



# CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

This document was approved by Board August 2021

Reviewed every year

A Child Safe Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. 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 understand they are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safe Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm.

## **The Child Protection Code of Conduct applies to:**

- All staff members, including operational staff and temporary or casual staff;
- Volunteers;
- Parents and carers;
- Third Party Contractors
- External Education Providers;
- The College Board;
- Teaching students on placement at the College; and
- Visitors.

## **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 this Code, Donvale Christian College may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal. The College revises this Code annually.

Donvale Christian College has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our College community. This includes all teaching staff, operational staff, Board directors, volunteers, third party contractors, external education providers and parents/carers.

The College Board has endorsed this Child Safe Code of Conduct.

## DO:

- Behave as a positive role model to students.
- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- 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.
- 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 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Discriminate against any student based on culture, race, 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 inappropriate, or 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 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.
- 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.
- 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 staff and Volunteers on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults at Donvale Christian College.

### **Agreement to Child Safe Code of Conduct**

A copy of the Child Safe Code of Conduct is provided to all Staff, Volunteers and Contractors at induction, or otherwise prior to them commencing work at the College. It is also communicated via refresher training at regular intervals for all Staff, as well as Volunteers and Contractors.

All Staff, as well as Direct Contact Volunteers, must sign an agreement to adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct prior to commencing work at the College.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct forms part of the contract between the College and any Direct Contact Contractors. Therefore, all Direct Contact Contractors are deemed to have agreed to adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct upon signing the contract or upon commencing work at the College.

A copy of the Child Safe Code of Conduct is provided to parents/carers, who must sign an agreement to abide by the Child Safe Code of Conduct on enrolment.

### **Consequences for Breaching the Child Safe Code of Conduct**

Staff, including the Senior Leadership Team and Executive Principal, Volunteers and Contractors who breach the Child Safe Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary actions that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

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

Where any other member of the College community breaches any obligation, duty or responsibility within the Child Safe Code of Conduct, Donvale Christian College will take appropriate action.

An employee or volunteer will be automatically suspended from work or other duties within the College if they are under investigation (either internally or by the police).

### **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 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 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.**