



CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

Date Approved:	18 July 2023
Approved by:	SCC Board

1. RATIONALE

Our school has both a desire and a responsibility to ensure that children are safe at all times. There is an expectation on staff, volunteers and contractors to maintain a high standard of conduct at all times. Shepparton Christian College has a zero tolerance approach to child abuse.

2. AIMS

To safeguard the emotional and physical wellbeing of children and young people and to provide clear advice and direction to staff, volunteers and contractors for the establishment of positive, caring and respectful relationships with students at Shepparton Christian College.

3. BACKGROUND

- The safety of children is the most important reason for this code of conduct.
- Schools are required to meet child safety standards as outlined in Ministerial Order No. 1359.
- All teachers will adhere to the standards outlined in the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct (available from www.vit.vic.edu.au)
- All staff will be aware of and expected to maintain the professional boundaries as outlined in this code of conduct at all times (including outside of normal work hours). All staff will be expected at all times to make wise, discerning decisions about appropriate conduct.
- All volunteers are required to follow this code of conduct whilst engaged in school activities.
- All contractors are required to follow this code of conduct whilst engaged in school activities.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

This policy needs to be read in conjunction with the Shepparton Christian College Child Safety Policy.

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers and contractors are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- ensuring the adult/child relationship is professional at all times
- adhering to the school's commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone in the school community with respect, making children and families of all cultures feel welcome and included and supported to express their various cultural identities
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership (NOTE: this is not a matter for discretion, but a requirement)

- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations in line with the school's Child Safety Responding and Reporting Policy
- 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.
- when working one-on-one with students (counselling, learning support assistance, testing and assessment, behaviour management) the following guidelines apply
 - Make it visible. The use of classrooms with open blinds, picnic tables and offices in busy areas is most appropriate.
 - As far as possible, provide support during normal work hours, and do not conduct excessively long sessions
- respecting the privacy of children and their families, including keeping all personal information confidential unless required by law to share it

Unacceptable behaviours

Staff, volunteers and board members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children
- use inappropriate physical restraint
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, matters that would be considered either intimate or private)
- discuss private lifestyle details of self, other staff or children and young people unless directly relevant to the learning topic and with the individual's consent
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- denigrate and/or persistently criticise a child
- discriminate against any child because of age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, culture, vulnerability, ethnicity or disability
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses
- engage in correspondence of a personal nature via any medium (e.g. phone, text messages, letters, emails, internet postings).
- allowing students access to a staff member's personal internet locations (e.g. social networking sites)
- photographing, audio recording or filming children or young people via any medium when not authorised by the Principal and/or without required parental consent
- using personal rather than school equipment for approved activities, unless authorised by the Principal to do so
- still/moving images or audio recordings of children and young people on personal equipment must be uploaded/removed from personal devices as soon as possible after the event
- upload or publish still/moving images or audio recordings of students to any location other than the College servers, without parental and Principal's consent
- inviting/allowing/encouraging children and young people to attend the staff member's home (consideration to be made for family friendship and church group situations)

- attending students' homes or their social gatherings (consideration for family friendship and church group situations)
- be alone in a vehicle of any sort with a student of the College. When required to transport a student, there must be at least three people. For example, 1 staff and 2 students, or 2 staff with 1 student as a minimum (consideration given for arrangements between staff for staff children)
- being alone with a child or young person outside of a staff member's responsibilities
- entering change rooms or toilets occupied by children or young people when supervision is not required or appropriate. If required to supervise students in change rooms or toilets, ideally there should be 2 adults present, however, if this is not possible, there must always be more than one child in the room with a supervising adult.
- use facilities set aside for children and young people (e.g. toilets and change rooms). When on camps or excursions, and no other option exists, ensure that students are not present when using toilets or change rooms.
- private tutoring outside of normal school duties (paid or unpaid) of students who currently attend Shepparton Christian College (without the permission of the Principal)
- adopting an ongoing welfare role that is beyond the scope of their position or that is the responsibility of another staff member (e.g. a counsellor) or an external professional

If staff, volunteers or contractors suspect that this code of conduct has been breached by another person in the organisation, they will:

- act to prioritise the best interests of the child or children
- promptly take actions to ensure the child or children are safe
- as soon as possible report the incident or concerns to the Principal
- maintain the privacy of those involved, following all appropriate record keeping, privacy and information sharing guidelines.

5. EVALUATION/REVIEW

- This document will be reviewed every two years or earlier if required.

This code of conduct was last reviewed and accepted by the College Board – JUNE 2022

STAFF SIGNATURE

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by its terms.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____