

1. Purpose

The purpose of our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults working with children and young people in our school. This is guided by our mission to provide a student-centred learning environment, conducive to personal growth to enrich the lives of students and their communities.

2. Scope

The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all staff members, including non-teaching staff and casual staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, third party contractors, external education providers, teaching students on placement, visitors and the School Board.

3. Statement of Commitment

My College is committed to 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 reflects the Islamic values that our school upholds, as they go hand in hand with the standard of government and regulatory guidelines.

Acceptable Behaviours

All staff at My College and any other members of our school community involved in child-connected work are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Be a positive role model at all times and adhere to our Child Safety Policy.
- Be proactive and promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- Ensure all students are appropriately supervised.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students.
- Foster the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Aboriginal children.
- Encourage students to 'have a voice' and participate and listen to them with respect.
- Respond to a student's concerns especially when they disclose information about abuse.
- Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way.
- Report any breaches of this Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Report concerns about child safety to a member of the school leadership team.
- Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe.

- Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety.
- Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know in accordance with the school's Privacy Policy.

Unacceptable Behaviours

The College has a **zero policy** for staff members, or any adult involved in the school engaging in any form of inappropriate behaviours towards students or exposing students to such behaviour.

This includes:

- Using prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with students.
- Expressing personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on culture, race, ethnicity or disability.
- Partaking in discussions of an adult nature in the presence of students.
- Participating in any form of sexual conduct with a student including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material.
- Engagement of inappropriate or unnecessary physical conduct or behaviours including doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Partaking in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriately rough physical play.
- Using physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student.
- Partaking in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm.
- Developing 'special' relationships with students that could be considered as favouritism or grooming (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- Engaging in an undisclosed private meeting with a student that is not your own child.
- Personal communications with a student that is not your child, through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- Taking or publishing (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/guardian consent.
- Posting online any information about a student that may identify them such as their: full name; age; e-mail address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group they may attend.
- Ignoring or disregarding any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

**** If you suspect a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.**

Child Safety Records Management

My College is committed to maintaining accurate and confidential records relating to child safety and wellbeing. We recognise the importance of secure recordkeeping to support child protection practices and meet regulatory obligations. To uphold this commitment we will:

- Ensure that all reports, disclosures, concerns, risk assessments, and complaints related to child safety are recorded promptly and accurately.
- Store all child safety records securely, either in locked filing cabinets for physical records or in password-protected digital systems for electronic records.
- Limit access to child safety records to authorised personnel only, including the Principal, the Child Safety Officer, and designated members of the Student Wellbeing Team.
- Retain child safety records in accordance with the standards of the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV), ensuring that relevant records are kept for at least 7 years or as otherwise legally required.

- Regularly review and monitor recordkeeping practices to ensure compliance with legislative requirements and best practice in child protection.
- Record management processes are aligned with our commitment to privacy, confidentiality, and the safety and wellbeing of all students.

Family and Community Engagement in Child Safety

My College recognises the vital role that families and the broader community play in promoting and maintaining a child safe environment. We value partnerships with parents, carers, and families to support student wellbeing and safety. To ensure meaningful family engagement in our child safety practices, My College will:

- Actively consult with families in the development and regular review of child safe policies, procedures, and practices.
- Provide families with regular information about our child safety initiatives through newsletters, assemblies, the school website, meetings, and information sessions.
- Ensure all child safety policies, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct and Child Safe Standards, are made accessible to families in clear, understandable language.
- Create opportunities for families to provide feedback on child safety matters through surveys, consultation forums, or community events.
- Respond to feedback from families regarding child safety and incorporate improvements where appropriate.
- Engage with families in a culturally safe and respectful manner, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, families from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and families of students with additional needs.
- Support families to understand child safety processes, including how to raise concerns or make complaints if necessary.

My College acknowledges that open and transparent communication with families is a critical element in building a strong child safe culture. We are committed to ensuring families are informed, consulted, and empowered to support the safety and wellbeing of all students.

Student Empowerment and Participation

My College recognises that student voice and agency are critical to a child safe and supportive environment. We are committed to ensuring that all students are empowered to actively participate in decisions affecting them and are provided with the skills, knowledge, and support to understand their rights and responsibilities. To uphold this commitment, My College will:

- Provide students with developmentally appropriate education about their rights to safety and wellbeing.
- Promote protective behaviours and personal safety programs that teach students how to recognise unsafe situations, seek help, and express concerns.
- Encourage students to participate in decisions about school life, including student leadership, feedback processes, and wellbeing initiatives.
- Provide accessible and culturally safe avenues for students to raise concerns or make complaints.
- Promote an environment where students feel safe, respected, and valued, consistent with the Islamic values of dignity, justice, and compassion.
- Student empowerment strategies will be regularly reviewed and strengthened through consultation with students, families, and the broader school community.

The following procedures cover all staff and volunteers at the College.

1. Recruitment – to manage and reduce the risk of child abuse the College will implement the following recruitment practice:
 - a) Position Descriptions for child connected work include: the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety and the relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.

- b) All short-listed applicants are subject to rigorous reference and background checks, including identity checks, proof of qualifications, Working With Children Check and/or Police Check and/or VIT Check; and personal interviews.
2. Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration and Working with Children Check.
 - a) The College will ensure that all people who come in contact with children have a current Working with Children Check, and that all teachers are registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT).
 - b) Teachers must ensure that their VIT registration (including police check) is kept current. All non-teaching staff in the school, whether employed, contractors, or volunteers (including members of School Council), must have a current Working with Children Check.
 3. Individual Counselling, Learning Support and Individual meetings.
 - a) Situations where students can be alone with staff members are potentially problematic for both staff and students. The following guidelines are in place to ensure that students and staff feel safe and comfortable.
 - b) When an adult is alone with a child or young person they should only do so in a room where there is a window in the door or alternatively the door is left open.
 - c) Staff should not be in a room alone with a student where there is no window or they cannot be seen through the window or door. The student should be positioned in the room so that they can be seen through the window.
 - d) If privacy is required, a second staff member should be present. The exception to this rule is counselling conducted by a school psychologist. It is accepted that greater privacy is required in these situations.
 4. Camps
 - a) In the case of camps/interstate or overseas trips the following procedures should be adhered to at all times. These guidelines should be taken into account when planning activities as well as during the conduct of activities.
 - b) Staff may not sleep in a room alone with a student or students. If the accommodation is such that students and staff must sleep in the same area, there should be a minimum of 2 staff members and 2 students in the room at all times.
 - c) Staff must not use the same bathroom as a student if there are students present.
 - d) Staff should not enter a student bathroom without another staff member being present.
 - e) It is appropriate and inevitable that there is a higher degree of informality on camps between staff and students. Nevertheless, teachers should remain circumspect with regard to their language and discussions. Teachers should make sure that all their comments are appropriate. Specifically comments about appearance should not be made.
 - f) If anything of concern is raised at camp that should be immediately reported to the head of the camp and/or the principal of School.
 5. Change Rooms/ Public Toilets
 - a) Staff should not enter an area where students are getting changed alone. If entry is required, a second staff member should be present. Male staff should only go into male change areas and female staff should only go into female change areas. Furthermore, staff should monitor the area when non- School staff or members of the public are present.
 - b) Specifically, staff should be vigilant to protect against anyone improperly using a recording device whether they are adults or children.
 - c) When students need to use a public toilet on a camp or excursion please follow the procedure below.
 - d) Escort the student(s) to the toilet.
 - e) Ask the students to wait outside, quickly check the bathroom for strange individuals or dangerous items.
 - f) If you are comfortable with the situation, please ask the students to enter and wait outside. Boys should be told to use cubicles if available.

- g) Staff members must not access the toilets at the same time as students. If only one toilet block is available, they must wait until students have left before entering.
6. Social Media and Electronic Communication
- a) The following procedures must be always adhered to in respect of social media. Staff should not communicate with students using any social media (e.g. Facebook, Tiktok, Threads, Instagram, Twitter, Skype, etc.)
 - b) Staff must only communicate with students via email using School email accounts. Communication between Staff and students via private email is unacceptable. Staff should not give students their mobile numbers and they should not SMS students. A School mobile is available for Staff to use on excursions and camps.
 - c) Staff should not be on social media with former students of the school for 2 years after they have left School.
7. Travel with students - staff should not travel alone with a student even when parental permission has been given. Other students or staff should always be in attendance. If this is not practicable then the parents of the student must be contacted prior to travel and permission from the principal must be sought.
8. After Hours Contact
- a) Staff should not have any unofficial contact with students outside of School hours. This specifically precludes meeting students in café/restaurants or in private homes. Teachers are reminded that they are not permitted to tutor students of the school.
 - b) There may be circumstances where a staff member may visit a private home; written permission to do so should be sought from the Principal or a member of the school leadership team.
 - c) Staff are also advised to be vigilant in their behaviour if they attend a social function where School students are present (e.g. Eid festivals or prayers).
 - d) Staff often have friendships with parents of the School. Staff should be very mindful of when they are acting as an official of the School and when they are acting as a friend.
9. Gifts - staff should never give individual students gifts of any type. This does not preclude a reward for a whole class or team.
10. Alcohol and Drugs - it is illegal to give or sell alcohol and drugs of any type to students.
11. Photography
- a) Any photograph a staff member takes of a student should be put into the specific school network folders and not retained by the staff member on any device or their own computer.
 - b) When photographs are taken of students, whether by a professional photographer or a staff member, every effort must be made to ensure that the student's modesty is maintained. This means that students should be appropriately clothed and not in a suggestive pose.
12. Students left at school - if a student has not been collected at the conclusion of a school day or school activity and no parent or emergency contact can be contacted, then the student should be attended to by two staff members. Staff members may not be alone with a student under these circumstances.
13. Language
- a) Staff must use appropriate language with students.
 - b) Suggestive or lewd comments or gestures should never be made inside or outside the classroom.
 - c) Staff should also refrain from commenting on a student's appearance. Specifically comments that are profane, demeaning, sarcastic are prohibited.
 - d) Staff are specifically warned about making jokes of a sexual nature.
14. Access to student files
- a) Staff may access student files either online or on paper to gain information relevant to their work.
 - b) Staff may not access personal information for any other reason.
15. Parent Volunteers
- a) A Working With Children Check is required for any 'child-related work', regardless of whether contact with children is supervised or not.

- b) Although parents may be doing this in a voluntary capacity, the changes in legislation make it prudent to require all volunteers to have a WWCC.
- c) For instance, parents who volunteer at school canteens or on stalls at school fetes are now required by law to obtain a Volunteer WWCC.

16. Raising Concerns

- a) In addition to the Mandatory Reporting obligations in Section 3, teachers are required to lodge any concerns that they have about another staff member's conduct with the Principal or a member of the school leadership team.
- b) School leaders are required to document any concerns that are raised and follow the procedures described in this document or the staff manual.
- c) Senior management must inform the Principal of all concerns that have been brought to their attention.
- d) Parents are also asked to lodge any concerns that they have about a staff member's conduct with their Principal or a member of the School Leadership Team.

It should be noted that under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), Crimes Amendment (Grooming) Act 2014 (Vic) and Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014 (Vic) it is an offence to fail to reduce or remove a substantial risk that a relevant child will become the victim of a sexual offence. It is also an offence to fail to report such suspicions.

Students who feel concerned about the behaviour of any adult with regard to their safety should report the matter to a staff member as soon as practicable. This will be emphasised in the school's child protection curriculum. If a staff member receives a concern from a student, they are required to inform the Principal or a member of the School Leadership Team as soon as practicable after receiving the concern.

If a member of the school community becomes concerned about the conduct of the Principal or a direct report of the Principal that they are not comfortable raising with the Principal, the concern must be raised with the School Council President and in his or her absence, the School Council Vice President.

Emergency Management Plan

The emergency management plan must:

- be completed by government schools using the online EMP
- describe actions to take before, during and after an emergency to ensure the ongoing safety of staff, students and others
- cover all circumstances when the school is responsible for student safety, such as school excursions to ensure staff and student safety and that students are supervised at all times
- be reviewed annually and/or following an emergency or crisis.

Emergency and Critical Incidents

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/management/Pages/emergency.aspx>

4. Communication

This Code of Conduct will be published on the school's website and intranet.

5. Review

Approved by: Principal and School Board, April 2025

Next review: April 2027