

**Safeguarding Children and Young People
Staff Code of Conduct
Sacred Heart Girls' College, Oakleigh
8 August 2016**



MISSION STATEMENT

We are a Catholic Girls' College
Striving to create a culture of learning
in a Christ-centred, disciplined environment
Encouraging faith development and providing
a vigorous Catholic Education
Fostering a community where all are treated
with respect and dignity
Promoting academic excellence, offering diverse
intellectual, sporting and artistic opportunities
Demonstrating a vision of Christian womanhood
emphasising committed leadership and service
Recognising that education is for life, instilling a
desire for truth, compassion and justice

Registered schools have an important responsibility for keeping children safe. Schools already take steps to protect children from abuse.

Standard three (clause nine of the Ministerial Order) requires that the school governing authority develop, endorse and make publicly available a code for all school staff.

Standard 3: A child safety code of conduct

To comply with this Standard, a school needs to develop, and implement a code of conduct that has four specific requirements. They are that the code of conduct:

1. has the objective of promoting child safety in the school environment
2. sets standards about the ways in which school staff are expected to behave with children
3. takes into account the interests of school staff (including other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular school staff such as registered teachers), and the needs of all children, and
4. is consistent with the school's child safety strategies, policies and procedures as revised from time to time.

Please note that the Ministerial Order defines some terms broadly. A full list of definitions is available at www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe.

Purpose

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

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members at **Sacred Heart Girls' College, Oakleigh** 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 behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's child safety policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times (S:\Child Safety Standards: Child Safety 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 safety/the safety of another child
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification and by acceptance, openness and respect towards a child who identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander)
- 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) by ensuring that students with disabilities are treated equally and with dignity and respect at all times
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child

- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing or a member of the College Leadership Team
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting under the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005 and the Crimes Act 1958*
- reporting any child safety concerns to the Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing or a member of the College Leadership Team
- 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.

Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members **must not**:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- 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
- 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 College Leadership Team's knowledge and/or consent or the school governing authority'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 e.g. by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work or school related activities)
- use any personal communication channels/devices such as a personal email account, phone numbers or social networking sites to communicate with students
- publish/use photographs or video of a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events

I, _____, confirm I have been provided with a copy of the above Code of Conduct and will meet all requirements regarding acceptable behaviours in safeguarding children and young people at Sacred Heart Girls' College.

Signed: _____

Date: _____