



## *Presbyterian Ladies' College*

MELBOURNE

### **PLC CHILD SAFETY STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### **1. Rationale**

This Child Safety Staff Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all PLC staff and volunteers 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.

#### **2. Scope**

PLC has expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all school staff and persons interacting with students within our College community including any individual who is:

- a) directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority
- b) a volunteer or a contracted service provider
- c) a minister of religion
- d) directly engaged or employed by a parent to work with a student on College premises

#### **3. Expectations**

##### **DO:**

- Be a positive role model to students
- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students in all school environments
- Maintain professional and appropriate standards of behaviour and communication in all environments, regardless of the setting or location or purpose of activity
- Provide age appropriate supervision for students
- Comply with guidelines published by the College with respect to child protection and safety
- Treat all students with respect
- Respect students' privacy in sensitive areas such as toilet areas, Health Centre, change rooms, Aquatic Centre, Performing Arts Centre, camping situations and boarding
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- 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 students
- Use positive and affirming language towards students
- Encourage students to 'have a say' 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
- Provide adequate care and supervision of all students, not only on the campus but whenever students are involved in PLC approved activities
- Intervene when students are engaging in bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way
- Report any breaches of this Child Safety Staff Code of Conduct or concerns about child safety to one of the College's Child Safety Officers
- Ensure that your obligations (including legal) to report allegations internally and externally are met
- Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe
- Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know
- Call the Police on 000 if you have concerns for a student's immediate safety.

#### **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 inappropriate or disrespectful personal views on cultures, ethnicity, sexuality or disability in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on cultures, ethnicity, sexuality or disability
- Engage in open discussions of a personal or adult nature when 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 private meetings with a student outside the school environment
- Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student
- Communicate with students via text message where it is not in a professional context

- Give out personal telephone numbers or social media contact details unless a student needs a phone number in specific circumstances (e.g. providing a mobile phone number when on extended trips and exchanges)
- Accept or request students as 'friends' or 'follow' students on social media or otherwise use social media to communicate in any way that is not condoned or approved by the College
- Publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parent / guardian consent unless it has been authorised for educational purposes at PLC
- Post online any information about a student that may identify them such as their full name; age; email address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group they may attend.

In addition to meeting core functions, duties and responsibilities as outlined all staff are required to:

- Report any suspicions, concerns, allegations or disclosures of alleged abuse to a Child Safety Officer
- Maintain valid VIT or WWCC documentation
- Report to the Principal any criminal charges or convictions received during the course of employment or volunteering that may indicate a possible risk to children and young people, including any such charges or convictions prior to employment.

#### 4. Action in response to Victoria's reportable conduct scheme

The Principal will be informed of any allegation of child abuse or misconduct towards children against a worker or volunteer.

Upon receiving the allegation, the Principal will:

- a) Take immediate action to protect children from further potential for abuse
- b) Report the allegation to the CCYP. In circumstances where an allegation of criminal conduct is made, the Victorian Police will be informed as the first priority
- c) Ensure investigation of the allegation occurs, that appropriate action is taken in response and records of the outcome are kept
- d) Report the finding and reasons for the outcome to the CCYP at the conclusion of the investigation.
- e) Not disclose details or share information of the allegation internally except when assistance from a Child Safety Officer is required by the Principal in the administration of the reportable conduct reporting procedures and obligations.

#### 5. Key definitions

Term	Definition
Child	Any student enrolled at a school (Ministerial Order 870)

Term	Definition
School staff	In a non-government school means an individual working in a school environment who is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) directly engaged or employed by a school governing authority</li><li>b) a volunteer or a contracted service provider</li><li>c) a minister of religion</li></ul>
School environment	Means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the school governing authority for use by a child during or outside school hours, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) a campus of the school</li><li>b) online school environments (including email and intranet systems)</li><li>c) other locations provided by the school for the child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events)</li></ul>

The Principal, Head of Junior School, Deputy Principal (Pastoral, Staff and Students), Head of Learning Enhancement Department (JS), Head of ELC and Heads of Boarding oversee the development, implementation and review of child safety policies and practices.

*Approved:* Cheryl Penberthy, Principal

*Date:* November 2020

*Review date:* October 2022