

Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Chasing Sound

Reviewed: December 2020

Chasing Sound Policy Rationale

The Chasing Sound policies and guidelines exist to support, empower and protect the interests of the business and our wider community. They build the structure for how we operate, maintain our transparency and embed a foundation for future growth. These outline teaching, interaction and operational situations so all Staff are invited to contact the Chasing Sound administration team whenever they are unsure about anything.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

1.1 Overview

Chasing Sound recognises our responsibility for ensuring the Studio 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.

Our Child Protection Policy aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists our staff in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement government legislation and teaching best practices.

1.2 Personal and Professional Boundaries

Professional boundaries are parameters that describe the limits of a relationship in circumstances where one person (a student) entrusts their welfare and safety to another person (a Chasing Sound tutor or staff member), in circumstances where a power imbalance exists.

It is our policy that:

- staff exercise their responsibilities in a way that recognises professional boundaries with regard to their relationship with students at all times
- staff identify, discourage and reject any advances of a sexual nature initiated by a student
- staff interaction with students is professional at all times, including inside and outside¹ of school hours, as well as on-site at Chasing Sound premises and off-site at other locations

¹ Refer to **Off-Site Events, Excursions and Camps**



Lv 1, 199 – 201 Barkly Street, Footscray 3011
03 8317 1086
info@chasingsound.com.au
www.chasingsound.com.au

Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Chasing Sound

Reviewed: December 2020

- staff should not film/photograph anyone under 18 without parent and Chasing Sound consent and staff should not post material on their personal social media accounts
- conflict of interest issues² must be reported to Chasing Sound Director Emmet Brazil as soon as practicable via info@chasing-sound.com.au
- equal learning opportunities are given to each student without discrimination
- all members of the Chasing Sound community should avoid unnecessary physical contact³

The professional relationship of staff and students may be breached by:

- flirtatious behaviour or dating
- development of an intimate personal relationship and/or sexual relations
- the use of sexual innuendo, inappropriate language and/or material with students
- unwarranted and inappropriate touching
- unwarranted and inappropriate filming or photography
- deliberate exposure to sexual behaviour of others (e.g. pornography)
- having intimate contact without a valid context via written or electronic means (e.g. email, letters, telephone, text messages, social media sites or chat rooms)
- going out, whether alone or in company, to social events such as the movies or dinner
- exchanging gifts of a personal nature that encourages the formation of an intimate relationship

An established and expected professional relationship between staff and students may be compromised by staff:

- attending parties or socialising with students outside of organised Chasing Sound events (without parental/carer permission)
- sharing personal details about their private lives with students
- meeting with students outside of school hours without permission from Chasing Sound

Staff should demonstrate their commitment to student learning by:

- maintaining a safe and challenging learning environment that promotes mutual respect

² This includes if the child is a family member or family friend.

³ Handshake and high-five is acceptable. If physical contact is required for specific technical instructions, it must be brief and only with the consent of the student.



Lv 1, 199 – 201 Barkly Street, Footscray 3011
03 8317 1086
info@chasing-sound.com.au
www.chasing-sound.com.au

Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Chasing Sound

Reviewed: December 2020

- recognising and developing each student's abilities, skills and talents by catering to their individual abilities and respecting their individual differences
- encouraging students to develop and reflect on their own values
- interacting with students without bias
- not engaging in preferential treatment
- not discriminating against any student on the basis of race, sex, sexuality, disability or religious or political conviction
- always making decisions in the students' best interests

All staff are encouraged to declare any interactions with students outside school hours. These interactions may include instances where the staff member is:

- related to the student or friends with the student's parents or family
- given parental consent to interact with the student for academic purposes outside of school hours and has notified Chasing Sound

1.3 Non-Mandated Reporting

If you are not a Mandatory Reporter, you still have the option of making a report to DHHS under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)* if you believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection. The *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)* states that **any** person who believes on reasonable grounds that a child is at risk of harm should report their concerns to DHHS Child Protection.

At Chasing Sound, staff who have formed a reasonable belief that a child is suffering or at risk of physical or sexual abuse, or have had a student disclose details of such, have a professional obligation to report this by contacting the Department of Health and Human Services directly. The Chasing Sound Admin Team can support you.

Where there are no signs of physical or sexual abuse but staff are concerned about the welfare of a student, they must maintain a written record of the details and contact Child FIRST.

1.4 Mandatory Reporting

The *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)* requires that mandatory reporters must make a report to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection when they believe that a child (aged under 17) is in need of protection from significant harm from physical



Lv 1, 199 – 201 Barkly Street, Footscray 3011
03 8317 1086
info@chasingound.com.au
www.chasingound.com.au

Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Chasing Sound

Reviewed: December 2020

injury or sexual abuse. Anyone registered to teach with the Victorian Institute of Teaching is considered a **mandatory reporter**.

A mandatory report must be made when you form a belief on **reasonable grounds** that a child is in need of protection where the child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse; and the child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type.

The concept of '**reasonable grounds**' requires you to consider whether another person, when faced with similar information, would also draw the same conclusion. It does not mean reporters are required to be certain, but rather reporters should ensure their concerns are well founded and based on information from a reliable source.

There may be reasonable grounds for forming such a belief if:

- a child states they have been physically or sexually abused
- a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused
- someone who knows the child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused
- a child shows signs of being physically or sexually abused
- the staff member is aware of persistent family violence or parental substance misuse, psychiatric illness or intellectual disability that is impacting on a child's safety, stability or development
- the staff member observes signs of abuse, including non-accidental or unexplained injury, persistent neglect, poor care or lack of appropriate supervision
- a child's actions or behaviour may place them at risk of significant harm and the child's parents are unwilling or unable to protect the child

A report becomes mandatory as soon as is practicable after forming the belief. A report must include details of the belief, and the reasonable grounds of that belief. Additional reports must be made on each occasion where you become aware of any further reasonable grounds for the belief.

A report to DHHS Child Protection should be considered if the staff member forms the view the child is in need of protection because:



Lv 1, 199 – 201 Barkly Street, Footscray 3011
03 8317 1086
info@chasingsound.com.au
www.chasingsound.com.au

Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Chasing Sound

Reviewed: December 2020

- the harm (or risk of) has a serious impact on the child's immediate safety, stability or development
- the harm or risk of harm is persistent and entrenched and is likely to have a serious impact on the child's safety, stability and development
- the child's parents cannot or will not protect the child from harm

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger the Police should be called on 000. To report concerns about the immediate safety of a child within their family unit, call the 24 hour Child Protection Crisis Line 13 12 78. Concerns that require immediate attention should be made to the local or regional Human Services Child Protection office, or the After Hours Child Protection Emergency Services on 131 278. If you don't have a reasonable belief about a child, but still have concerns, you can refer the matter to Child FIRST and seek support from the Chasing Sound Admin Team via info@chasing-sound.com.au.

There is also the option to refer the matter to Child FIRST. A referral to Child FIRST should be considered if a staff member forms the view that the concerns have a low-to-moderate impact on the child and the immediate safety of the child is not compromised.

A referral can be made when the following factors may affect a child:

- significant parenting problems or family conflict
- a family member's physical or mental illness, substance abuse, disability or bereavement
- isolated or unsupported families
- significant social or economic disadvantage



Lv 1, 199 – 201 Barkly Street, Footscray 3011
03 8317 1086
info@chasing-sound.com.au
www.chasing-sound.com.au

Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Chasing Sound

Reviewed: December 2020

CONDUCT GUIDELINES

2.1 Overview

Chasing Sound 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.

2.2 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:

- upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety and adhering to the Chasing Sound Child Protection Program at all times
- taking reasonable steps to protect students from abuse
- 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
- 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
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- understanding and complying with all professional obligations or mandatory reporting as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm



Lv 1, 199 – 201 Barkly Street, Footscray 3011
03 8317 1086

info@chasing-sound.com.au
www.chasing-sound.com.au

Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Chasing Sound

Reviewed: December 2020

2.3 Unacceptable Behaviours

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

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts/food as treats)
- exhibit behaviours with students which may be construed as unnecessarily physical
- put students at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with students or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as using the toilet or changing their clothes
- engage in open discussions of an adult nature with or in the presence of students
- use inappropriate language in the presence of students
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students
- 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
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- communicate directly with students/parents/adult students without doing so via official Chasing Sound channels
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with Chasing Sound policy
- in the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol or take illicit drugs under any circumstances



Lv 1, 199 – 201 Barkly Street, Footscray 3011
03 8317 1086
info@chasing-sound.com.au
www.chasing-sound.com.au

Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Chasing Sound

Reviewed: December 2020

CODE OF CONDUCT

Our code of Conduct governs and reflects the values of the business and each other. These values and principles we adhere to echo our workplace culture and what we hold each other accountable to. It is a set of values that convey a vision and ideals for us to work by, that hold ethics, respect, understanding and communal values when you are working under the Chasing Sound name.

When reading through the Code of Conduct there is a need to understand that we are not trying to pin the tail on the donkey by listing every situation and issue but rather, placing our values on each individual's intent, level of respect and professionalism towards themselves and others. When anyone has questions that are about the Code of Conduct you should email info@chasing-sound.com.au.

Chasing Sound reflects, makes changes and promotes the Code of Conduct through getting feedback, making sure values and ethics are visible on our wall for people to read, through our staff meetings, individual conversations that are formal and informal and occur through email.

Chasing Sound is a team and our collective values are the heartbeat of where we are going as a group.

Professional Conduct

Everything you do as part of your role represents Chasing Sound. It's important that you behave appropriately at all times, communicate transparently and maintain professional boundaries, including personal work relationships. We encourage you to think globally about how your actions impact the Studio, as opposed to holding only a smaller, more local perspective that only benefits individuals and yourself. Understand that this can be onsite or offsite, when we are working under the Chasing Sound name.

We also have to understand where overlaps happen in our personal lives or other work contexts and how that can conflict with our Chasing Sound duties. Chasing Sound can support the performance career of tutors by putting posters up next to the stairs, however we don't sell or promote on our official social media pages. Inside the tuition room remember to be professional in this way, too. Avoid overtly propositioning students to attend your gigs or other outside



Lv 1, 199 – 201 Barkly Street, Footscray 3011
03 8317 1086

info@chasing-sound.com.au
www.chasing-sound.com.au

Child Protection Policy & Code of Conduct

Chasing Sound

Reviewed: December 2020

related events. This sort of conflicting intentions are not ideal and should be considered in the same way as students, parents or customers propositioning you on something.

Responsiveness & Communication

We welcome your feedback and suggestions about how CPD, policies and how other material is delivered, areas that need improvement or ways we could keep you better informed. Prompt communication and replies to our calls, emails and texts are expected and help us support the great work you do. This also includes you providing up-to-date contact information and giving us as much notice as possible about absences.

Best Practice

A big focus of the work we do here is providing musical pathways for all types of people in our community. In order to help them reach their potential and make sure we're operating professionally, we have a responsibility to maintain best practice. This means doing regular and ongoing professional development and learning, continuing to improve and expand our skills. It also includes maintaining valid Working With Children checks or VIT registration.

Student-Focused

All aspects of our work culture and Studio philosophy are about putting the best learning framework in place for our students, including modelling practice, involving parents and providing lesson notes. Despite this student focus, we also have that same scaffolding in place for our tutors to learn and grow professionally.

Safe and Healthy Workplace

There are going to be times that emotions can get the best of anyone in the studio however, this does not excuse peoples actions. Everyone at Chasing Sound has the right to feel healthy, safe and respected. We prohibit all forms of harassment, discrimination and bullying, do not permit drug/alcohol use on-site and believe in welcoming people from all walks of life. It is our shared responsibility to treat each other and the premises/equipment with compassion and respect. There will always be a time for these issues to be discussed; don't feel that your voice is not heard. Any issue you have should be emailed to the Admin Team.

Intellectual Property

Chasing Sound will send out material for you to sign, read or keep for certain events and other business related situations. No staff member should be distributing this information. Emails or any type of business information sent or passed to you is confidential in all circumstances. Chasing Sound also adheres to these policies with staff information and customer details.



Lv 1, 199 – 201 Barkly Street, Footscray 3011
03 8317 1086

info@chasing-sound.com.au
www.chasing-sound.com.au