

# **Sacred Heart College Code of Conduct Preamble**

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to describe minimum standards of conduct in all behaviour and decision making to ensure the safety and well-being of students.

## **APPLICATION**

The Code applies to staff, students, volunteers, parents and guardians as applicable. The term 'parents' includes guardians.

## **INTRODUCTION**

We acknowledge the inherent vulnerability of the students in our care.

We recognise that the safety and well-being of students depends upon our vigilance and diligence and the vigilance and diligence of all adults.

The Code does not give us detailed professional advice on specific behaviour. Rather, it describes the minimum requirements expected of us.

The Guidelines are illustrative and not an exhaustive list of the behaviours covered by the Code.

If our behaviour varies from the standards described in this Code and Guidelines, we should be prepared to explain and justify our decisions and actions.

While mandatory language such as 'must', 'shall' and 'will' is not used throughout the Code, there is a presumption the conduct described is mandatory and therefore not discretionary.

We conduct ourselves personally and professionally in a way that maintains public trust and confidence in our school and the Church.

We have a responsibility to students and their family, other members of the school community and the wider community to provide and support the safe and competent education and care of students.

We will do our best to support other members of the school community to comply with the Code.

In cases of conflict between parts of the Code, between the Code and other school policies, or in any decision making choices, we give priority to the outcome that will be in the best interests of the safety and well-being of the child.

## **BREACHES**

Breaches of the Code must be notified to the Principal and it is a breach of the Code not to do so.

A breach of the Code may attract counselling, professional development or other sanctions as decided by the Principal. For parents, volunteers or visitors, the Principal may take such action as is appropriate in the circumstances to maintain the safety and well-being of students.

The Principal must notify the appropriate authorities of any breach of the Code that was grooming behaviour: ie. deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a student, to lower the student's inhibitions in preparation for engaging in sexual activity with the student.

Examples include:

- Developing relationships that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- Being alone with a student in circumstances where you are unseen or unlikely to be randomly interrupted.
- Initiating unnecessary physical contact with students or doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Engaging in personal disclosures (including personal contact details), or exchanges containing sexual content with or in the presence of a student.
- Organising contact with a student or their family outside of school without a valid reason (e.g. tutoring, or sport coaching would be valid reasons).
- Having any non-curriculum related online contact with a student (including via digital media).
- Using any personal digital media account to contact students (or ex-students until they are 21).
- Photographing or videoing a student without the consent of the parent.
- Being in the presence of a student whilst under the influence of alcohol or non-medically prescribed drugs or offering either to a student.

The Principal must notify the appropriate authorities of any breach of the Code that was sexual abuse of a child: ie sexual behaviour in circumstances where: the student is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence; the student has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.



**Peter Bothe**  
**PRINCIPAL**