CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Issue date:	
Last Review date:	
Recent review date:	Aug 2025
Review cycle:	Every 2 years
Approved by:	School Board

1. RATIONALE

Shepparton Christian College is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children in our care at all times. We expect all staff, volunteers, and contractors to uphold the highest standards of conduct. The College maintains 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 guidance to staff, volunteers and contractors in establishing positive, caring and respectful relationships with students at Shepparton Christian College.

3. BACKGROUND

- The safety of children is the primary purpose of this Code of Conduct.
- Schools are required to meet child safety standards as outlined in **Ministerial Order No. 1359.**
- All teachers must adhere to the standards outlined in the **Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct** (available from www.vit.vic.edu.au)
- All staff must be aware of and maintain the professional boundaries outlined in this code of conduct at all times, including outside of normal work hours. Staff are expected to exercise wise and discerning judgment in all matters of conduct.
- All volunteers are required to comply with this Code of Conduct while engaged in school activities.
- All contractors are required to comply with this Code of Conduct while engaged in school activities.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

This Code of Conduct must be read in conjunction with the **Shepparton Christian College Child Safety Policy**.

Acceptable behaviours

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

- ensuring the adult-child relationship remains 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 all members of the school community with respect, ensuring that children and families of all cultures feel welcome, included, and supported in expressing their 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 (this is **a mandatory requirement, not a matter for discretion).**
- 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, as well as certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher
- respecting the privacy of children and their families, keeping all personal information confidential unless disclosure is required by law
- when working one-on-one with students (counselling, learning support assistance, testing and assessment, behaviour management), the following guidelines apply:
    - **Make it visible**: Use classrooms with open blinds, outdoor areas such as picnic tables, or offices located in busy areas
    - Where possible, provide support during normal work hours, and do not conduct excessively long sessions

Unacceptable behaviours

Staff, volunteers, contractors, and board members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be perceived as favouritism (e.g. offering gifts or special treatment to particular students)
- 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 (e.g. matters that are intimate or private)
- discuss private lifestyle details of themselves, 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 or persistently criticise a child
- discriminate against any child on the basis of age, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, culture, vulnerability, ethnicity or disability
- use any personal communication channels or devices such as a personal email account, to contact students
- exchange personal contact details (e.g. phone number, social networking sites or email address) with students
- engage in correspondence of a personal nature with students via any medium (e.g. phone, text messages, letters, emails, internet postings)
- allow students access to a staff member's personal online accounts or locations (e.g. social networking sites)
- photograph, audio record or film children or young people without authorisation from the Principal and required parental consent
- use personal rather than school equipment for approved activities, unless authorised by the Principal to do so

- retain still/moving images or audio recordings of students on personal devices; all such material must be uploaded to College servers and 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, unless parental and Principal's consent has been obtained
- invite/allow/encourage children and young people to attend the staff member's home (consideration may be made for family friendship and church group situations)
- attend students' homes or their social gatherings (consideration for family friendship and church group situations)
- be alone in any vehicle with a student of the College. When transporting students, there must be at least three people present (e.g. one staff member and two students, or two staff members and one student). Exceptions may be made for arrangements involving staff members' own children.
- spend time alone with a student outside the scope of their professional responsibilities
- enter change rooms or toilets occupied by students unless supervision is required and appropriate. Where supervision is necessary, two adults should be present wherever possible. If this is not possible, there must always be more than one child present with the 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.
- provide private tutoring outside of normal school duties (paid or unpaid) to students who currently attend Shepparton Christian College (without the permission of the Principal)
- adopt 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
- report the incident or concerns to the Principal as soon as possible
- 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.

STAFF SIGNATURE

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

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____/_____/_____