



Child Safety Code of Conduct

Introduction

The protection of children and young persons is the responsibility of everyone working at Ruyton Girls' School, including all staff, contractors, parents and volunteers. We all share responsibility for promoting the wellbeing and safety of children and must behave appropriately towards them when they are in our actual or virtual presence.

Purpose

The purpose of this code of conduct is to:

- promote child safety in the Ruyton School environment;
- set standards about the ways in which individuals working in the Ruyton environment are expected to behave and conduct themselves when interacting with our students; and
- outline the possible consequences should this code of conduct be breached.

Scope

All individuals who are working (paid or unpaid) in the Ruyton environment are required to comply with this code of conduct at all times. Such individuals include those who are:

- staff members, including non-teaching staff and temporary or casual staff;
- volunteers;
- students;
- parents and carers;
- third party contractors and service providers (including external education providers);
- members of the School Board;
- student teachers on placement at the School; and
- visitors.

Some individuals will also be members of a recognised professional body (such as teachers, psychologists, accountants, etc.) with their own professional codes of conduct and must also adhere to these. Nothing in this Code is expected to require any individual to breach their relevant professional code.

The Ruyton environment is any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by Ruyton for use by a child during or outside School hours, and includes:

- our main campus at 12 Selbourne Road, Kew;
- online School environments, including our email and intranet systems;

- Trinity Grammar School; and
- other locations provided by Ruyton for our students' use, including locations used for School camps, tours, sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, the Police should be contacted on 000.

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct

This Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards students. The Code serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote child safety in the School environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. Where a staff member breaches the Code, Ruyton may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal. The School revises the Code annually.

Ruyton has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our School community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, Board members, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors, External education providers and parents/carers.

The School's School Board has endorsed this Child Safety Code of Conduct.

Overarching Principles:

- the adult/child relationship should be professional at all times; and
- an adult's response to a child's behaviour or circumstances should be commensurate with the child's age, developmental stage and vulnerability and the adult's responsibility for the care, safety and welfare of the child.

Standards of Conduct

DO:

- Behave as a positive role model to students.
- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- Be vigilant and proactive with regard to student safety and child protection issues.
- Provide age appropriate supervision for students.
- Comply with guidelines published by the School with respect to child protection.
- Treat all students with respect.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students.
- Use positive and affirming language toward students.
- Encourage students to 'have a say' and then listen to them with respect.
- Respect cultural, religious and political differences.
- Ensure the safety, participation and empowerment of students who are gender diverse

- Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact, and socialise.
- Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way.
- Report any breaches of this Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Report concerns about child safety to one of the School's Child Safety Leaders and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met.
- Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe.
- Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety.
- Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

DO NOT:

- Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour.
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with students.
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on culture, race, ethnicity or disability.
- Engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of students.
- Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a student including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material.
- Engage in inappropriate or unnecessary physical conduct or behaviours including doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Engage in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriately rough physical play.
- Use physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student.
- Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm.
- Develop 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- Engage in meetings with a child that is not your own, outside of school hours and without permission from the School and the child's parent.
- Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- Take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent.
- Post online any information about a student that may identify them such as their: full name; age; e-mail address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group they may attend.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

Child Protection Program

Our Child Protection Program includes a Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy that provides detailed guidance for all staff on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults at Ruyton.

The Program also includes guidance on how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our School's nominated Child Safety Leaders.

Third party contractors, external education providers, volunteers, students, parents or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact one of the School's Child Safety Leaders.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

Breaches of this Code

Employees of Ruyton who breach this code of conduct will be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with the School's disciplinary policies. Such disciplinary action may include counselling, receiving a written warning, loss of privileges, suspension from duties or the termination of their employment.

Contractors and volunteers of Ruyton who breach this code of conduct may face termination of their engagement with Ruyton. Employees of contractors or sub-contractors may also be refused permission to continue working in the Ruyton school environment.

When circumstances require, a breach may be referred to the Victoria Police and/or a regulatory body, such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

Related Documents

- Ruyton's Child Protection and Safety Policy
- Ruyton's Code of Ethical Conduct
- Mandatory Reporting and Child Protection Policy
- Reportable Conduct of Staff, Volunteers and Others Policy
- Acceptable Use of Information Technology and Communications Policy
- Ministerial Order No. 870: Child Safe Standards
- Victorian Institute of Teaching: Victorian Teaching Profession Codes of Conduct and Ethics

APPROVED: Ruyton Board (February 2020)