

Child Safe Standards – Engaging Volunteers

A distinctive mark of Catholic schools is the emphasis on principals, teachers, staff and parents working together with the wider community to educate and develop the whole child. This approach encompasses spiritual, academic, emotional, physical and social development.

This whole of community approach extends to a shared responsibility for the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people in our schools. With the introduction of the Victorian Child Safe Standards in 2016, all Victorian schools are required to systematically develop, implement, monitor and evaluate risk management strategies to ensure child safety in all school environments.

Catholic schools are continuing to work closely with their communities to review and strengthen child safety policies, codes of conduct and related procedures and practices for the wellbeing and protection of all students. This will result in growing community awareness and understandings of our shared responsibility.

As part of the Child Safe Standards, schools are also required to demonstrate evidence of their commitment to safer recruitment of staff including, teachers, volunteers and contractors. This requirement extends to the engagement of parent volunteers and involves more open and transparent screening and supervision practices.

Volunteers continue to be a valued and vital aspect of Catholic education and Catholic schools welcome and encourage involvement of parent volunteers to share their skills, experience and expertise. As parents of children in Catholic schools, when you enrol your child, you should feel confident that their safety is a priority while at school and in the care of all members of the learning community.

With this in mind, if it is your intention to volunteer at St Francis Xavier, either in the classroom at school sporting events, class excursions etc. you will need to complete the attached Volunteer Application Form and follow with the steps outlined in the form.

If you require further copies of the application form (for second parent, grandparents etc), please contact the office and we will send home another copy.

If you have a WWCC and are already registered with the office, you will still have to complete this process. You will be contacted to make arrangements to follow this process.

I thank you for your support. Your commitment and involvement helps to maintain a safe, secure, and nurturing learning environment for our students



Steve Bellesini

Principal

Child Safe Standards – Volunteer Application Form

Name of Volunteer: _____

Associated Business
(if applicable) eg. ACU _____

Address: _____

Mobile / Home  : _____

- Volunteer Role:
- Classroom Helper
 - Literacy Helper
 - Excursion Helper
 - Other (please specify) _____

History of Volunteer Work or Employment in Child related fields:

Referees:

Name	Position	School/Company	Phone Number
1.			
2.			

Declaration:

- I agree to maintain the highest standards of confidentiality with respect to any information obtained during the course of my volunteer work
- I understand that I may be required to participate in an interview and undertake referee and background checks
- I have attached a copy of my current WWCC (Working with Childrens Check)
- I have read and signed the attached Volunteer Code of Conduct
- I declare that the information contained in this application is true and correct

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Privacy Statement

The personal information you have provided will help us to assess you as a valued volunteer of St Francis Xavier Primary School and will be treated as confidential. Information provided by you in this form may be checked with any relevant authorities, previous employers, volunteer organisations and/or referees. Information provided will be treated in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).



St Francis Xavier Primary School, Box Hill

Volunteers & Contractors Code of Conduct

Our vision is for a school that enhances the wellbeing of all in an environment of justice, inclusiveness, tolerance, equality and compassion; in which harmony and healthy relationships are promoted through the development of social skills, self-worth, affirmation and the celebration of achievements. It is also a place in which clergy, parents, teachers and students build and nurture a healthy growing community.

Purpose

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

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members at St Francis Xavier 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, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board 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 (modelling positive and respectful relationships and acting in a manner that sustains a safe, educational and pastoral environment)
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child have been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child - these should be reported to the school's Leadership
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance policy towards discrimination)
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- Teachers will ensure as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)
- Reporting any child safety concerns to the school's leadership or a member of the Child Safety Team.
- If an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe.

Unacceptable behaviours

Failure to Comply With This Code of Conduct

Where a volunteer or contractor is suspected of breaching any obligation, duty or responsibility within this Policy, St Francis Xavier will take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal.

All volunteers and contractors must not:

- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse or 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)
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves (such as toileting or changing clothes) or engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- Use inappropriate language or express inappropriate personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- Discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- Have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc.) or their family (unless necessary e.g. by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work)
- Use any personal communication channels/device or exchange personal contact details with a student or minor without a parent's permission such as phone number, social networking sites or personal email addresses
- Photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- Work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.

I have read and understood this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it at all times.

Name:
Signature:
Date: