

PROTECT



CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT



LYNDHURST SECONDARY COLLEGE

February 2018

Lyndhurst Secondary College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development. All members of our school community will be treated with dignity and respect regardless of their sex, gender identity, socioeconomic status, cultural background, religion, sexual orientation and level of ability.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Department policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of Lyndhurst Secondary College will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide an inclusive, safe and orderly schools and learning environment. The Principal and school leaders of Lyndhurst Secondary College will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work (including oral, written and electronic communication) are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps and with the use of digital technology and social media.

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding the College's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's child safe policy
- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- 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
- reporting any allegations of child abuse¹ or other child safety concerns to the College's Child Safety Officers, Wellbeing staff and/or Principal class
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm

Unacceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting

¹ **Child abuse** includes any instance of physical or sexual abuse (including grooming), emotional or psychological harm, neglect and family violence involving a child.

- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, religion or ethnicity
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with College policy or where required for duty of care purposes²
- in the school environment or at other College events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to College policy³ or take illicit drugs under any circumstances

Commitment to gender equality

We recognise that our College is a place where all members of the school community deserve to feel respected, safe, and valued. As staff, volunteers, contractors, and other member of the school community, we will:

- Actively promote gender equality and speak out against gender-based violence
- Contribute to professional learning for the planning and implementation of the whole school approach to promote respectful relationships and gender equality
- Contribute to professional learning relating to gender equality, the prevention of gender-based violence and Respectful Relationships education
- Contribute to a school culture of gender equality and identify gaps in limitations in existing culture, policies and practices in gender equality
- Provide feedback on gender equality in the workplace
- Contribute to key actions that promote gender equality, in order to prevent gender-based violence
- Where required, engage with external experts for advice and support in promoting gender equality and respectful relationships among staff and students
- Where required, contribute to building partnerships with expert family violence services to increase school capacity to respond to students and staff who experience, witness or perpetrate gender-based violence
- Commit to continual improvement and evaluation of Respectful Relationships Education

Breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct

Breaches of the *Child Safe Code of Conduct* will result in appropriate action being taken. Such action, depending upon the breach, may include a formal discussion with principal class; formal action following advice from Conduct and Ethics, and/or Victorian Police intervention, as a result of a criminal act.

² SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/photoandfilm.aspx> . The policy says the school should get consent before taking and publishing photos of a student. This applies every time a photo is taken. The same policy applies for excursions and school activities.

³ SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/alcohol.aspx>. The policy says the school must obtain school council approval before alcohol can be consumed on school grounds or at a school activity. The policy says staff members should not consume alcohol during camps and excursions. It is silent on whether they can consume alcohol at other school events where students are present, this is a matter that the school needs to decide upon – draft text is provided in the guidance fact sheet

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

This Code of Conduct was endorsed/approved by the Lyndhurst Secondary College School Council on <date>] for review if legislative or other changes require in the interim or no later than December 2018.