1. Objective:
The objective of this Code of Conduct is to guide school staff in identifying and regulating their own behaviour and the behaviour of other school staff, and to protect children from abuse in the school environment. McKinnon Primary School will, develop, adopt, review and maintain a Child Safety Code of Conduct and have this endorsed by the School Council. The Code of Conduct will be published on the school’s website on an ongoing basis and will form part of embedding the Code of Conduct into the Child Safe culture of the school.

The Code of Conduct is consistent with school policies related to student supervision, duty of care, volunteers, camps and excursions, bullying prevention policy and disciplinary procedures described in the Student Engagement and Well Being Policy.

McKinnon Primary School is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

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 McKinnon 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 the school 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.

2. Embedding the Code of Conduct:
To ensure the Code is fully appreciated, understood and applied by all school staff (employees, contractors and volunteers) and parents the following actions will be taken:

2.1. ensure that all school staff (employees, contractors and volunteers) and parents are aware of the code and how it applies
2.2. inclusion of the Code as part of the induction for new staff
2.3. inclusion of the Code in induction for all pre-service teachers
2.4. inclusion of the Code as part of annual training for existing school staff (employees, contractors and volunteers)
2.5. discussion of the Code at staff meetings; communication of the Code through school communication channels including email, Compass, intranet, shared drive, team meetings and Consultative Committee meetings; as well as shared spaces including the staff room and office areas
2.6. informing parents/carers and other persons associated with the school of the expected behaviour for the school’s leadership, staff, contractors and volunteers
2.7. using the school’s and the Department’s reporting procedures should breaches of the Code be suspected or identified
2.8. including the Code in employment advertisements and service contractors to ensure compliance
2.9. communication to students in an appropriate way.
3. **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:

3.1. upholding the school’s statement of commitment to child safety at all times, adhering to the school’s child safe policy

3.2. 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

3.3. listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child

3.4. promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students

3.5. promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds

3.6. promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability

3.7. promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of young children

3.8. reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the school’s leadership or Child Safety Leader

3.9. understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse

3.10. if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

4. **Unacceptable behaviours:**

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

4.1. ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse

4.2. develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to ‘grooming’ behaviour (for example, offering gifts)

4.3. 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

4.4. ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate

4.5. 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

4.6. treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity

4.7. 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

4.8. photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes. The school must obtain consent before taking and publishing photos of a student. Written consent is sought at the beginning of each school year from parent/carers. This applies for excursions and school activities

4.9. in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

5. **Making a professional judgement:**

Adults at McKinnon Primary School will:

5.1. make judgements about their behaviour in order to secure the best interests and welfare of the child

5.2. discuss any misunderstandings, accidents or threats with a member of School Leadership or Child Safe Leader
5.3. be aware of their position of trust and ensure an unequal balance of power is not used for their own or others personal advantage or gratification
5.4. not use their position to intimidate, bully, humiliate, threaten, coerce or undermine children
5.5. maintain appropriate professional boundaries and avoid behaviour which might be misinterpreted by others
5.6. not promote relationships which create a personal friendship or are of an inappropriate nature.

6. Personal/living space:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will;
6.1. not invite a child into their home or any home or domestic setting frequented by them, unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with parents and School Leadership or the home has been designated as a work place e.g. child-minders, foster carers
6.2. be vigilant in maintaining their own privacy and mindful of the need to avoid placing themselves in vulnerable situations
6.3. not ask children to undertake personal jobs or errands
6.4. maintain professional boundaries.

7. Gifts, rewards and favouritism:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will;
7.1. be aware of the Department's policy on the giving and receiving of gifts
7.2. ensure that gifts received or given in situations that may be misconstrued are declared
7.3. gift giving to an individual as part of a reward system should be avoided, instead, be based on collective or team based positive reinforcement.
7.4. ensure that if operating reward/award systems, methods and criteria for selection of children for awards are fair and transparent.

8. Infatuations:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will;
8.1. deal with infatuations sensitively and appropriately to maintain the dignity and safety of all concerned
8.2. make sure their own behaviour is beyond reproach
8.3. if they become aware of an infatuation developing or any indications that it may, record it and discuss it with a School Leadership member or the Child Safe Leader so that action can be taken to avoid any hurt, distress or embarrassment.

9. Communication (including the use of technology):
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will:
9.1. ensure communication takes place within clear and explicit professional boundaries this includes the wider use of technology such as mobile phones, text messaging, e-mails, digital cameras, videos, web-cams, websites, and blogs
9.2. not share any personal information with a child
9.3. not request, or respond to, any personal information from a child, other than that which may be appropriate as part of their professional role
9.4. not give their personal contact details to children, including their mobile number, home phone or personal e-mail address, unless the need to do so is agreed with School Leadership and parents
9.5. only use equipment e.g. mobile phones, provided by their organisation to communicate with children, making sure that parents/carers have given permission for this form of communication to be used
9.6. only make contact with children for professional reasons and in accordance with school policy
9.7. only use text messaging as a last resort when no other forms of communication are possible
9.8. not use internet, web-based or social media communication channels to send messages
9.9. use internal e-mail systems in accordance with the school’s policy.
10. Social Contact:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will;
10.1. not have social contact with children unless the reason for this has been firmly established and agreed with School Leadership
10.2. not have secret social contact with children and/or their parent(s)
10.3. always approve any planned social contact with children with School Leadership
10.4. advise School Leadership or Child Safe Leader of any social contact that has occurred which may raise concern
10.5. report and record any situation which may place a child at risk or may compromise the organisation or their own professional standing.

11. Sexual Contact:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will;
11.1. not engage in sexual activity with or in the presence of a child, or cause or incite a child to engage in or watch sexual activity, to do so would be considered a criminal offence
11.2. not have any form of communication which could be interpreted as sexually suggestive or provocative or make sexual remarks to, or about a child either verbally, written or electronically
11.3. not discuss their own sexual relationships with or in the presence of children
11.4. ensure relationships take place within boundaries of respect and professionalism
11.5. ensure language, attitudes and demeanour do not give rise to comment or speculation
11.6. be aware that consistently displaying special attention and favour upon a child might be construed as part of a grooming process, and as such will give rise to concerns about behaviour.

12. Physical Contact:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will;
12.1. be aware that even well intentioned physical contact may be misconstrued by the child, an observer or by anyone to whom this action is described
12.2. only have physical contact with a child when it is necessary and in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role and responsibilities, never touch a child in a way which may be considered indecent
12.3. be aware of the child’s reactions or feelings and, as far as possible, only use a level of contact which is acceptable to the child and for the minimum time necessary
12.4. seek permission from the child or the parent, if the child is very young, before physical contact is made and agree what contact is acceptable
12.5. not assume that when a child is distressed they seek physical comfort
12.6. always be prepared to report and explain actions and accept that all physical contact is open to scrutiny
12.7. always encourage children, where possible to undertake self-care tasks independently
12.8. be aware of cultural or religious views about touching and be sensitive to issues of gender
12.9. where there is regular physical contact needed, the nature of this must be agreed with School Leadership and the parent as part of a formally agreed plan
12.10. where a child initiates inappropriate physical contact, you must sensitively deter them and help them understand the importance of personal boundaries.

13. Behaviour Management:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will;
13.1. not use any form of degrading treatment towards a child
13.2. not use sarcasm, demeaning or insensitive comments
13.3. ensure any sanctions and rewards are part of an agreed behaviour management policy
13.4. try to defuse situations before they escalate
13.5. never use corporal punishment
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13.6. follow the behaviour policy and only use physical intervention in exceptional circumstances and as a last resort, when other behaviour management strategies have failed and where there is a risk of physical injury or serious damage to property

13.7. when using physical intervention, use the minimum force necessary and techniques in line with recommended policy and practice and always report and document the incident

13.8. be mindful of other factors which may be impacting on a child’s behaviour, i.e. bullying, changes in home circumstances.

Note: the use of unwarranted physical force is likely to constitute a criminal offence.

14. Personal/Intimate Care:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will:
14.1. adhere to the schools Code of Conduct
14.2. make other staff aware of the task being undertaken
14.3. explain to the child what is happening
14.4. carefully and sensitively observe the emotional responses of the child, and record and report any concerns to School Leadership and parents, if appropriate
14.5. respect children’s privacy at all times
14.6. avoid any physical contact when children are in a state of undress, other than as part of an agreed care plan
14.7. not change, in the same place as children
14.8. not shower or bathe with children
14.9. not assist with any personal care task which a child can undertake themselves.

15. One to one situations/home visits:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will:
15.1. ensure that, when working alone is an integral part of their role, full and appropriate risk assessments have been agreed
15.2. avoid meetings with a child in secluded areas
15.3. always inform colleagues and/or parents about one to one contact beforehand, assessing the need to have them present or close by
15.4. avoid the use of ‘engaged’ or equivalent signs, where ever possible, these create an opportunity for secrecy or the interpretation of secrecy
15.5. carefully consider the need of the child when in one to one situation and always report any situation where the child becomes distressed or angry towards you
15.6. gain approval from school leadership for any home visit ensuring it is integral part of your role
15.7. never put themselves into a one to one situation when little or no information is available about the child.

16. Transporting:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will:
16.1. ensure requirements specific to seat belts and car seats are adhered to
16.2. not offer lifts outside normal working duties unless this has been brought to the attention of school leadership and been agreed with parents
16.3. ensure they are fit to drive and free from any drugs, alcohol or medicine that is likely to impair judgement or ability to drive
16.4. record details of the journey in accordance with agreed DET procedures
16.5. ensure that there are proper procedures in place for vehicle, passenger and driver safety, including appropriate insurance;
16.6. ensure that any impromptu or emergency lifts are recorded and can be justified if questioned.

17. Excursions and Camps:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will:
17.1. recognise that they are in a position of trust and ensure that their behaviour remains professional at all times and stays clearly within defined boundaries
17.2. ensure staff/child ratios and gender mix are appropriate
17.3. always have another adult present in out of work activities, unless otherwise agreed with by school leadership
17.4. ensure risk assessments are undertaken
17.5. have parental consent to the activity
17.6. never share beds with children
17.7. not share bedrooms unless it is a dormitory situation and the arrangements have been agreed with a school leadership, parents and children.

18. Photography and Videos:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will:
18.1. be clear about the purpose of any activity involving photography and what will happen to the images when the activity is concluded
18.2. be able to justify the reason for having images of children in their possession
18.3. avoid making images in one to one situations or situations that may be construed as secretive or which show a single child with no surrounding context
18.4. only use equipment provided or authorised by their school
18.5. immediately report any concerns if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found
18.6. have parental consent to take, display and/or distribute any images of children
18.7. not use images that may cause distress or offence.

19. Access to inappropriate images and internet usage:
Adults at McKinnon Primary School will:
19.1. not access, make or store indecent images of children on the internet, to do so would be illegal and lead to a criminal investigation
19.2. not make or store images of children, gathered as a result of their work, on personal equipment
19.3. follow their schools guidance on the use of ICT equipment
19.4. ensure that children are not exposed to unsuitable material through ICT
19.5. ensure that any materials shown to children are age appropriate
19.6. immediately report any concerns, if any inappropriate or intrusive images are found, to the school leadership and follow mandatory reporting policy.

20. Evaluation
20.1. This code of conduct will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

Review Date: October 2019

This code of conduct was last ratified by School Council in: October 2016