



CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

Seymour College has developed a Child Protection Code of Conduct to specify standards of conduct and care, professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and unacceptable behaviour when working and interacting with children. This is based on information outlined in the Department for Education's *Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people guidelines*. The aim is to provide guidance to staff on how best to support students, and how to avoid or manage difficult situations. For staff, the Child Safe Code of Conduct should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy.

When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is educated about the Child Safety Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the College environment becomes much more transparent and people are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safe Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm. The Child Safe Code of Conduct is made available to all staff, volunteers and families.

Where a staff member breaches the Code, Seymour College may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal. The College revises the Code as part of the College's policy review cycle.

Seymour College has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our College community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, Board members, volunteers (direct and indirect), third party contractors, external education providers and parents/carers.

Compulsory behaviour:

- Staff and volunteers must comply with the school's Child Protection Policy;
- Staff and volunteers must behave as a positive role model to students;
- Staff and volunteers must promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students;
- Staff and volunteers must promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability;
- Suspicions of child abuse must be reported to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL – 13 14 78) and to the Deputy Principal and Principal, (or to the Chair of the Board or Deputy Chair of the Board) if the situation involves the Principal;
- Concerning behaviour or breaches of the Child Protection Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal, or to Chair of the Board or Deputy Chair of the Board if the breach concerns the Principal. The Principal (or other person) will be responsible for developing an appropriate plan of action and ensuring it is followed;
- Students must be treated with respect and encouraged to speak up and participate;
- When working one-on-one with children and young people, actions must be:
 - Public – ensure the environment is visible, public and busy. Use the site's authorised ICT systems;



- Authorised – parents must be informed and have given consent and the activity must be authorised by the Principal;
- Timely – the activity must be a legitimate part of your role, support must be provided within normal work hours where possible, and sessions should be concise and not unnecessarily prolonged; and
- Purposeful – the activity should address or be linked to an identified wellbeing and/or learning need of the child or young person;
- Manage challenging behaviour through non-physical intervention, such as directing other children and young people to move away from the situation, talking to the child, directing the child or young person to a safe place, and directing other children to a safe place. Physical restraint should only be used as a last resort and must only be used when the safety of a child or young person or adult is threatened. Physical restraint must not be used as a response to property destruction, disruption to the education or care activity, refusal to comply, verbal threats, leaving an education care setting, or a need to maintain good order unless someone's safety is clearly threatened;
- Become as familiar as possible with the values of various cultural groups enrolled in an education or care site, as different cultures have different attitudes and traditions surrounding the concept of appropriate touch; and
- Ensure that the privacy of students is respected, and that personal information is managed in accordance with the school's Privacy Policy.

Unacceptable behaviour:

- Communication
 - Failure to act when an allegation of child abuse is made, including failure to report the allegation. This would be a breach of the Safety Act and fines may apply
 - Inappropriate comments about a child or young person's appearance, including excessive flattering comments.
 - Inappropriate conversation or enquiries of a sexual nature (eg questions about a child or young person's sexuality or their sexual relationship with others).
 - Disrespectful or discriminatory treatment of, or manner towards, young people based on their perceived or actual sexual orientation.
 - Use of inappropriate nicknames.
 - Vilification or humiliation.
 - Jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature.
 - Obscene gestures and/or language.
 - Facilitating/permitting access to pornographic material.
 - Facilitating/permitting access to sexually explicit material that is not part of an endorsed curriculum.
 - Failing to intervene in sexual harassment of children and young people
 - Correspondence of a personal nature via any medium (eg phone, text message, letters, email, social media, internet postings) that is unrelated to the staff member's role. This does not include class cards or bereavement cards.
 - Introducing 'secrets'.



- Communication related to the role but carried out via private personal devices, eg communication to tax drivers of student personal details, with parent or outside agencies and services.
- Personal Disclosure
 - Discussing personal lifestyle details or opinions of self, other staff or children and young people unless directly relevant to the learning topic and with the individual's consent.
- Physical contact
 - Unwarranted or unwanted touching or a child or young person personally or with objects (eg pencil or ruler).
 - Corporal punishment (eg physical discipline or, smacking).
 - Initiating, permitting or requesting inappropriate or unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person (eg massage, kisses, tickling games) or facilitating situations that unnecessarily result in close physical contact with a child or young person.
 - Inappropriate use of physical restraint/restrictive practices – may constitute assault.
- Place
 - Inviting/allowing/encouraging children and young people to attend the staff member's home.
 - Attending children and young people's homes or their social gatherings.
 - Being alone with a child or young person outside of a staff member's responsibilities.
 - Entering change rooms or toilets occupied by children or young people when supervision is not required or appropriate.
 - Transporting a child or young person unaccompanied.
 - Using toilet facilities allocated to children and young people.
 - Undressing and using facilities set aside for children and young people, or in their presence.
- Targeting individual children and young people
 - Tutoring outside of normal teaching duties and responsibilities.
 - Giving personal gifts or special favours.
 - Singling the same children and young people out for special duties or responsibilities.
 - Offering overnight/weekend/holiday care of children and young people as respite to parents.
 - Privately giving money and/or gifts to individual children/young people
 - Babysitting students of the College.
- Role
 - Adopting an ongoing welfare role that is beyond the scope of their position or that is the responsibility of another staff member (eg a



student wellbeing leader) or an external professional, and that occurs without the permission of senior staff.

- Photographing, audio recording or filming children or young people via any medium when not authorised to do so and without required parental consent.
- Using personal rather than school equipment for approved activities, unless approved to do so.
- Possessions
 - Correspondence or communication (via any medium) to or from children and young people where a violation of professional boundaries is indicated and where the correspondence has not been provided to the Head of School/Deputy Principal by the staff member.
 - Still/moving images or audio recordings of children and young people on personal equipment or kept in personal locations such as car or home that have not been authorised by the line manager or Head of School.
- Digital/electronic
 - Email, social media, internet postings that is unrelated to the staff member's role.
 - Allowing children and young people access to a staff member's personal internet locations (eg social networking sites).
 - Uploading or publishing still/moving images or audio recordings of children and young people to any location, without parental or College consent.
 - Correspondence of a personal nature via social media, internet postings.
 - Creating/using private online chat rooms.
 - Filming/recording for the use of behaviour training/modification.

Staff with Children or Extended Family Members at the College.

The College acknowledges that staff with children or extended family members at the school face additional challenges in managing professional boundaries as they are likely to have social relationships with families/ parents of the children and young people their children interact and socialise with.

The guiding principles in managing these situations are that:

- Social contact should be generated via the relationship the staff member has with the parents of children and young people or by an event.
- Staff should avoid being alone with children and young people in these situations.
- Staff should conduct themselves in a way that will not give others reason to question their suitability to work with children and young people and will not create discomfort for children and young people in their learning relationship with them. Consuming alcohol in these situations may lessen a staff member's capacity to judge when a professional boundary is at risk.



- Staff should politely refuse to discuss matters relating to the workplace and should not discuss children and young people's learning or social progress other than at times specifically set aside for that purpose.
- Any concern a staff member has about whether or not a situation may be compromising or breaches a professional relationship should be discussed with the Deputy Principal and an approved plan of action followed.

If a staff member is ever in doubt regarding their professional boundaries they should seek permission and/or clarification.

All Seymour College Staff will be required annually to acknowledge that they have read, understood and agreed to abide by the Seymour College Child Protection Code of Conduct via the Staff Learning System.