

# Child Safe Code of Conduct

---

This Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults in the School environment towards students. It serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote child safety in the School environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations.

*It is the School's policy that any breach of the Child Safe Code of Conduct is a child safety incident and must be reported internally.*

*Any breach that meets the threshold for external reporting must also be reported to the relevant external authority.*

The School reviews the Child Safe Code of Conduct annually.

Our Child Safe Code of Conduct is published on our public website.

Our Child Protection Program also includes a Staff and Student Professional Boundaries policy that provides detailed guidance for all Staff, direct contact Volunteers and Contractors on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and people in positions of trust at St Columba Anglican School.

## 1. Scope

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to all adults in the School community, including:

- School Council members
- the Principal, the Executive and Leadership Team
- all staff members, including non-teaching Staff and temporary or casual Staff, as well as Columba Cottage (Early Learning Centre and OSHC) Staff
- all Volunteers
- all Contractors
- External Education Providers
- teaching students on placement at the School
- parents/carers and other adult family members of students
- Visitors

Together referred to as “the School Community” for the purposes of the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies in all School environments. School environments include both physical and online environments, as well as any environment (including those outside the School's grounds) where School-related activities are occurring.

Certain staff members, Volunteers and Contractors at the School may have other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate their profession or occupation. These staff members, Volunteers and Contractors must comply with these other codes of conduct. If the staff member, Volunteer or Contractor considers that there is a conflict between their professional or occupational code of conduct and the Child Safe Code of Conduct in a particular matter, the relevant staff member, Volunteer or Contractor must seek advice from their professional or occupational regulatory body and/or a Deputy Principal and must advise the Principal or the Deputy Principal of their proposed course of action.

## 2. The Child Safe Code of Conduct

Each member of the School Community is responsible for promoting the safety and wellbeing of students by adhering to the following standards of behaviour.

### Do:

- Uphold and act in accordance with St Columba's Child Protection Policy at all times.
- Comply with applicable guidelines published by the School with respect to child safety, such as the Staff and Student Professional Boundaries policy.
- Behave as a positive role model to students.
- Promote the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of students.
- Be vigilant and proactive with regard to child safety and protection issues.
- Provide age-appropriate supervision for students.
- 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 and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.
- Use positive and affirming language towards students.
- Encourage students to 'have a say' and participate, 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 bullying or inappropriate behaviour towards others, for example humiliating or vilifying others.
- Ensure as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child.
- Report any breaches of this Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Report concerns about child safety to the Principal or delegate and ensure that your legal obligations to report child abuse or other harm externally are met.
- Where an allegation of child abuse or other harm 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.
- Engage in prejudicial or oppressive behaviour or use inappropriate language with students.
- Express personal views on cultures, race, or sexuality in the presence of students or 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 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 undisclosed private meetings with a student who is not your own child.
- Engage in activities with a student who is not your own child, outside of school hours and without permission from the student's parent/carer.
- Take or publish (including online) photos, movies, or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent.
- Post identifying information about a student online unless it is necessary for the School's activities, or you have consent from the student and/or their parent/carer. Identifying information includes things such as the student's 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 or other harm.

### **3. Agreement to the Child Safe Code of Conduct**

The School provides a copy of the Child Safe Code of Conduct to all Staff, relevant Volunteers, and relevant Contractors at induction, or otherwise prior to them commencing work at the School. The School also communicates it via refresher training at regular intervals for all Staff, as well as relevant Volunteers and Contractors.

All Staff, and Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers must sign an agreement to adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct prior to commencing work at the School.

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

The School's commitment to child safety is outlined in the Parent and Carer Code of Conduct.

### **4. Consequences for Breaching this Child Safe Code of Conduct**

Staff, including the Leadership Team, the Executive and 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
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract, or engagement.

Where any other member of the School community breaches any obligation, duty or responsibility within our Child Safe Code of Conduct, St Columba will take appropriate action.

## 5. Report Any Concerns

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

## 6. Staff

It is the School's policy that any breach of the Child Safe Code of Conduct is a child safety incident. Therefore, all Staff, Direct Contact and Regular Volunteers, and Direct Contact and Regular Contractors who witness, or suspect, any breach of this Code of Conduct must report their concern internally and, if required, also externally.

Our Child Protection Program includes information for Staff, Volunteers and Contractors about how to identify key indicators of abuse or other harm and how to report child safety incidents or concerns internally. It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child safety incidents or concerns to relevant authorities.

## 7. Students

The School provides students with information about and encourages them to use multiple pathways to report child safety incidents or raise concerns about or at the School, including breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct. These include informal and formal ways, an 'anonymous' way, and through external child advocacy or child safety organisations. For more information, refer to the Child Protection Policy.

## 8. Parents/Carers, Family Members or Other Community Members

Parents/carers, family members or other community members who witness or suspect that there has been a breach of this Code of Conduct, or have concerns that a child or young person associated with the School may be subject to abuse or harm from a member of Staff, a Volunteer, or a Contractor, should contact:

- the Principal by phoning (02) 65814188
- any of the School's Head of School by phoning (02) 65814188
- if the concern relates to the Principal, contact the Chair of Council via email: [councilchair@scas.nsw.edu.au](mailto:councilchair@scas.nsw.edu.au)

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

## 9. Cross Reference/Related School Documents

1.	Child Protection Policy
2.	Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy
3.	Parent and Carer Code of Conduct

## 10. Review and Circulation

<b>Responsible Area</b>	School Executive
<b>Version</b>	1
<b>Approved by</b>	School Executive
<b>Effective Date</b>	19.06.2024
<b>Review Date (every 2 years)</b>	19.06.2026
<b>Publication</b>	School Website / Portal – Explain SCAS / Staff Handbook

**11. Version Control**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Approved by</b>
1		School Executive
2		