



Child Safe Code of Conduct

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1. Purpose

The Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour involving interactions between adults and children at Oxley Christian College. The Code of Conduct serves to protect students and to reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm by promoting child safety within the College environment.

It is College policy that any breach of the Child Safe Code of Conduct will be regarded a child safety incident that must be reported internally. Any breach that has been determined to meet the threshold for external reporting will be reported to the relevant external authorities.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, Victoria Police should be contacted on 000.

The Code of Conduct also provides guidance on how students can be supported through best professional practice (pastoral) and to install processes and practices that help to avoid or better manage difficult situations.

Further information regarding the College's procedures for responding to and reporting child safety incidents or concerns can be found in Child Safe – *Key Information for Staff*.

The College reviews the Child Safe Code of Conduct annually. The College Council has approved the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct is published on Oxley Christian College public website and includes a Staff and Student Child Safe Code of Conduct as part of the College Child Safe Program.

The College Professional Boundaries policy provides detailed guidance for all Staff, Volunteers, Contractors and External Education Providers.

2. Scope

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to all adults in the College who are referred to as "the College Community" and include:

- members of the College Council and its sub-committees;

- the College Executive and other Leadership Teams;
- all staff members, including non-teaching Staff and temporary or casual Staff;
- all appointed Volunteers;
- all appointed Contractors including all External Education Providers;
- Probationary teachers, student teachers on placement (practicum) at the College;
- parents / carers and other adult family members of students; and
- visitors to the College.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies in all College environments and includes the following physical, virtual, and online spaces that are used during or outside the College's regular operating hours:

- the college campus located at 15-49 Old Melbourne Road, Chirnside Part VIC 3116;
- any online or virtual College environments that has been authorised and / or made available or authorised by Oxley Christian College Council or the College Executive for use by students including email, intranet systems, software applications, collaboration tools and online services; and
- locations accessed or provided by the College or through a third-party provider for student use including, but not limited to:
 - camps;
 - approved homestay accommodation;
 - delivery of education and training such as registered training organisations, TAFEs, non-school senior secondary providers;
 - another school; and
 - sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other events.

If a staff member or other member of the College Community believes that there may be a conflict between their professional or occupational code of conduct and the Child Safe Code of Conduct, the relevant staff member or other member of the College Community must:

- seek advice from their professional or occupational regulatory body and / or a Child Safety Officer; and
- must advise the College Executive of their proposed course of action before engaging children or students at the College.

3. The Child Safe Code of Conduct

Each member of the College Community is responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of students by adhering to the following standards of behaviour.

Appropriate behaviour will:

- Uphold and act in accordance with the Oxley Christian College Child Safe Policy at all times;
- Comply with applicable guidelines published by the College with respect to child safety, such as the Staff and Student Professional Boundaries policy;
- 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 Safe Code of Conduct;
- Report concerns about child safety to the College's Child Safety Officers;
- Ensure external legal obligations to report child abuse are met;

- Where an allegation of child abuse has been made, ensure the student involved is safe;
- Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety;
- Behave as a positive role model to students;
- Promote the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of students;
- Be vigilant and proactive regarding student safety and wellbeing, including child protection issues;
- Provide age-appropriate supervision for students;
- Treat all students with respect;
- Support the safety, participation, and empowerment of students with disability;
- Support the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of linguistically and / or culturally diverse students;
- Support the safety, participation, and equality of and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- Use positive and affirming language towards students;
- Encourage an active participation in schooling by students and listen to them with respect;
- Respect students holding different cultural, religious, and political views;
- Help provide an open, safe, and supportive environment for all students to interact, engage and socialise; and
- Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

Inappropriate behaviour. Staff, volunteers and representatives of organisations must not:

- Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour;
- Engage in prejudicial or oppressive behaviour or use inappropriate language;
- Express adverse personal views on culture, or sexuality in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on culture, 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 unwarranted physical touching or violence towards a student including inappropriately rough physical play;
- Use any means of physical or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student, except when physical intervention may be appropriate in circumstances where a student requires physical protection;
- Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious physical, emotional or psychological harm;
- Develop any form of relationship with student(s) that could be construed as favouritism or grooming;
- Engage in undisclosed private meetings or activities with a student who is not their own child;

- Engage in undisclosed private meetings or activities with a student outside of school hours and without permission from the student's parent / carer and without the knowledge and approval of the College Executive;
- Engage in extraneous, inappropriate, or 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 and knowledge and prior approval from the College Executive; or
- Post identifying information about a student online unless it is necessary for the College's activities, or you have consent from:
 - the student and / or their parents / guardians; or
 - the College Executive.

(Identifying information includes things such as a student's name; age; e-mail address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group that they may attend).

- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse or other harm.

4. Agreement to the Child Safe Code of Conduct

The College provides a copy of the Child Safe Code of Conduct to all Staff and members of the College Community upon appointment and / or at induction, or otherwise prior to them commencing work at the College.

The College also communicates the Code of Conduct via regular "refresher" training sessions for all Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and members of the College Community who have direct contact with students within a college space.

- All Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact members of the College Community must sign an agreement to adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct prior to commencing work at Oxley Christian College.
- The Child Safe Code of Conduct forms part of the contract between the College and any Direct Contact and Regular Contractors.
- A copy of the Child Safe Code of Conduct is made available to parents / carers who must sign an agreement to abide by the Child Safe Code of Conduct on enrolment.

5. Consequences for Breaching the Child Safe Code of Conduct

Where any member of the College Community breaches an obligation, duty or responsibility within the College Child Safe Code of Conduct, the College will take appropriate action.

Any Staff, Volunteers and Contractors who breach this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary actions that may result in a range of measures including:

- increased supervision;
- appointment to an alternate role;
- restriction of duties;
- remedial education;
- counselling;
- suspension; and
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract, or engagement.

6. Reporting Concerns

6.1 Staff

It is College policy that any breach of the Child Safe Code of Conduct is regarded as a child safety incident.

All Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors and members of the College Community who witness, or suspect, any breach of this Code of Conduct must report their concern internally. Any breach that has been determined to meet the threshold for external reporting must be reported to the relevant external authorities.

Staff who make an internal or external report alleging a breach of the Code of Conduct or report a Child Safety Concern will not be subject to reprimand or adverse consequence if the report was made in “good faith”.

6.2 Students

The College provides students with information about and encourages them to use various means, platforms, and reporting pathways (formal and informal) to raise child safety incidents or concerns about or at the College. Such Child Safety incidents or concerns including breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct, may be reported by students using informal and formal reporting processes. The reports may:

- be anonymous;
- identify the student making the report; and
- be made through an external child advocacy or child safe organisation.

The College response to anonymous reports may be discretionary and considered in view of appropriate assessment of risk. Students who make reports that prove to be vexatious will be subject to disciplinary action.

6.3 Parents / Carers, Family Members or Other Community Members

Parents / carers, family members or other community members who witness or suspect that there has been a breach of this Code of Conduct or have concerns that a child or young person associated with the College may be subject to abuse or harm from a member of Staff, a Volunteer or a Contactor should contact the College Principal.