

Child Safety Code of Conduct

1. Purpose

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school.

All Alphington Grammar School staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, school council members and any other adult 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).

2. Acceptable behaviours

As Alphington Grammar School, staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding our Alphington Grammar 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 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 disclose 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 students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTIQ+) students
- 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.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Child Safety Team (The Principal, Assistant Principals, Overseas Co-Ordinator; Child Safety Champion, School Psychologist)
- understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures and the PROTECT Four Critical Actions.
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

3. Unacceptable behaviours

As Alphington Grammar School, staff, volunteers, contractors and member of our school community involved in child-connected work we 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 or professional context
- ignore an adult’s overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student

- discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance
- 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 Photographing, Filming and Recording Students policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- 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 when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought.

4. Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All Alphington Grammar School staff, volunteers, contractors 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 agreement 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 Reportable Conduct Scheme guidelines (Social Services Regulator) and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Alphington Grammar School Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the principal and/or Child Safety Team (Assistant Principals, Overseas Co-Ordinator; Child Safety Champion, School Psychologist)

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the principal, contact the Chairperson of the School Board or Assistant Principals, Child Safety Champion.

5. Approval and review

5.1 Review cycle

This Code of Conduct is reviewed at least every two years, and at a minimum annually, in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359 Clause 6.2(b) and the School's Child Safety Governance and Oversight Policy. The standard review cycle is set out below.

Item	Detail
Review frequency	At least annually, and at a minimum every two years, consistent with MO1359 Clause 14.2(a).
Review owner	Child Safe Champion, on behalf of the Senior Management Team (SMT) — the Policy Owner.
Approval authority	Alphington Grammar School Council.
Next scheduled review	August 2027, or earlier if triggered under Section 5.3 below.

5.2 Review process

The following process is followed for each scheduled or triggered review of this Code of Conduct:

1. **Preparation:** The Child Safe Champion reviews the Code of Conduct against the current version of Ministerial Order 1359, the Victorian Child Safe Standards, the School's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, and any relevant VRQA or regulatory guidance, and identifies any recommended amendments.
2. **Consultation:** Proposed amendments are circulated to the Principal, Assistant Principals and relevant members of the Child Safety Team for feedback. Where amendments are substantive, input is also sought from staff, volunteer and student representative groups (for example, through the Staff Consultative Committee and Student Representative Council).
3. **Drafting:** The Child Safe Champion finalises the amended Code of Conduct, incrementing the version number and updating the 'Last Review' and 'Next Review' dates in the document footer.
4. **Endorsement recommendation:** The Principal reviews the final draft and recommends it to School Council for approval.
5. **Council approval:** School Council formally considers and approves (or requests further amendment to) the Code of Conduct. The approval, including the date and a minute reference, is recorded in the Council meeting minutes.
6. **Publication:** Once approved, the updated Code of Conduct is published on the School website and intranet, replacing the previous version, and is filed in the Policy Register with a record of the version history.
7. **Communication:** The School communicates the update to all staff, volunteers, contractors and the school community via the usual channels (staff briefing/email, newsletter, and induction materials), and requires staff, volunteers and contractors involved in child-connected work to re-acknowledge the Code of Conduct.
8. **Evidence:** A record of each review — including the date, reviewer, consultation undertaken, Council approval reference, and communication activity — is retained in the Evidence Register maintained by the Child Safe Champion, for inspection by VRQA or other regulators on request.

5.3 Triggers for an early (out-of-cycle) review

In addition to the scheduled review cycle, this Code of Conduct will be reviewed earlier than the next scheduled date where any of the following occur:

- a significant child safety incident, complaint or reportable allegation identifies a gap in this Code of Conduct;
- Ministerial Order 1359, the Victorian Child Safe Standards, or related legislation (including the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) and the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)) is amended in a way that affects this Code of Conduct;
- a VRQA audit, rectification plan or other regulatory review identifies a non-compliance or recommendation relating to this Code of Conduct;
- the School's Child Safety Risk Register annual review identifies a risk or control gap relevant to staff, volunteer or contractor conduct; or
- the School Board or School Council otherwise resolves that a review is warranted.

Where an early review is triggered, the process at Section 5.2 is followed on an expedited basis, with the trigger and rationale recorded alongside the review evidence.

5.4 Version history

Version	Date	Approved by	Summary of changes
v1.0	July 2025	School Council	Original policy adopted.
v1.1	August 2026	School Council	Completed Section 5 (Approval and review) to specify the review cycle, review process, triggers for early review, and version history, in response to the VRQA

			MO1359 Rectification Plan (July 2026), Clause 6.2(b).
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5.5 School Council ratification

This version of the Code of Conduct (v1.1, August 2026), including the completed Section 5, is submitted to Alphington Grammar School Council for ratification at its meeting of 4th August 2026.

Council resolution	Wording
Resolution	The School Council approves the Child Safety Code of Conduct (v1.1, August 2026), including the review cycle, review process and triggers for early review set out in Section 5, and confirms that this satisfies the requirement under MO1359 Clause 6.2(b) for the Code of Conduct to include a completed review and approval section.