



## Staff Child Safe Code of Conduct Agreement-FT057

### Our commitment to child safety

Plenty River College is committed to providing an environment where children are safe and feel safe and have a say in decisions that affect their lives.

We are committed to:

- preventing harm to children by identifying risks and taking steps to reduce or remove those risks
- treating allegations of child abuse seriously, and notifying authorities where required by law and in accordance with our child safety related policies and procedures
- hiring the right people to work with children, and training and supporting our staff to provide a child safe environment
- ensuring children, families, communities and staff feel safe to speak up about child safety
- aligning responses to children at risk of family violence with Victoria's legislated family violence framework (the MARAM Framework <https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management>)
- ensuring the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and ensuring that decision-making for Aboriginal children is made or informed by Aboriginal people wherever possible
- providing a safe and welcoming environment for all children, including Aboriginal children, children from multicultural and multifaith backgrounds, children with disability and LGBTIQ+ children and children in out of home care settings
- embedding inclusive practice in our systems so we identify and respond to the diverse and intersecting needs of children and families
- listening to and empowering children so they can understand their rights and have a say in decisions about their lives
- listening to and learning from children with lived experience of involvement with child safety.

### Expected behaviours

Staff must:

- provide a welcoming, inclusive, culturally responsive and safe environment for children
- take reasonable steps to protect children from harm and abuse by identifying risks and taking steps to remove or reduce those risks. In some cases, this may require immediate action (for example, taking a child's arm to stop them walking into traffic or arranging medical care from a qualified person).
- treat allegations of child abuse and harm seriously
- assess and manage risks of family violence to children in accordance with Victoria's legislated family violence framework (the MARAM Framework <<https://www.vic.gov.au/family-violence-multi-agency-risk-assessment-and-management>>) and other laws and the College's policies and procedures.



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- notify the appropriate authorities of alleged or suspected child abuse in accordance with the law and the College's policies and procedures. This means reporting:
  - criminal conduct and suspected criminal conduct to Victoria Police
  - allegations of child abuse or suspected abuse to Child Protection
  - reportable conduct (alleged child abuse by PRC staff) to Social Services Regulator (SSR)
- ensure any steps to manage the behaviour of children are reasonable, lawful and follow the College's policies
- inform the principal if they are charged with a criminal offence
- treat children with respect and value their opinions
- communicate with children in a way that helps them understand information, ask questions and express their preferences
- listen and respond to the concerns of children, particularly about their safety or the safety of another child
- encourage children to 'have a say' and participate in decisions that affect their lives
- ensure children know who to approach if they feel unsafe or want to raise concerns
- manage children's personal information consistently with privacy and information sharing laws and policies
- promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children by supporting and encouraging their connection to culture, kin, community, cultural practices and Aboriginal identity
- promote the cultural safety, inclusion, participation and empowerment of all children including Aboriginal children, children from multicultural and multifaith backgrounds, children with disability, children who identify as LGBTIQ+ and children in out of home care settings
- take a zero-tolerance approach to racism and respond appropriately to any incidents.

### Unacceptable behaviours

Staff must not:

- condone or participate in illegal, unsafe, abusive or harmful behaviour towards children. This includes:
  - participating in sexual abuse or misconduct
  - possessing child abuse material
  - grooming a child (predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity at a later time)
  - engaging in discussions (including online) of a mature or adult nature in the presence of a child
  - inappropriately discussing or showing audio or images of sexual acts
  - physical violence
  - family violence



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- neglect
- humiliating, belittling, rejecting or threatening a child, or behaving in any other manner that may cause emotional or psychological harm
- develop inappropriate or 'special' relationships with children that cross professional boundaries (for example, preferential treatment, giving inappropriate gifts, or inappropriate social media communication)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do themselves
- ignore or disregard concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse and family violence
- wait until there is definite proof before acting on and reporting an allegation or suspicion of child abuse or family violence
- discriminate against or denigrate any child because of their age, gender, gender identity, race, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or disability
- condone or participate in racist behaviour, or use inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with, or in the presence of a child
- question a child's self-identification or self-expression related to their gender, gender identity, race, culture, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or disability
- disregard or fail to consider the views of children, especially about their safety (including cultural safety) or issues or decisions that are important to them
- withhold access to tools and services that children need to communicate. Examples are communication tools for children with complex communication support needs, or interpreter and translation services for children with low English proficiency or children who use a form of sign language (such as Auslan)
- photograph or distribute images of a child without the consent of their parent or guardian.

### Breaches of this Code

Any staff member who violates the Child Safe Code of Conduct may face disciplinary action, which may include suspension or termination of employment.

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I have read the College's Child Safe Code of Conduct Agreement and agree to abide by it at all times.

<b>Full Name</b>	
<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date</b>	