

Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct

July 2016



Preamble

OLMC's Mission, Vision and Values statement emphasises the College's commitment to respecting the dignity of each person and to understanding and responding to others in times of need. This Code of Conduct gives expression to these commitments and to the College's steadfast resolve to provide a safe and secure environment for students.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding students at OLMC against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional codes, inclusive of the *VIT Codes of Conduct and Ethics* and the *OLMC/Mercy Education Limited Code of Conduct*.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and College Council members at OLMC are expected to actively contribute to our College culture that respects the dignity of its members and that upholds child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards students.

Acceptable Behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and College Council members are responsible for supporting the safety of students by:

- adhering to the College's Child Safe Policy and upholding all related College policies on student safety (see below)
- taking all reasonable steps to protect students from abuse
- treating everyone in the College community with respect, inclusive of modelling positive and respectful relationships and acting in a manner that sustains a safe, educational and pastoral environment
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another student have been abused or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another student
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- ensuring that appropriate precaution for student safety is taken if there is a need to meet alone with a student
- reporting any safety concerns or allegations of abuse to the College Child Safety Officer¹
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as these relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)²
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student is safe.

Unacceptable Behaviours*

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and College Council members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed abuse of a child/student
- spend prolonged, private time with individual students or develop relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with students or exhibit behaviours with students which may be construed as unnecessarily physical
- put students at risk of abuse
- use inappropriate language in the presence of students
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students
- discriminate against any student, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a student or their family outside of school without the knowledge of the College's Child Safety Officer and the student's family, unless such contact is incidental
- have any online contact with a student unless through the College's agreed channels of communication
- photograph or video students in private settings for private use without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with students while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at the College or at College events in the presence of students.

** Unacceptable behaviours include but are not limited to the list above.*

Related Policies

OLMC College Policies

- Child Protection Reporting Obligations
- Child Safety Policy
- Mercy Education Ltd/OLMC Code of Conduct for Staff and Volunteers
- Employment Practices Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Student Acceptable Use of Digital Technologies Policy
- Student Anti Bullying Policy
- Student Behaviour Management Policy
- Student Wellbeing Policy
- Interstate and Overseas Excursions Policy
- Staff Acceptable Use of Digital Technologies Policy
- Staff Responsible Use of Social Media Policy

Catholic Education Melbourne Policies

- Policy 2.2: Guidelines Relating to the Employment of Staff (currently under review)
- Policy 2.19: Child Protection – Reporting Obligations
- Policy 2.19a: School Guidelines –Police and DHHS Interview Protocols

Approved: July 2016

Reviewed and Revised: July 2017

Approval Authority: College Leadership Team

Person Responsible: Head of Student Wellbeing

Review Date: July 2018

¹ The Child Safety Officer at OLMC in 2016 is the Head of Student Wellbeing, Ms Brooke Kilborn.

² Refer *OLMC Child Protection and Reporting Obligations Policy* for detailed direction and advice.