



CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

Preamble

St Columba's College is a Mary Aikenhead Ministries College in the tradition of the Sisters of Charity. We are called to develop in each member of our community a contemporary understanding and application of the charism of Venerable Mary Aikenhead and the spirituality of the Sisters of Charity, and the Mary Aikenhead Ministries' mission and vision and values of love, justice, compassion and hope.

A Child Safe Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding students at St Columba's College against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships. For more detailed guidance refer to the College's **Staff and Student Professional Boundaries** policy.

When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is educated about the Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the College environment becomes much more transparent and people are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safe Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm. This Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the St Columba's College Child Safe Policy.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff members, including non-teaching staff and temporary or casual staff
- clergy and members of religious congregations
- directors of the College Board
- parents and legal guardians
- students
- teaching students on placement at the College
- Third Party Contractors
- External Education Providers
- visitors
- volunteers.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct set out below is designed to stand alone. It can also be incorporated in whole or part into broader codes of conduct that are developed within the College, including other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular staff at the College.

The Code is made available to all staff, Volunteers, families and students via our public website.

Our Child Safe Code of Conduct

This Child Safe 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, St Columba's College may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal. The College revises the Code annually.

St Columba's College has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our College community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, the College Board, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers and parents/legal guardians.

DO:

- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- Treat everyone in the College community with respect, inclusive of modelling positive and respectful relationships and acting in a manner that sustains a safe, educational and pastoral environment.
- Be vigilant and proactive with regard to 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.
- Avoid touching or making contact with students, as far as is reasonably practicable.
- Ensure as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a student.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students.
- Use positive and affirming language towards students.
- Encourage students to 'have a say' and participate, and then listen to them with respect.
- 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 Safe Code of Conduct.
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another student have been abused or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another student.
- Report concerns about child safety to one of the College's Child Protection Officers and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met (Mandatory Reporting and Reportable Conduct Obligations).
- 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.

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.
- Put students at risk of abuse.
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students.
- Discriminate against any student on the grounds of age, gender, race, religion, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, 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.
- Use physical restraint in managing a student, except in situations where a student's safety is at risk.
- Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm.
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of students.

- 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.
- Travel alone with a student. Should such a situation arise a Leadership Team member must be told of the arrangement and where possible, parents should also be contacted.
- Exchange personal contact details with students, such as phone numbers, social networking sites, or email addresses.
- Take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent.
- 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.
- Work with students while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Consume alcohol or illegal drugs at the College or at College events in the presence of students.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

Our Child Protection Program includes a **Staff and Student Professional Boundaries** policy that provides detailed guidance for all adults at the College on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults at St Columba's College.

Report any concerns

The Program also includes information for directors of the College Board, 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 Protection Officers.

It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, Indirect Contact Volunteers, students, parents/carers or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact one of the College's **Child Protection Officers**.

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

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

APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Date of Approval: August 2019

Approval Authority: St Columba's College Board

Delegated Contact Person: College Principal

Next Review Date: August 2021