

1 Purpose

The Berry Street School Child Safety Code of Conduct has the objective of promoting child safety and wellbeing in the school environment. It sets out the expected behaviour of adults with the students in our school.

This is a public facing document.

2 Scope

All Berry Street School staff, volunteers, contractors, other service providers, Berry Street Board members and any other adults involved in child-connected work must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

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, a school camp).

3 Review cycle

The Child Safety Code of Conduct will be reviewed every two years in line with Ministerial Order no. 1359 and the Plan Do Check Act Cycle, and as outlined in Berry Street's Policy Framework.

4 Acceptable behaviours

At the Berry Street School, all staff, volunteers, contractors, other service providers, Berry Street Board members and any other adults involved in child-connected work are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding our Berry Street 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 and dignity 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 tell you 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/or Torres Strait Islander students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students unable to live at home
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students who are part of the LGBTQIA+ community
- 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 adult, unless their role requires privacy, such as a school counsellor or psychologist
- ensuring that any conversations with a student about sex or sexuality occur in a respectful and safe way and in the context of their experience and the staff member's role
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Assistant Principal (Head of Campus), School Principal or Child Safe Champions
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with Berry Street's Reporting Child Maltreatment Procedure and Berry Street's Responding to Reports of Child Maltreatment Procedure; also see [PROTECT Four Critical Actions](#)
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from further harm.

Staff at our School hold a position of influence and trust that must not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with children and young people.

5 Unacceptable behaviours

At the Berry Street School, all staff, volunteers, contractors, other service providers, Berry Street Board members and any other adults involved in child-connected work, in order to support and promote the safety of children, 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, therapeutic or professional context
- ignore any adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student

- initiate discussion of intimate topics or use sexualised language
- 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 by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc.) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to schoolwork or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child or student in a school environment except in accordance with the Berry Street Image Use Procedure, and Authorisations for Release of Images (Student Enrolment Form – Part C) provided by parent or guardian), or where required for duty of care purposes. The School is required to seek consent before taking and publishing photos of a student at school, or when on an excursion or camp, which is done through the Authorisations for Release of Images upon enrolment
- 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 with the explicit approval of the Principal and parents/guardians/carers. Such contact must be directly related to school auspiced activities.

6 Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All Berry Street School staff, volunteers, contractors, other service providers, Berry Street Board members 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, other relevant agreements or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the Commission for Children and Young People Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

Berry Street will report to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

Complaints can be made to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), such as if there is a concern that Berry Street is not complying with the child safety standards (<https://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/complaints/Pages/making-a-complaint.aspx#link93>).

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Berry Street School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal (BSVSchool@berrystreet.org.au or 03 5120 2576).

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the Principal, contact the Executive Director: State-wide Services (info@berrystreet.org.au or 03 9429 9266).

7 Supporting documents

- Berry Street School - Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Berry Street School - Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Berry Street School – Student Enrolment Form
- Berry Street – Image Use Procedure
- Berry Street – Reporting Child Maltreatment Procedure
- Berry Street – Responding to Reports of Child Maltreatment Procedure

8 Version control

Version Number	1.2
Approved by:	Berry Street Board
Approved date:	10/09/2024
Review date:	10/09/2026
Process Owner:	Principal
Executive Responsible:	Executive Director Statewide Services
Version notes:	
Version 1.0	Code of Conduct was developed following implementation of the new Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order No. 1359
Version 1.1	01/05/2023 Added the following sentence to the Purpose: “The Berry Street School Child Safety Code of Conduct has the objective of promoting child safety and wellbeing in the school environment.” Moved a sentence from Purpose to Scope to improve clarity.
Version 1.2	29/07/2024 Document reviewed as per review cycle <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Included relevant policies, procedures and documents throughout○ Included generic contact details○ Minor change of wording