

## Child Safety Code of Conduct

### Rationale:

Advance College of Education (ACE) has zero tolerance to child abuse and is committed to the protection and wellbeing of all students whilst participating in College activities both during and outside school hours. We hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our College.

### Purpose:

The Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with young people in the College. It has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at ACE against sexual, physical, psychological, and emotional abuse or neglect.

The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by students. It also applies during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the school for student use (for example, a school camp).

All ACE staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, College Committee members and any other adult involved in child-connected work must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

### Acceptable Behaviours:

ACE staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Upholding the ACE commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to ACEP30 Student Care, Safety and Welfare: Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedure.
- Treating students and families in the College community with respect in the school environment and outside the school environment as part of normal social and community activities.
- Treating children and young people with respect and value their opinions.
- Promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and young people by supporting and encouraging their connection to culture, kin, community, cultural practices and Aboriginal identity.
- Provide a welcoming, inclusive, culturally responsive and safe environment for children and young people.
- Taking reasonable steps to protect children and young people from harm and abuse including by identifying child safety risks and taking steps to remove or reduce those risks.
- Ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a child or young person – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a child or young person are to be in an open space or in line of sight of other staff.
- Treating allegations, disclosures, incidents and suspicions of child abuse and harm seriously and if child abuse is suspected ensuring as quickly as possible that children and young people are safe and protected from harm.
- Communicating with children and young people in a way that helps them understand information, ask questions and express their preferences.
- Providing access to tools and services that children and young people need to communicate (for example interpreter and translation, Auslan, content in child friendly language).
- Listening and responding to children and young people's concerns, particularly about their or others' safety.
- Encouraging children and young people to 'have a say' and participate in decisions that affect them.

- Ensuring children and young people know who to approach if they feel unsafe or want to raise concerns.
- Managing personal information in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy and relevant privacy and information sharing legislation.
- Ensuring that all personal information is handled in a manner that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
- Promoting the cultural safety, inclusion, participation and empowerment of all children and young people including Aboriginal children, children from multicultural and multifaith backgrounds, children with disability and LGBTIQ+ children.
- Taking a zero-tolerance approach to racism and respond appropriately to any incidents.
- Communicating with children and young people in a way that helps them understand information, ask questions and express their preferences
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Principal or Senior Management.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations as they relate to child safety, mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) and the PROTECT Four Critical Actions.
- If child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.
- Notifying the College as soon as practicable if charged with a criminal offence.

### **Unacceptable Behaviours**

ACE staff, volunteers, contractors and members of our school community involved in child-connected work must not:

- Condone or participate in illegal, unsafe, abusive or harmful behaviour towards children or young people. This includes, but is not limited to:
  - Participating in sexual abuse or misconduct
  - Possessing child abuse material
  - Grooming a child (predatory conduct undertaken to prepare a child for sexual activity later)
  - Engaging in discussions, including online, of a sexualised nature in the presence of a child
  - Discussing or showing audio or video or images of sexual acts
  - Perpetrating physical or family violence
  - Humiliating, belittling, rejecting or threatening a child, or behaving in a way that may cause emotional or psychological harm
- Develop inappropriate relationships and or display behaviours or engage with children or young people in ways that are not justified by educational or professional context, for example, preferential treatment, giving inappropriate gifts, or inappropriate social media communication.
- Have contact with any child or young person outside of activity/program except when needed to deliver curriculum or professional guidance and where parent or carer consent has been provided.
- Communicate directly with a child or young person through department, 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 department activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter.

- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do themselves.
- Ignore or disregard concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse, harm and family violence.
- Wait until there is proof before acting on and reporting an allegation or suspicion of child abuse, harm or family violence.
- Ignore or disregard an adult's overly familiar behaviour, that is not justified by an educational or professional context, towards a child or young person.
- Condone or participate in racist behaviour, or use inappropriate or discriminatory language when speaking with, or in the presence of children or young people.
- Treat any child unfairly or criticise how they identify or express themselves. This includes their age, gender, race, culture, religion, sexuality, disability or other protected attributes.
- Disregard or fail to consider the views of children or young people, especially about their physical and emotional safety, cultural safety, or issues or decisions that are important to them.
- Photograph or video a child or student in a school environment except in accordance with College policy or where required for duty of care purposes.
- Consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present.
- Work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Have contact with any student outside of school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought.

### **Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct**

All ACE staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-connected work who breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the *Reportable Conduct Scheme* [CCYP | Report a concern or allegation](#) and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the ACE Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal (James Doble on 5986 4623)

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the Principal, contact the President of the ACE College Committee on 5986 4623.

### **Staff Declaration**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, confirm that I have been provided with a copy of the above Code of Conduct. I acknowledge that I have read and understood its contents and agree to comply with the standards of conduct required of me to ensure I meet the Child Safe requirements of the College at all times.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_.