



Child Safety Code of Conduct – Acceptable and Unacceptable Behaviour

Introduction

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding students and young people at Mater Christi College against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board directors at Mater Christi College are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of students, as noted below.

Principles for adult's behaviour in undertaking student-connected work

Some simple principles should guide an adult's behaviour when undertaking student-connected work such as:

- the adult/student relationship should be professional at all times
- an adult's response to a student's behaviour or circumstance should be commensurate with the student's age and vulnerability and the adult's responsibility for the care, safety and welfare of the student
- an adult should not be alone with a student unless there is line of sight or access to other adults
- an adult should not initiate or seek physical contact or contact with students outside school.*

Acceptable and unacceptable behaviours

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers and board directors are responsible for supporting the safety of students by:

- adhering to the school's Student Protection Policy and upholding the school's statements of commitment to student safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect students from abuse
- treating everyone in the school community with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another student has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another student
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability (for

- example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a student
- reporting any allegations of student abuse to the school's leadership or student protection leaders
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958
- reporting any student safety concerns to the school's leadership or student protection leaders
- if an allegation of child/student abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren)/student are safe
- reporting 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.

Unacceptable behaviours

Staff and volunteers must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child/student abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students)*
- exhibit behaviours with students which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- 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 toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of students (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of students
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students
- discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school's leadership or student protection leaders knowledge and/or consent (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching).*
- have personal private online contact with a student including via social media, using personal email accounts, instant messaging etc *
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- exchange personal contact details except as directed and known by the College leadership for certain school-related activities.*
- photograph or video a child without their consent or that of their parents/guardians and in accordance with Privacy regulations and guidelines
- work with students whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.

*Unless there is already established family, social or community-based relationship(s) with a student.

I have read and understand my responsibilities within this Code of Conduct and agree to adhere to it.

Name: _____ **Position:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____