

Employees, Contractors and Volunteers Code of Conduct - CYSS CGS

This Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour by employees, contractors and volunteers when interacting with children in the school environment.

All employees, contractors and volunteers are required to comply with both the letter and spirit of this Code of Conduct.

The Code of Conduct aims to protect children (“children” includes all persons under the age of 18) in the school environment from child abuse.

Child abuse includes:

- any act committed against a child involving:
 - o a sexual offence; or
 - o grooming (which is a criminal offence in Victoria);
- the infliction, on a child, of –
 - o physical violence; or
 - o serious emotional or psychological harm;
- serious neglect of a child.

The school environment includes at school, in transit to or from the School, within the school-related cyber world, at any location where School-sponsored events or activities are occurring, or where the School community’s interests are being represented.

The Code of Conduct also helps employees, contractors and volunteers with guidance on how to best interact with children, and how to avoid or better manage potentially difficult situations.

A breach of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action (which may include dismissal) and reporting to the relevant authorities (including to the police or the Victorian Institute of Teaching).

The Code of Conduct is to be read in conjunction with the Statement of Commitment which was endorsed by the School Executive Committee on Friday 29 July 2016 and approved by members of the School Council on Friday 2 August 2016.

The Code of Conduct was developed in collaboration with the School Executive Committee having regard to the interests of employees, contractors and volunteers and the needs of all children.

The Code of Conduct will be reviewed by both the School Executive Committee and the School Council annually.

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 line of sight to other adults, or proximate supervision by other adults
- an adult should not initiate or seek physical contact, or contact with children outside school, without the express permission of the Principal or a member of the School Executive Committee (e.g. where necessary to demonstrate a sporting movement or musical technique).

Acceptable behaviour

Caulfield Grammar School employees, contractors and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of children by:

- adhering to and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- listening and responding 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/the safety of another child
- welcoming all students and their families and carers and being inclusive respecting cultural, religious and political differences and acting in a culturally sensitive way
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- modelling appropriate adult behaviour by listening to children and responding to them appropriately
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child

- working with children in an open and transparent way – other adults should always know about the work you are doing with children
- reporting any allegations or suspicions of child abuse to the school's leadership as quickly as possible under the relevant policies and procedures
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*
- reporting any other child safety concerns to the school's leadership
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) 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
- respecting the privacy of children and their families, and only disclosing information to people who have a need to know.

Unacceptable behaviour

Caulfield Grammar School employees, contractors and volunteers must NOT:

- seek to use children in any way to meet or satisfy the personal needs of adults
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- use prejudicial, oppressive behaviour or language with children
- develop 'special' relationships with specific students or other children or show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention
- engage in or instigate behaviours towards children which constitute bullying, harassment, intimidation, discrimination or physical aggression
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with students or other children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children (For avoidance of doubt, "personal views" does not include the views or values of the School, and the Code of Conduct does not prevent employees, contractors or volunteers from expressing a view that is consistent with the views and values of the School)
- 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 knowledge and/or consent or the School Council's

- approval (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.
- have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary eg by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work)
 - exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking site or email addresses with children and have unauthorised contact with children online or by phone.
 - use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
 - photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
 - work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
 - consume alcohol at school or at school events in the presence of children except with the express permission of the Principal or members of the School Executive
 - smoke on school grounds or at school events or in the presence of children.

Parent Volunteer

A “parent volunteer” is an adult who has a child enrolled at the school.

It is understood that there is social interaction between different parents and between students, outside of school hours. Therefore it is understood that a parent volunteer will have contact with children of other parents and children of other parent volunteers, out of school hours. For example social interaction, play dates, parties, sports and the like.

Normal and usual contact of that nature is not a breach of this Code of Conduct.

Direct contact outside of the school or outside of school hours between a parent volunteer and a student (who is not their child), without the prior knowledge or involvement of that student’s parent is a breach of this Code of Conduct.

If any employee, contractor or volunteer has any concerns that a child may be subject to abuse, they should report their concerns to a teacher, a School Councillor or a member of the School’s Executive Committee.

Where the concerns relate to an immediate threat to a child’s safety, please contact the Police immediately on 000.

If any employee, contractor or volunteer have any queries regarding this Code of Conduct, please direct your query to the Vice Principal at cyss.communityquestions@caulfieldgs.vic.edu.au.

Authored by: Mike Gregory
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