# **RATIFIED BY SCHOOL COUNCIL**: **August 13, 2019**

# **Review: August 2021**

Mount Dandenong Primary School (MDPS) 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. MDPS has zero tolerance for child abuse.

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 Mount Dandenong Primary School will support 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 MDPS will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers 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.

**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 Mount Dandenong Primary School Child Safe Policy at all times and adhering to the Mount Dandenong Primary School Statement of Commitment to Child Safety at all times
  + 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
  + promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal 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)
* 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
* reporting any child safety concerns to **Mount Dandenong Primary School** Principal or leadership
* understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
* if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe

**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 any ‘special’ relationships with children 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 (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometimes, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
* ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
* 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
* 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
* 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
* 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
* consume alcohol contrary to school policy in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the **Mount Dandenong Primary School** Principal.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name: ……………………………….............

Signature: ……………………………………

Date: ……………………………………........