



St Thomas' Primary School

Guthridge Parade, Sale 3850

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CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

St Thomas Catholic Primary School, Sale

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to St Thomas Catholic Primary School, Sale.

Central to the mission of St Thomas Catholic Primary School is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children and young people and providing them with a safe, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

2.0 PURPOSE

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

All school staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy, School Advisory Committee members and any other adult involved in child-connected work at St Thomas Catholic Primary School must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct. They are also 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.

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, school camps and excursions).

3.0 ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

At St Thomas Catholic Primary School, all school staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy, School Advisory Committee members and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding our St Thomas Catholic Primary School commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing 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 and Torres Strait Islander 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/or asexual (LGBTIQA+) 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 responsible adult
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to one of our Child Safety Champions.
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in accordance with the [Four Critical Actions for Schools](#) and the following Diocese of Sale Catholic Education Limited (**DOSCEL**) policies:
 - Protection of Children – Reporting Obligations Procedure
 - Protection of Children – Anti-Grooming Policy
 - Protection of Children – Failure to Disclose Policy
 - Protection of Children – Failure to Protect Policy
 - Mandatory Reporting Policy
 - Guide to Reporting Conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme
 - Child and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes Policy and Procedure
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

4.0 UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

At St Thomas Catholic Primary School, all school staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy, School Advisory Committee members and member of our school community involved in child-connected work 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 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 and when principal and parental permission has been sought
- photograph or video a child or student in a school environment except where written consent has been obtained 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 principal and parental permission has been sought.*

* At St Thomas we acknowledge that some of our staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members have relationships with other school community members. It is important that these relationships uphold the Catholic Ethos and abide by the code of conduct.

5.0 BREACHES TO THE CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

All St Thomas Catholic Primary School 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 of conduct or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the DOSCEL Guide to Reporting Conduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the St Thomas' Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the principal.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact the Executive Manager: Industrial Relations / Human Resources, DOSCEL, on 03 5622 6600.

6.0 AUTHORITY, MONITORING AND REPORTING

DOSCEL, a Company incorporated under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth.), is the Governing Authority of primary and secondary schools in the Diocese of Sale, excluding Catholic College Sale and Lavalla Catholic College, Traralgon.

The Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL, is responsible for the management and general administration of DOSCEL schools. Based on the principle of subsidiarity and in keeping with the DOSCEL Delegation Register for Schools, a broad range of duties, functions, powers and authority are delegated to the Principal. This includes the effective implementation of this Child Safety Code of conduct and the compliance obligations outlined in this code of conduct.

However, the Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL, remains responsible for monitoring the development and implementation of this code of conduct and for providing reports as required to the Directors of the DOSCEL Board.

The Principal is responsible for:

- ensuring compliance with the obligations outlined in this code of conduct;
- assigning authority, responsibility and accountability at appropriate levels within the school for code of conduct implementation and compliance;
- providing delegated staff with the direction, support and resources necessary to fulfil code of conduct requirements;
- ensuring cyclic reviews of the code of conduct;
- reporting and escalating concerns, issues and code of conduct breaches to the Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL, and working collaboratively with the Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL, to resolve them.

Whilst the Principal will play an important role in effective implementation of this code of conduct and compliance with the Standards, it is noted that responsibility for compliance with the Standards ultimately remains with DOSCEL.

7.0 CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT STATUS AND REVIEW

Approval

This Code of Conduct is endorsed by the Chief Executive Officer, DOSCEL.

Implementation Date:	September 2022
Consultation:	17/10/22 School Advisory Committee Meeting review 22.11.21 Student representative group discussion about child safety 28/1/2022, 3/9/22 School staff 29/3/22, 27/7/23 Parent consultation volunteer inductions

Review Date:	September 2024