a reasonable belief that another adult may have committed a sexual offence against a child under 16 years of age; AND
- fail to report this information to Victoria Police.

A person will not be guilty of the offence if they have a reasonable excuse for not disclosing the information. A reasonable excuse includes:

- a reasonable fear for their own or another person's safety  
*Failing to disclose a sexual offence based on concerns for the interests of the perpetrator or organisation (e.g. concerns about reputation, legal liability or financial status) will not be regarded as a reasonable excuse.*

- a reasonable belief that the information has already been disclosed to Victoria Police or DHHS Child Protection and the person has no new information to add to the disclosure.

Additional exemptions apply where:

- the victim is aged 16 years or over and requests confidentiality
  - the person is a child when they formed a reasonable belief
  - the information would be privileged
  - the information is a confidential communication disclosed to a counsellor or a registered medical practitioner (e.g. in a school context, this exemption may apply to a psychologist or a social worker who engages in a counselling relationship with the victim of a sexual offence)
  - the information is in the public domain police officers are acting in the course of their duty.
- **Failure to protect:** A person in a position of authority in an organisation will commit this offence if they know of the risk of abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so.

This offence applies to a person in a position of authority within an organisation who:

- knows of a substantial risk that a child under the age of 16, under the care, supervision or authority of the organisation will become a victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with the organisation (e.g. employee, contractor, volunteer, visitor); AND
- has the power or responsibility to remove that risk; AND
- negligently fails to remove or reduce the risk of harm.
- *Within a school setting, a position of authority includes principals and assistant principals and staff in institutional management positions (for example in government schools this includes Regional Directors and other senior managers).*

For further information on these offences, go to: Failure to protect offence:

- <http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+protect+offence>
- Failure to disclose offence: <http://www.justice.vic.gov.au/home/safer+communities/protecting+children+and+families/failure+to+disclose+offence>
- **Government's responses to the recommendations of the Betrayal of Trust Report:** [https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/fcdc/inquiries/57th/Child\\_Abuse\\_Inquiry/Government\\_Response\\_to\\_the\\_FCDC\\_Inquiry\\_into\\_the\\_Handling\\_of\\_Child\\_Abuse\\_by\\_Religious\\_and\\_Other\\_Non-Government\\_Organisations.pdf](https://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/images/stories/committees/fcdc/inquiries/57th/Child_Abuse_Inquiry/Government_Response_to_the_FCDC_Inquiry_into_the_Handling_of_Child_Abuse_by_Religious_and_Other_Non-Government_Organisations.pdf)

For information sharing requirements for Doctors in Secondary Schools go to:

- [www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/doctors.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/doctors.aspx).

## CHILD ABUSE

Melba College takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to respond quickly and thoroughly to any concerns of Child Abuse. Such issues should be immediately reported to:

- The Principal
- The Assistant Principal Wellbeing and Engagement
- Assistant Principals or Leading Teachers at Melba College.

All staff are trained annually on how to deal appropriately with allegations, as well as how to support or assist children who disclose child abuse or are otherwise linked to suspected child abuse. In such situations the school will follow actions outlined in the Child Safety Reporting Policy.

This policy outlines our clear expectations for all staff and volunteers in making a report about a young person who might be in need of protection.

The DET guide '**Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools**' includes comprehensive, detailed guidance and support for all staff.

**First and foremost, we at Melba College will ensure that students and young people are safe from harm,** after which we will follow the procedures outlined in this document. This process includes making appropriate reports, following up and ensuring that children and any others involved receive appropriate support. We record all allegations of abuse and safety concerns using the Child Safety Incident Report form. All information is considered confidential and written reports will be held securely.

Any inappropriate behaviour will be reported either to DHHS Child Protection, the Police or Child FIRST Report depending on the severity and urgency of the matter.

All Melba College staff have a responsibility to report an allegation of abuse if we have a reasonable belief that an incident took place (see information about failure to disclose or protect). If an adult has a reasonable belief that an incident has occurred then they must report the incident.

Factors contributing to reasonable belief may be:

- A child states they or someone they know has been abused (noting that sometimes the child may in fact be referring to themselves)
- Behaviour consistent with that of an abuse victim, is observed
- Someone else has raised a suspicion of abuse but is unwilling to report it
- Observing suspicious behaviour.

We work to ensure all children, families, staff and volunteers know what to do and who to tell if they observe abuse or are a victim, and if they notice inappropriate behaviour.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT**

In Victoria, organisations are required to protect children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, Melba College proactively manages risks of abuse to students and young people by removing and reducing these risks and follows the Child Safety Standards.

The school has risk management strategies to identify, assess and take steps to minimise child abuse risks which include risks posed by physical environments and online environments.

The school's risk management includes:

- the Assistant Principal Wellbeing and Engagement assuming the role of the primary Child Safety Officer, acting as a source of support, advice and expertise to staff on matters of child safety.
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct – outlines acceptable and unacceptable behaviour with respect to child safety and child abuse. The Child Safety Code of Conduct is publically available.

- annual Professional Development of all Melba College staff on Duty of Care, Child Safe standards, Child Safe Code of Conduct and Child Safe Reporting Obligations as part of the first staff meeting, 'Welcome Back to School' on Day 1 of each year
- all newly employed staff and Casual Relief Teachers (CRTs) Duty of Care, Child Safe standards, Child Safe Code of Conduct and Child Safe Reporting Obligations at Melba College will be given copies of the Duty of Care Policy, Child Safety Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct and Child Safe Reporting Obligations
- screening as part of the staff recruitment process
- working With Children checks, Police Record checks, reference checks
- sign in processes at the school office
- on and off site supervision of children during recess and lunch breaks as well as 25 minutes before and after school – staff carry mobile phones
- digital Technologies Policy and Acceptable Use Agreement for students
- teacher supervision of student Digital Technology usage
- protocols to ensure students do not move around the school individually during class time
- out of bounds areas in the school to ensure that students are not placed at risk
- staff and volunteer training
- child safe environments information and awareness for visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors
- adequate monitoring of visitors, staff, volunteers and contractors
- refresher training for staff – see eLearning mandatory reporting module

#### **RELATED LEGISLATION**

- The Victorian Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006
- Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (the Regulations)
- Ministerial Order No. 870
- Working with Children Act 2005
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015

#### **REFERENCES**

- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/health/protect/Pages/childsafestandards.aspx>
- <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/default.html>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/Pages/spag.aspx>.
- 'Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Victorian Schools'  
[https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandard5\\_SchoolsGuide.pdf](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandard5_SchoolsGuide.pdf)
- 'Protecting children from abuse: for parents and carers'  
[https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandard5\\_SchoolsGuide.pdf](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/health/protect/ChildSafeStandard5_SchoolsGuide.pdf)
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/reportableconductscheme.aspx>
- [https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/pages/production.aspx#/app/content/2868/support\\_and\\_d\\_service\\_\(schools\)%252Fhuman\\_resources%252Fhrweb%252Freportable\\_conduct](https://edugate.eduweb.vic.gov.au/sites/i/pages/production.aspx#/app/content/2868/support_and_d_service_(schools)%252Fhuman_resources%252Fhrweb%252Freportable_conduct)

**RELATED POLICIES**

- Melba College Philosophy
- Melba College Child Reporting Obligations Policy
- Melba College Child Safety Incident Report form
- Melba College On-Site Supervision Policy
- Melba College Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Melba College Critical Incident Policy
- Melba College Duty of Care Policy
- Melba College Excursions/Incursions Policy
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Melba College Visitors and Volunteers Policy
- Melba College Working with Children Check and Suitability Policy

**APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: Child Safe Code of Conduct

**EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the Melba College’s review cycle.

<b>Policy Reviewed by School Council</b>	<b>Person Responsible for Policy</b>	<b>Next School Council Review</b>
2018	Assistant Principal Compliance	2019

## **APPENDIX A: CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT**

Melba College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and has 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 Melba College will support the 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 Melba College will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

Melba College has clear and comprehensive policies, procedures and accountability mechanisms to regulate the conduct and decisions of school staff for the benefit of its students. All staff, contractors, volunteers, other adults contracted, employed or engaged by Melba College 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.

All staff, visitors and volunteers are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children. Fulfilling the roles and responsibilities contained in the policies and procedures regarding an allegation or disclosure of child abuse does not displace or discharge any other obligations that arise if a person reasonably believes that a child is at risk of child abuse.

The Melba College Code of Conduct follows the **Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees and Understanding DET'S Values - Schools Guide**

### **Acceptable Behaviours**

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

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's Child Safety Policy
- 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 students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- 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 or child safety officer
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- making reasonable efforts to ensure as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm if child abuse is suspected.

### **Unacceptable Behaviours**

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- 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, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- treat a child 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 school work 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 [\[1\]](#)
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy [\[2\]](#) or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

### **Implementation:**

Staff at Melba College are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- participating in training and guidance in regard to the school's child safety policies and practices. Melba College will provide, at least annually, professional learning that provides appropriate guidance and training about:
  - o individual and collective obligations for managing the risks of child abuse
  - o child abuse risks in the school environment
  - o the school's current child safety standards
- taking account of and making reasonable efforts to accommodate the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children who are vulnerable, same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse (SSAIGD) children
- modelling inclusive behaviour, and reporting any behaviour that appears racist, discriminatory or prejudiced
- supporting, enabling and encouraging school staff, parents and children to understand, identify, discuss and report child safety matters
- informing appropriate authorities when responding to an allegation of child abuse (including but not limited to mandatory reporting)
- protecting any child connected to the alleged child abuse until the allegation is resolved

- making, securing, and retaining records of allegation(s) of child abuse and the school's response to it
- managing an alternative procedure for responding to an allegation or disclosure if you cannot perform your responsibility
- specifying actions and monitor risk management strategies regarding child safety that identify and mitigate the risk(s) of child abuse in school environments, by taking into account the nature of each school environment, the activities expected to be conducted in that environment (including the provision of services by contractors or outside organisations), and the characteristics of all children expected to be in that environment inform all applicants for jobs that involve child-connected work for the school about the school's child safety practices (including this Code of Conduct)
- making reasonable efforts to gather, verify and record the following information about a person who is engaged to perform child related work:
  - o working with children status, or similar check
  - o proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications
  - o the person's history of work involving children
  - o references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children

**Staff must not:**

- prohibit or discourage staff from reporting an allegation of child abuse to an appropriate authority external to the school
- state or imply that it is the victim's responsibility to inform the police or other authorities about the allegation
- make a judgement about the truth of an allegation of child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children inconsistent with child safety policies and procedures
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily or inappropriately physical
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of non-age appropriate children (for example, personal social activities)
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express disrespectful personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child
- have inappropriate contact with a child or their family outside the school environment
- have any inappropriate online contact with a child or their family outside the school environment

**If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000 and inform a Principal Class Officer**

**References**

Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees

Understanding DET'S Values – Schools Guide

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Documents/PublicSectorValues-SchoolGuide.pdf>

## Evaluation

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually as part of the Melba College's review cycle.

<b>Policy Reviewed by School Council</b>	<b>Person Responsible for Policy</b>	<b>Next School Council Review</b>
November 2018	Assistant Principal Compliance	2019