



Staff, Volunteers and Contractors Safeguarding Children Code of Conduct

Preamble

This Staff, Volunteers and Contractors Code of Conduct has been developed in the light of the Mission and Values Statement of Whitefriars College, in which we seek to live by and teach those values which the Catholic Church upholds and to celebrate our Catholic identity in the Carmelite Tradition. The College seeks staff who will be supportive of our faith community and be involved in the celebration of that community. It promotes a spirit of mutual trust and respects the gifts of others. It honours the contributions which each individual makes to the enrichment of the community. The College also values a diverse community in which the contribution of each individual is encouraged, valued and respected. Whitefriars aims to develop and maintain a staff that is committed to the ethos of the College, professional in its approach to learning and teaching and diverse in the range and scope of the skills and experiences it provides.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at Whitefriars College against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, religious and Board members at Whitefriars College are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

Acceptable Behaviour

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

- Adhering to the school's [Child Safe Policy](#).
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- Treating everyone in the school community with respect and dignity.
- 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 own safety or the safety of another child.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse background (by having a zero tolerance of discrimination).
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability.
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child.

- Reporting promptly any allegations of child abuse and safety concerns to the Principal or a Deputy Principal.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to Mandatory Reporting.
- If allegations of child abuse are made, ensuring as quickly as possible, by working with the Student Management & Wellbeing Committee, that the individual/s are safe and taken care of. (The Committee members are DP-Students, House Leaders, Directors Middle/Senior Years, Transition Coordinator and Psychologists).
- 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.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Where staff or volunteers are parents, some of the below unacceptable behaviour would not apply due to the parent-son relationship.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, religious and Board members must not commit the below actions under any circumstances:

- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse, or put the students at risk of abuse.
- Harass or threaten a student/s.
- Engage in sexual or improper relations with a student/s.
- Omit to report any sexual or improper advances made by a student/s.
- Violate the [privacy](#) of students by inappropriately divulging student personal details.
- Inappropriate behaviour that may constitute discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying, victimisation and vilification of others (unfair/inappropriate behaviour) in interactions with students and all stakeholders.
- Make physical contact with a student in a way not necessary for the purposes of effective pastoral care (e.g. carrying a student to sickbay) or effective teaching.
- Have contact with a student or their family outside of school without the school's leadership knowledge and/or consent of the school governing authority's approval (e.g. after-hours tutoring or sport coaching).
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of students.
- Provide financial advice to students, unless within the learning and teaching context.
- Solicit unauthorised funding or fees from students, sell property to students or sublet their property to students including formal Homestay arrangements.
- Invite students to visit their place of residence.
- Provide accommodation to a student.
- Avoid situations of being in a room alone with a student without clear external visibility into that room through an open or glass door, etc.
- Offer particular student privileges in a way that is not merited by the student, nor open and transparent for everyone to see.
- Counsel students regarding personal matters. Matters of this nature are to be referred to the Pastoral Care Teacher, House Leader, Directors-Middle/Senior Years or Learning Leader-

Learning Diversity, who may refer them on to qualified college Psychologists. (The ultimate decision sits with the Deputy Principal – Students).

- Email students from a non-Whitefriars College account, or respond to emails from non-Whitefriars College student accounts for any purpose other than directing students to use their Whitefriars College account for correspondence, unless this is unavoidable.
- Provide their personal mobile phone number to students or send text messages to students from their personal mobile phones, except in special circumstances (e.g. excursions). The Leader of the International Students Program is excepted of this.
- Have any online contact or engage with students utilising social networking sites and technologies unrelated to Whitefriars College education programs (e.g. personal Facebook, on-line gaming etc.).
- Fraternise with students in social situations outside the school or school activities.
- Consume alcohol with or in the presence of students, unless specified by school leadership.
- Consume or be under the influence of alcohol and/or illicit drugs at school or school activities.
- Photograph or video a student without the written consent of the parents or guardians (by “Enrolment Form” or “Re-Enrolment Authorisation and Consent Form”).
- In exercising their duty of care, a member of staff may be required to restrain a student from harming him/herself or others using reasonable force. Any such strategy must be in keeping with the College’s behaviour management practices. Any force used in restraint must be the minimum needed and must not include any force applied to the student’s head or neck.
- Staff must not, under any circumstances, use any form of discipline which involves corporal punishment or engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour which could cause physical or emotional harm to students.

The following practices are unacceptable:

- Any form of corporal punishment;
- Using an object such as a ruler, book, duster, or a whiteboard marker to gain a student’s attention in a hostile or an inappropriate manner;
- Restraining a student for any purpose other than the student’s actions causing imminent harm to self or others;
- Intimidating a student;
- Using sarcasm to humiliate a student;
- Belittling a student;
- Verbal abuse of a student;
- Swearing at a student;
- Criticising a student rather than the student’s actions.

There is no place for sarcasm, derogatory remarks, offensive comments or any other inappropriate conduct that may result in emotional distress or psychological harm to a student.

- Whilst physical contact with students is to be minimised, it is recognised that there are times in the teaching profession when physical contact is appropriate and acceptable for the duty to be performed and is consistent with the core values of the College. Examples of this are:
 - Applying medical treatment;

- Comforting an upset child;
 - Guiding a student in a non-threatening manner;
 - Separating students who are fighting; or
 - Using appropriate physical contact in order to protect a student from imminent danger to him/herself or to others.
- The physical contact referred to above is only acceptable if the contact was reasonably necessary for the purposes of discipline, management or care of the student. The contact must also be appropriate given the student's age, maturity, health or other characteristics.
 - In the case of a student with special needs, physical contact with a student is to be consistent with the behaviour management plan that is developed for the student.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, religious and Board members must not commit the below actions without approval from the Principal or Deputy Principal (Staff):

- Provide transport to an individual student, with own vehicle or other, unless such a circumstance is unavoidable.
- Visit a student's place of residence (with exception of the International Student Program team members who may visit Homestay residences).

Any reasonable belief of an incident of inappropriate behaviour should be reported to the Principal or a Deputy Principal.

In an emergency, call Emergency Services (ambulance, police, fire brigade) on 000 and notify the Principal or a Deputy Principal before taking any action requiring approval listed above.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I, _____ (name), confirm I have read, understood and agree to uphold the above Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____ **Date:** _____

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