

Child Safety Code of Conduct (Standard 3)

Introduction

The Child Protection Code of Conduct applies to: all staff members, including support staff and temporary or casual staff, volunteers, students, parents and carers, third party contractors and service providers (including External Education Providers), members of the Board of Directors, teaching students on placement at the College and visitors.

This Code of Conduct includes details of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in dealing with children.

Code of Conduct

The Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards students. The Code serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur and promote child safety in the College environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. Where a staff member breaches the Code, Emmaus College may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal.

Our Expectations

Emmaus College has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students in our College community. This includes all teaching staff, support staff, Board members, volunteers (direct and indirect), third party contractors, external education providers and parents / carers.

Adults in the College community are expected to:

- behave as a positive role model to students
 - promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students
 - be vigilant and proactive about student safety and child protection issues
 - provide age appropriate supervision for students
 - comply with guidelines published by the College with respect to child protection
 - treat all students with respect
 - promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
 - promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students
 - promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)
 - use positive and affirming language towards students
 - encourage students 'to have a say' and listen to them with respect
 - listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another child
 - respect cultural, religious and political differences
 - help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact and socialise
 - 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 Safety Code of Conduct
 - report concerns of child safety to one of the College's Child Safety Officers and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met
 - 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
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Do Not

- Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour.
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with students.
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on culture, race, ethnicity or disability.
- Engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of students.
- Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a student including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material.
- Engage in 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.
- Engage in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriately rough physical play.
- Use physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student.
- Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm.
- Develop 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- Engage in undisclosed private meetings with a student that is not your own child.
- Engage in meetings with a child that is not your own, outside of school hours and without permission from the College and the child's parent.
- Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- Take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent.
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- post 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.
- consume alcohol* or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children. (*Alcohol consumption by school staff is permitted in moderation at school events where parents/guardian are in attendance)
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

Our Child Protection Program includes Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Guidelines which provide detailed guidelines for all staff and volunteers on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults at Emmaus College.

Principles for Adult's Behaviour in Undertaking Child Connected Work

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

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

Reporting Concerns

The Child Protection Program includes information for Board of Directors, staff and direct contact volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our College's nominated Child Safety Officers. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to the relevant authorities.

Third party contractors, external education providers, indirect contact volunteers, students, parents or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact one of the College nominated Child Safety Officers.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

Wherever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, the police should be contacted on 000.

Related Documents

Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Guidelines

Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Codes of Conduct and Ethics

Relevant Legislation

Ministerial Order 870 Child Safe Standards Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools

Review

The College revises the code annually. The College Board of Directors has endorsed this Child Safety Code of Conduct.