# SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY
Brunswick South Primary School

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<th>Policy Implementation Date</th>
<th>Review Date</th>
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<td>2012</td>
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<td>Policy Subcommittee</td>
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## Aim
Children have a right to be and feel safe. Brunswick South Primary School takes seriously its responsibility to provide an environment that is caring, nurturing and safe. BSPS is committed to ensuring that children are protected from sexual, physical, and emotional abuse and neglect from adults who have contact with them at the school.

## Rationale
Establishing behavioural guidelines with respect to appropriate contact with children and recruitment screening play an important role in reducing the likelihood of abuse to children and excluding unsuitable persons from working with children.

## Implementation

### Safeguarding Children at Brunswick South Primary School
We are committed to ensuring that all personnel strive for the highest possible standards with respect to safeguarding children from abuse. To that end we have developed these behavioural expectations to prevent behaviour that may be harmful to children in our care. All personnel are subject to this policy.

The term ‘personnel’ is inclusive of all staff, placement students, volunteers, including parent volunteers, contractors and service providers e.g. instrumental teachers who have contact with BSPS students. This policy will be distributed to all personnel upon commencement of their employment with BSPS. The individual will be required to sign a copy of this statement to indicate that they have read and will comply with these guidelines. A copy of this document will be retained by the school.

Any breaches of these guidelines should be reported to the Brunswick South Primary School leadership team. Disciplinary action may be taken in the event of a breach of these guidelines and any breaches of law will be reported to Police.

### Sexual misconduct
- Under no circumstances is any form of sexual behaviour to occur between, with or in the presence of children. Sexual behaviour needs to be interpreted widely to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including ‘contact behaviour’, such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling and ‘non-contact behaviour’, such as sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, and inappropriate photography.
Discipline - We require our personnel to use strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental stage of the children involved. The child or young person needs to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their misbehaviour in a positive manner. Under no circumstances are our personnel to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

Adhering to role boundaries - Our personnel should not, of their own volition, act outside the confines of their duties in the manner which may place a child at risk or may be construed as grooming behaviour e.g. lending money, unauthorised transport, unauthorised and/or secretive contact with the child outside of school hours for social purposes.

Use of language and tone of voice - Language and tone of voice as directed to children should not be harmful to children – in this respect, avoid language that is discriminatory, racist or sexist, derogatory, belittling or negative, intended to threaten or frighten, profane or sexual.

Supervision - Personnel are responsible for supervising children to ensure they are in a safe environment and are protected from external threats, for example, visitors to the school. Where possible, personnel are encouraged to avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with children and to conduct all activities and/or discussions in view of others.

Use of electronic communications - Electronic communication (for example, text messages, emails, instant messaging, or contact through social networking websites) between personnel and children is permitted only for educational purposes and should be avoided for promoting social contact, to arrange unauthorised contact with a child, and to exchange digital photographs or video. There may be exceptional circumstances where contact via electronic means is necessary e.g. prolonged illness and/or absence from school, in those circumstances it should occur with the express permission of the parent and the school's leadership team and may include copying content to parents or guardians.

Photography of children – Photography (video and digital) is permitted for educational purposes and where the child is appropriately dressed and posed and is not be distributed to anyone outside of the school community without approval from the leadership team. Images are not to be exhibited on our website without parental knowledge and approval, and such images must be presented in a manner that de-identifies the child or young person. Any caption or accompanying text may need to be checked so that it does not identify a child or young person if such identification is potentially detrimental.

Physical contact with children - Any physical contact with children must be appropriate and consistent with activity being engaged in e.g. when fitting sporting equipment and based on the needs of the child e.g. to assist or comfort a distressed child rather than on the needs of personnel.

Under no circumstances should any of our personnel have contact with children that:

- involves touching:
  - of genitals
  - of buttocks
- of the breast area (female children) that is other than as part of delivering medical or first aid.

- would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation

- is intended to cause pain or distress to the child – for example, physical punishment

- is overly physical – as is, for example, wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing

- is unnecessary – as is, for example, assisting with toileting when a child does not require assistance

- is initiated against the wishes of the child, except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the child or to others, in which case:
  - physical restraint should be a last resort
  - the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances, and aimed solely at restraining the child to prevent harm to themselves or others

Any physical contact involving force, restraint or potential harm e.g. accidental harm, must be reported to the leadership team immediately.

Personnel are required to report to the leadership team any physical contact initiated by a child or young person that is sexual and/or inappropriate, for example, acts of physical aggression, as soon as possible, to enable the situation to be managed in the interests of the safety of the child, personnel and any children.

**Change room arrangements** - Personnel are required to supervise children in change rooms while balancing the child’s right to privacy. In addition:

- personnel should avoid one-to-one situations with a child in a change room area

- personnel are not permitted to use the change room area to, for example, undress, while children are present

- personnel need to ensure adequate supervision in ‘public’ change rooms when they are used

- personnel need to provide the level of supervision required for preventing abuse by members of the public, adult service users, peer service users, or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a child’s privacy

**Use, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs** - While on duty, personnel must not:

- use, possess or be under the influence of an illegal drug

- use or be under the influence of alcohol

- be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs

- supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children

Use of legal drugs other than alcohol is permitted, provided such use does not interfere with your ability to care for children.

**Transporting children** - Children are to be transported only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of educational program or emergency situations. Children are to be transported only with prior authorisation from the child’s parent/guardian. Gaining approval involves providing information about the proposed journey.
Criminal History Background Screening
Brunswick South Primary School has a responsibility to ensure that employees and volunteers are suitable for child-related positions. Criminal history screening is an important part of a comprehensive recruitment process that prevents unsuitable people from working with children.

The Working with Children Check Act 2005 and the Victorian Institute of Teaching registration requirements specify criminal history record check screening requirements for those undertaking teaching and/or child-related work. These measures serve to ensure that a person who is known to have criminal charges or convictions that are considered relevant to their employment or voluntary role with children are excluded from such work to protect the well being of children.

Teachers (including Instrumental Teachers)
All teachers (irrespective of whether they are paid by the school or not) are subject to registration requirements* through the Victorian Institute of Teaching which include comprehensive screening measures e.g. national criminal history record check to ensure that a teacher does not have a criminal history which may suggest possible risk to children.

*Victorian Institute of Teaching Circular 6/2004 Registration Update

Non-Teaching Staff and Volunteers
Non-teaching personnel (e.g. OSHC staff, contractors, service providers, volunteers) are subject to the Working with Children Check Act 2005 requirements if the work:

- involves contact with children in connection with one of 20 listed child-related occupational fields
- is conducted on a regular basis e.g. daily, weekly
- involves direct contact with children and is not directly supervised e.g. physical contact, talking face-to-face and physically being in view of children.

Non-teaching personnel are required to possess a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) or apply for a WWCC for the purposes of work with children at our school. BSPS will sight and record the Application Receipt Number and/or the WWCC Check Number. The school will verify the validity of the WWCC on a regular basis.

Information regarding the Working with Children Check can be obtained from the Working with Children Check Unit, Department of Justice – Information Line 1300 652 879 or www.justice.vic.gov.au.

Ratification and Review
This policy was ratified by the School Council in 2010. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s review cycle and in the event of any incident which may prompt a review of the policy.
COMMITMENT TO
THE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN POLICY

I, ________________________________________________________________ (print name)

• have been provided with a copy and read Brunswick South Primary School’s Safeguarding
  Children Policy
• understand my responsibilities in relation to ensuring and promoting the safety of children at
  Brunswick South Primary School
• will observe these guidelines during my employment/time at Brunswick South Primary School
  to ensure and promote the safety of children at the school.

Signature: ___________________________________________ Date: ____________________________

Signature of Leadership Team Representative: ________________________________

Name: _______________________________________________________________

Date: ____________________________