



## POLICY

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**NAME:** **Child Safety Code of Conduct (for all adults engaged in child-connected work)  
July 2016**

**UPDATE DUE:** **July 2019**

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### COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

All students who attend Camberwell Girls Grammar School (CGGS) have a right to feel and to be safe. The wellbeing and safety of all students in our care is our first priority and we have zero tolerance to child abuse. The protection of students is the responsibility of everyone who is employed at, or is engaged by CGGS in child-connected work. To ensure the safety and best interests of all students, we take into account the needs of those with an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander heritage, those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and those with a disability.

### INTRODUCTION

This Code sets out the standards for the way we conduct ourselves at CGGS. It provides a practical set of guiding principles to help you make decisions in your day to day work, whatever role you fulfil. The Code is supported by the School's policies and procedures, which can be found on SEQTA.

### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

There are Australian laws which are aimed at keeping children safe and to which all Victorian schools must comply. CGGS has many policies and procedures to keep help children safe and which comply with the laws. Everyone has a responsibility to ensure that all students are kept safe in accordance with the School's policies and procedures. Therefore, if you have a pre-existing personal relationship with a CGGS family and a concern regarding a member of the family is relayed to you, it is expected that you will disclose this relationship to the Principal.

At CGGS we have Child Safety Code of Conducts for:

- all adults engaged in child-connected work
- all Year 7 to 12 students, including those 18 years or older
- all Foundation to Year 6 students

### TO WHOM DOES THIS STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT APPLY?

School Council members

Principal

Teachers

Professional Services staff

External Teachers, Tutors & Coaches

External Operators using CCGS facilities

Homestay Hosts for international students

Volunteers



Contractors

Others employed or engaged by CGGS

Parents (CGGS parents have a role to play in protecting students in line with the School's Child Safety Policy, where everyone involved with the School is expected to uphold the duty of care CGGS owes to all of its students)

Should there be an occasion where you are unsure, please consult with either the Principal or Chief Financial & Operating Officer.

### **WHEN DOES THIS CODE APPLY?**

This would apply whenever you would reasonably be expected to be identified as a member of the CGGS community. This includes when you are undertaking work authorised by CGGS performed in the CGGS School environment while students are present or reasonably expected to be present. It also includes occasions during outside working hours and off-campus and online activities.

### **ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS & RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- taking all practicable steps to protect students from abuse and upholding CGGS's commitment to the highest standards of child safety at all times
- promoting the safety, dignity, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with a disability and students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- not unlawfully discriminating against students for their age, gender, race or sexuality
- treating everyone in the School community with respect
- valuing the ideas and opinions of everyone in the School community
- being fair, considerate and honest with everyone in the School community
- respecting all CGGS's community members' privacy
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958
- listening and responding immediately to the concerns or allegations made by students, either for themselves and/or others
- reporting any student safety concerns to the Principal, or member of the Educational Leadership Team, or School Counsellors, or CGGS Child Safety Officer before any suspected, alleged or actual child abuse is reported to the authorities (Police, Department of Health & Human Services) in accordance with CGGS's Child Safety and Response Policy and Procedures (including Mandatory Reporting)
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher
- using positive reinforcement and avoiding abusive, harassing or discriminatory language
- ensuring that any intentional physical contact staff have with students such as medical treatment, or a sport or other recreational activity is necessary and that they explain the reason for the contact and ask for the student's permission
- avoid where possible situations where an adult may be alone with a student such as in a dressing or change room, Health Centre, Uniform Shop or when the student needs to be transported in a vehicle
- not developing any 'special' relationships with students, which could be seen as grooming, favouritism, or misconstrued as unnecessarily physical



- not having online contact with a student, including social media, instant messaging, personal emails or personal telephone numbers

#### **UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS:**

- ignoring or disregarding any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- developing any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism, for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children
- exhibiting behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical, for example inappropriate touching or sitting on laps
- putting children at risk of abuse, for example, by locking doors
- initiating unnecessary physical contact which children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engaging in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children, for example, personal social activities
- using inappropriate language in the presence of children, including swearing
- expressing personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminating against any child because of age, race, religion, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or disability
- having contact with a child or their family outside of school without the Principal's knowledge and/or consent or approval, for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching. Unintended contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.
- exchanging personal contact details and/or using any personal communication channels/devices such as a personal email account or telephone numbers, social media platform, or instant messaging. Online communication with a student, or their family, should be for the purposes of School business only. Examples are: assisting with students with schoolwork or providing e-newsletters or student reports, which should only be communicated through the CGGS email and network system
- photographing or videoing a child without the consent of the School, parent or guardians
- responsibility with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs

#### **POTENTIALLY HIGH RISK ACTIVITIES:**

Adults involved in the following activities are advised to be especially aware when interacting with students:

- coaching individuals related to sport
- overnight camps and exchanges
- counselling
- first aid
- assisting with students trying on items of uniform before purchase
- assisting young students changing clothes
- assisting young children with toileting
- bus travel
- students with high support needs



## **SPECIFIC SCHOOL STAFF**

In addition to the Acceptable Behaviours and Responsibilities and Unacceptable Behaviours, the following specific CGGS staff must also take into account any professional code of conduct that might regulate them.

Some individuals will be members of a recognised professional body, such as School Counsellors, Nurses, Sports Coaches etc, with their own professional codes of conduct and must also adhere to these. Nothing in this Code is expected to require any individual to breach their relevant professional code.

### **Teachers**

Teachers are also required to comply with the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct and in particular the principles relating to relationships with students. These principles require teachers to:

- know their students well, respect their individual differences and cater for their individual abilities
- work to create an environment which promotes mutual respect
- model and engage in respectful and impartial language
- protect students from intimidation, embarrassment, humiliation and harm
- respect a student's privacy in sensitive matters
- interact with students without displaying bias or preference
- not violate or compromise their unique position of influence and trust in their relationship with students

### **School Counsellors**

When dealing with students, school counsellors should also take into account their professional obligations as set out in the code of ethics or practice to which they are bound, including, and because of, their membership of:

- The Australian Psychological Society
- Australian Counselling Association

### **Nurses**

Nurses have a responsibility for maintaining their professional and personal boundaries when providing care to an individual. The care provided by nurses is likely to involve personal contact with a student, such as touching and holding. In particular, nurses are expected to abide by the minimum standards for practice as set out in the Code of Professional Conduct for Nurses in Australia which includes the following:

- nurses practice in accordance with the standards of their profession
- nurses respect the dignity, culture, ethnicity, values and beliefs of people receiving care and treatment
- nurses treat personal information obtained in a professional capacity as private and confidential
- nurses promote and preserve the trust and privilege inherent in their relationship with those in their care

### **Sports and Recreation**

Sports coaches, staff members and volunteers who are involved in coaching, training or assisting students during sporting and recreation activities should adopt practices that help make children to feel safe.

Should there be an occasion where you are unsure, please consult with either the Principal or Chief Financial & Operating Officer.

## **WHAT IF I AM NOT SURE?**

The Code cannot anticipate every possible circumstance, but if you are in doubt it may be helpful to reflect on the following:

- does this feel like 'the right thing' to do



- am I acting in the student's best interest
- what would my colleagues, students or members of the School community expect me to do
- what would be the reaction if this was reported publicly
- what impact might this have on the School's reputation

#### **WE AVOID AND MANAGE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST BY:**

- being aware of potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest by having contact with a student or their family outside of the School (eg, babysitting a student) without the knowledge or consent of the Principal or Chief Financial & Operating Officer. However, unintended contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate
- never accepting any gift, reward or entertainment if it could create an obligation or expectation, or could be perceived to create an obligation or expectation, that would be in conflict with your role at CGGS
- maintaining an appropriate professional distance when dealing with students and parents

#### **WHAT HAPPENS IF I BREACH THIS CODE?**

Failure to comply with the principles of this Code will be considered a serious breach, will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action.

#### **WE COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW, THIS CODE AND CGGS'S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES BY:**

Complying with this Code and all relevant laws, regulations, policies and procedures:

- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)
- Child Safe Standards 2015
- Ministerial Order No 870 – Child Safe Standards – Managing the risk of child abuse in schools.

Honestly reporting any actual or suspected breach of this Code, or any law, regulation, policy or procedure.

#### **DEFINITION OF CHILD ABUSE:**

- any act committed against a child involving –
  - a sexual offence; or
  - an offence under section 49B(2) of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming); and
- the infliction, on a child, of –
  - physical violence; or
  - serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- serious neglect of a child.



**APPENDIX 1:**

CGGS Child Safety Officer Reporting Process

**ATTACHMENT**

Commitment to abide by CGGS's Child Safety Code of Conduct – to be signed and returned to Fiona Lear, Director of CGGS Human Resources.

We encourage you retain a copy of this Policy and the Child Safety Officer Reporting Process for your own records.

***If you have further questions please contact Mrs Cathy Poyser, Deputy Principal / Head of Senior School.***



**APPENDIX 1: CGGS CHILD SAFETY CONTACT DETAILS AND REPORTING PROCESS**

Who can report?	Staff member, volunteer, contractor or student over 18	Student	Parent
<b>What to report?</b>	Any child safety concerns, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>disclosure of abuse or harm</li> <li>allegation, suspicion or observation</li> <li>breach of Code of Conduct</li> <li>environmental safety issues</li> <li><b>Call 000 if a child is in immediate danger</b></li> </ul>		
<b>How?</b>	Face-to-face verbal report, letter, email, telephone call, meeting		
<b>Who to?</b>	Mrs Debbie Dunwoody	Principal	9811 8529
	<b>Senior School Child Safety Officers:</b>		
	Mrs Cathy Poyser	Deputy Principal / Head of Senior School	9811 8546
	Mr Hayden Gyles	Deputy Head of Senior School	9811 8508
	Mrs Paula Kolivas	School Counsellor	9811 8546
	Mrs Beth Sarlos	School Counsellor	9811 8546
	Rev Helen Creed	School Chaplain	9811 8517
	Mr Shane Maycock	Education Outdoors Coordinator	9811 8524
	<b>Junior School Child Safety Officers :</b>		
	Mr Paul Donohue	Head of Junior School	9811 8541
	Mr Craig Goodwin	Deputy Head of Junior School – Student Wellbeing	9813 1965
	Miss Kate Giles	Deputy Head of Junior School – Teaching, Learning & Innovation	9813 1965
	Ms Angela Follacchio	Early Learning Centre Team Leader	9811 8545
	Mrs Beth Sarlos	School Counsellor	9811 8546
	Rev Helen Creed	School Chaplain	9811 8517
Mr Shane Maycock	Education Outdoors Coordinator	9811 8524	
<b>If a Child Safety Officer is unavailable, please contact another trusted member of staff</b> Senior School: Ph: 9813 1166 Junior School: Ph: 9813 1965			
<b>What happens next?</b>	The Child Safety Officer will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>offer support to the child, the parents, the person who reports</li> <li>initiate internal processes to ensure the safety of the child, clarify the nature of the complaint</li> <li>report to the School's leadership team: Principal, Deputy Principal / Head of Senior School or Head of Junior School</li> <li>following discussion with the School's leadership team, decide in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, whether the matter should/must be reported to the Police or Child Protection and make report as soon as possible if required</li> </ul>		
	The accused staff member, volunteer, contractor, child or parent will also be offered support by the School.		
<b>Outcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Investigation and outcome decided</li> <li>Relevant staff, volunteers, contractors, parents and child notified</li> <li>Policies and procedures updated where necessary</li> </ul>		



**ATTACHMENT:**

**Please sign your commitment to the CGGS Child Safety Code of Conduct policy below and return to the CGGS Director of Human Resources.**

I, (print your name) \_\_\_\_\_ have read and understood the CGGS Child Safety Code of Conduct for Students and agree to abide by this policy.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_