



Staff Code of Conduct



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 9687 1535

PURPOSE

To ensure that staff interact with children at Footscray West Primary (FWPS) in ways that enhance the educational and social development of our students and are consistent with providing an open, welcoming, inclusive and safe environment for all.

OBJECTIVE

To outline the expected behaviours of staff in their interactions with children at FWPS.

SCOPE

This code of conduct applies to all staff at FWPS.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this policy, the term 'staff' includes all employees of FWPS, pre-service teachers and work experience students.

CODE OF CONDUCT

All staff at Footscray West Primary School (FWPS) are governed by The Code of Conduct for Victorian Public Sector Employees (2015) which is designed to help public sector employees understand their obligations to behave in accordance with the high standards the community expects. It describes the behaviours that promote the values contained in the Public Administration Act 2004, and it provides employees with guidance if they are faced with an ethical dilemma or a conflict of interest in their work.

Teachers are also registered with The Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) which has developed a Code of Conduct as required by Part 2.6 of the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006*. The Code of Conduct is a set of principles or standards for the behaviour and conduct of all Victorian teachers.

Misuse of social media can seriously damage reputations and exacerbate bullying. Even with security settings in place, issues may still arise.

The following principles from the Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics, are of particular relevance when using social media:

Principle 1.5: Teachers are always in a professional relationship with their learners in their school whether at school or not. Teachers hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students.

Principle 1.6: Teachers maintain a professional relationship with Parents (Guardians, Caregivers).

Principle 1.7: Teachers work in collaborative relationships with students' families and communities.

Principle 2.1: The personal conduct of a teacher will have an impact on the professional standing of that teacher and on the profession as a whole.

While staff can be friendly with students, parents and communities their relationship should remain professional. In social situations staff should conduct themselves in an appropriate manner and respect the confidentiality of the school and others. It is important for staff to consider the consequences of their actions.

In addition to the regulations as outlined in the codes above, all staff members of FWPS 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 FWPS are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to FWPS child safe policy and upholding the 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 and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 an adult is not left alone with a child
- observe child safe protocols when interacting with students online when in a remote and flexible learning situation
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Assistant Principal, who is the Child Safety Officer and/ or leadership, and ensuring any allegation is reported to the police or child protection
- reporting any child safety concerns to Assistant Principal, who is the Child Safety Officer and/ or leadership
- ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe if an allegation of child abuse is made,
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities when appropriate, especially on issues that are important to them.

Staff 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)
- 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 without express knowledge of their parents/carers
- have any online contact with a child other than for educational purposes for which they have obtained school approval
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

Policies which support this code:

- Duty of Care
- Mandatory reporting – child safe obligations
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	November 2020
Consultation	Staff, Policy and Planning
Approved by	School Council
Next scheduled review date	2024