



Child Safe Code of Conduct

Foundation for Life

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1. Purpose

This Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines the values, commitments and expectations of Coast Christian School (the 'School') in relation to keeping children safe and protected.

2. Scope

This Code applies to all School Community Members and is required to be acknowledged by the following persons (by signing the attached Acknowledgment):

- All paid employees whether employed on a permanent, temporary or casual basis, and
- All persons who have been engaged to work within the School or who have face-to-face contact with Students in any place and on any basis, including persons from Coast Community Church, consultants, Student Teachers on tertiary practicum placements, or adult volunteers (including parents) working with Students in any capacity.

This Code applies to - but is not required to be signed by - those who are not alone with Students at any time (eg an Amazing Me facilitator who is always in the company of teachers).

3. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

The safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is the paramount consideration¹ for all School employees and volunteers under this Code, and the School has a zero tolerance for child abuse and neglect and any form of child and young person mistreatment.

The School acknowledges that children, like adults, possess human rights and that children have the right to special protection because of their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse². In the context of the School, children have the right to learn in a safe, caring, accepting and protected environment.

The School is committed to following all measures legislated to protect children and young people, including the 2019 National Principles for Child Safe Organisations developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission in response to recommendations by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Additionally, the School's Biblical Christian worldview compels us to protect and support children - and any other vulnerable person - from harm.

¹ Section 7 – Children's Guardian Act (NSW) 2019

² United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) 1990

Although the Keep Them Safe initiative³ has ended, the School continues to adopt the key precepts of the program; ensuring that caring and supporting children is ‘first and foremost the responsibility of parents, families and communities’ and acknowledging our crucial role in keeping the students in our care safe.

The School is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people are safe, feel safe and are supported, respected and empowered to learn in a Christian setting.

The School acknowledges our duty of care to keep children safe and protect them from the many forms of child abuse (including physical, sexual and psychological abuse, ill-treatment and neglect) and aims to take a proactive rather than reactive approach to fostering student safety and wellbeing.

4. Our Values in relation to Students

At School, we seek to create a caring environment where Christian values inspire and affirm the highest standard of ethical conduct in relation to the care, safety and protection of Students entrusted to us.

5. Expectations of School Community Members

This Code of Conduct identifies positive child safe behaviours that the School encourages all adults to support. It also identifies behaviours that the School considers unacceptable. Engaging in unacceptable behaviour is a breach of this Code of Conduct and may result in managerial or disciplinary action.

All School Community Members:

WILL	Prior to engagement with the School, inform the School if charged with or convicted of an offence relevant to working in child-related employment (including as a volunteer), or if any reportable allegation has been made.
WILL	Complete and maintain a clear and current Working With Children Check with the Office of the Children’s Guardian and inform the School if the Check lapses at any time during engagement.
WILL	Inform the School of any secondary employment (such as mentoring and babysitting) or engagement with children outside of the School prior to engagement with the School.
WILL	Treat everyone with respect and honesty, listening to the needs of others, remaining calm and using positive language.
WILL	Listen to and value Students’ ideas and opinions, responding appropriately.
WILL	Behave as a positive role model to Students in all interactions.

WILL	Dress in clean, appropriate clothing (including avoiding clothing that is revealing or that includes offensive language or pictures).
WILL	Behave in a caring, compassionate manner as a person who takes an interest in the wellbeing of Students and who sets appropriate boundaries in interactions with Students.
WILL	Act in accordance with a duty to take reasonable care for the safety and welfare of Students.
WILL	When conducting any one-to-one activity with a Student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that another adult is present or within sight at all times; • ensure that the other adult is actively engaged and aware of the action of the School Community Member at all times; and • if the active engagement and awareness of another adult is not possible or practicable, ensure that prior approval for the one-to-one activity has been obtained from the Principal (or Principal's delegate).
WILL	Record and act on a complaint of abuse, ill-treatment or neglect of a Student by reading the School's Child Safe Policy (see website: http://coastcs.nsw.edu.au/information-and-policies/) which explains what to do next.
WILL	Report to the School any allegations or convictions of Staff Misconduct or Reportable Conduct involving students and any School Community Member (School's Child Safe Policy, see School website: http://coastcs.nsw.edu.au/information-and-policies/).
WILL	Report to the School any information or concerns about inappropriate behaviour by any School Community Member that involves a Student.
WILL	Report to the School if any student is at risk of significant harm, or criminal activity.
WILL	Maintain confidentiality appropriately.
WILL	Where the role extends appropriately, be familiar with the School's procedures for providing Students with access to, prescribed or other medication.
WILL	(Where required) Sign an Acknowledgement of commitment to this Code annually.

WILL NOT	Develop any 'special' or selective relationships with a Student that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment.
WILL NOT	In the absence of the prior approval from the School Community Member's immediate supervisor, or without the active participation of another adult, engage in one-to-one contact with a Student such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ doing things of a personal nature that Students can do for themselves, such as going to the toilet or changing clothes ▪ accompanying a Student alone in a vehicle ▪ visiting a Student's home in circumstances where the Student is alone ▪ tutoring a Student
WILL NOT	Engage in conduct that could be construed as grooming behaviour of a Student or their close family or friends.
WILL NOT	Engage in inappropriate physical contact/force with a Student including physical/corporal punishment of a Student.
WILL NOT	Act in ways which may cause a Student to reasonably fear that unjustified force will be used against them, even if this is not their intention.
WILL NOT	Swear, blaspheme or use inappropriate or disparaging language in the presence of, towards or about any Student or any School Community Member.

WILL NOT	Behave in a manner which may cause psychological harm to a Student.
WILL NOT	Correct or discipline a Student in excess of what is reasonable or appropriate for the situation (such as being abusive or intimidating by yelling, moving into another person's personal space or passive aggressive by purposely ignoring, isolating or dismissing a Student or School Community Member).
WILL NOT	Consume or have in their possession alcohol, drugs, tobacco, vapes or any prohibited substances on the grounds of the School or at any place where activities of the School are being conducted; or allow Students to consume or have in their possession alcohol, drugs, tobacco, vapes or any prohibited substances at any place and in any circumstances where they are engaged in the activities of the School.
WILL NOT	Neglect any Student or allow any Students to place themselves at risk when in the care of the School Community Member, or fail to exercise reasonable care for the safety and wellbeing of any Student in any situation where there is a reasonable expectation that they should do so.
WILL NOT	Engage in communication with any Student by any means or by any device, in any manner that contravenes the School's policies and procedures relating to electronic information, communication technology and social media.
WILL NOT	Engage in crossing professional boundaries through behaviour that can reasonably be construed as involving an inappropriate and/or overly personal or intimate relationship with, conduct towards, or focus on a Student or a group of Students. For example, using sexual language or gestures or encouraging communication with a child in a private setting.
WILL NOT	Otherwise abuse, neglect, ill-treat or exploit Students or other children.

6. Concerning Behaviours

Some examples of concerning behaviours are provided below and are further detailed in the Child Safe Policy (available on the School's website). These are behaviours that on their own may not constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct but together may indicate a pattern of behaviour that poses a risk to the safety of children:

- Being alone with a child (not a family member) when there is no professional reason for doing so.
- Showing favour to one child over others.
- Babysitting and/or mentoring a child out of work hours (without the Principal's approval for this kind of employment).

All staff, volunteers, families and community members are encouraged to speak up if they have concerns about the safety of children. Complaints about a breach of this Code of Conduct must be reported to the School Principal on: (02) 4368 3377 or via email: principal@coastcs.nsw.edu.au

If the concern relates to the School Principal, concerns about the safety of children need to be reported to the Chair of the School Board via: boardchair@coastcs.nsw.edu.au.

Some breaches of this Code of Conduct may need to be reported to the NSW Police, the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and the Office of the Children's Guardian. The School's *Child Safe Policy* and *Complaints and Grievances Policy* provide more information about reporting obligations to external authorities as well as describing protections and confidentiality provisions for anyone making a report (Additional information is also located in the *Whistleblower Policy*). A printed copy of these policies can be obtained from Office Staff at Reception. They are also available as a link on the School's website.

Staff and volunteers who breach this Code of Conduct may also be subject to disciplinary action, as noted in Section 8.3 of the School's *Child Safe Policy*. This can include:

- a written warning/caution,
- summary dismissal (for serious misconduct),
- report to external authorities (including DCJ, OCG, NSW Police etc)
- other actions under the *Staff Discipline Policy* as may be relevant.

Detailed descriptions of breaches are found in our *Staff Discipline Policy*. A copy of this can be obtained from Office Staff at Reception.

Adults in children-related work at the School (as an employee or volunteer) will commit an offence if they know another adult poses a serious risk of abusing a children (under 18 years), and they have the power to reduce or remove the risk, and they negligently fail to do so (This is deemed a *Failure to protect* under section 43B of the Crimes Act 1900).

All adults in NSW are required to report information to police if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child (under 18 years) has been abused. Not reporting is a criminal offence under section 316A of the Crimes Act 1900 as a *Failure to report*.