



# St John's Primary School Heidelberg

February, 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following the implementation of the Victorian Child Safe Standards in 2016 there have been many positive changes, with heightened awareness, increased vigilance and stronger processes in schools, the Church and our communities. St John's is committed to protecting the wellbeing and safety of all children in our school and as the 2017 school year begins, we are continuing to review and strengthen child safety policies, code of conduct and related procedures and practices.

Information was sent out to parents last year, explaining the background of the Standards and how we, as a school, are expected to comply with them. The Standards are based on a zero tolerance approach to any child abuse or neglect and are far reaching in their expectations and responsibilities for all concerned. St John's will be continuing to work on all seven Standards to ensure we are addressing current issues and remain compliant.

One of the expectations is the signing of a Code of Conduct by ALL staff, volunteers and contractors. Attached to this letter is St John's Code of Conduct which is based on the recommendations from the Victorian Regulations and Qualifications Authority, Catholic Education Melbourne and The Department of Education. This Code of Conduct has been ratified by St John's School Advisory Council (2016) and has been signed by all staff at St John's.

**We would ask that all parents sign and return this Code of Conduct to classroom teachers so that if, in future, you wish to volunteer in any capacity at St John's, you will be able to do so with complete understanding of such expectations.**

Only one form need be completed per family. Those signing it can include grandparents and other adult family members. The signed forms will be stored in student's confidential files. A register of signed forms will be maintained by the school.

This form will not negate the need for a **Working with Children Check, WWCC**. All parents are required to obtain a WWCC and to nominate St John's as employer.

**We would ask that signed forms are returned by Friday 17th February, alternatively you may leave your signed form in the envelope provided by your child's classroom teacher.**

Yours sincerely,

**MAUREEN STELLA**  
Principal

## **What are the Child-Safe Standards?**

There are seven minimum [Child Safe Standards](#) with an overarching principle of inclusion which applies to each of the *Standards*.

The intention of these new [Child Safe Standards](#) is to make organisations, including schools, consider and address child-abuse situations and risks in an integrated and proactive fashion.

## **The Child Safe Standards**

**Standard 1:** Strategies to embed an organisational culture of child safety, including through effective leadership arrangements

**Standard 2:** A child safety policy or statement of commitment to child safety

**Standard 3:** A code of conduct that establishes clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children

**Standard 4:** Screening, supervision, training and other human resources practices that reduce the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel

**Standard 5:** Processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

**Standard 6:** Strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse

**Standard 7:** Strategies to promote the participation and empowerment



# Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct

St John's Primary School

Created July 2016

## St John's Vision

Given St John's proud history and tradition within the Heidelberg community, we strive to empower the school's motto, '*Labora et ora*', *Work and pray*

*We aspire to:*

Support everyone's journey in faith and personal relationship with their God

Engage and inspire a commitment to being life-long learners

Develop confidence and a commitment to personal excellence

Encourage compassion for those in need and be welcoming and inclusive of others

## Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at St John's against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, parents, volunteers, contractors, clergy and school council members at St John's are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

## Acceptable Behaviours

All staff, parents, volunteers, contractors, clergy and school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- Adhering to the school's child safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- Treating everyone in the school community 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 or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership
- Reporting any child safety concerns to the school's leadership
- If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe

- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children 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 by having a zero tolerance of discrimination
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability
- Adhere to protocols regarding personal care
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- Reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.
- Adhere to the eSmart policy regarding online contact with a child or their family
- Adhere to the eSmart policy regarding the taking of photos or videos of a child

### **Unacceptable Behaviours**

All staff, parents, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members must not:

- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- 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 or being alone in a single sited room)
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact which children or 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 age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability.
- Have any inappropriate online contact with a child or their family (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc)
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or personal email addresses
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or carer
- Work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.

**Please retain the information provided which includes a copy of St John's Code of Conduct.**

**Please return this form to your child's teacher**

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# Parent/Carer Code of Conduct

## PARENT/CARER 1 TO COMPLETE

I, \_\_\_\_\_, confirm that I have been provided with a copy of the above Code of Conduct.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## PARENT/CARER 2 TO COMPLETE

I, \_\_\_\_\_, confirm that I have been provided with a copy of the above Code of Conduct.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Returned to school on

Date: \_\_\_\_\_