



## HEATHDALE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE LTD

### MP 03.7.2 CHILD PROTECTION: CODE OF CONDUCT

March 2017

This document should be read in conjunction with:

- GP 03.7 Child Protection: Policy (“**Policy**”)
- MP 03.7.1 Child Protection: Procedures (“**Procedure**”)

#### 1. INTRODUCTION:

This Child Protection Code of Conduct will apply to all, staff, volunteers, contractors and directors at Heathdale Christian College (“**the College**”) and they are required to abide by this Code.

The purpose of this Code is to promote child safety within all School Environments.

The following list of behaviours includes examples of what is acceptable and not acceptable behaviour.

#### 2. ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of, or in connection with, the College must:

- 2.1. contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse (telephone ‘000’);
- 2.2. adhere to the Child Protection Policy and Procedure and uphold the College’s statement of commitment to child safety at all times;
- 2.3. take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse;
- 2.4. conduct themselves in a manner consistent with their position as an employee, director, volunteer or contractor of the College and as a positive role model to children and young people;
- 2.5. work towards the achievement of the aims and purposes of the organisation;
- 2.6. be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities in their area;
- 2.7. maintain a duty of care towards others involved in these programs and activities;
- 2.8. establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work;
- 2.9. be fair, considerate and honest with others;
- 2.10. treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas, opinions and backgrounds;

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Policy GP 03.7.2

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman)

Print name: Trevor Sawyer

- 2.11. promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island child's self-identification);
- 2.12. promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination);
- 2.13. promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability;
- 2.14. listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they are or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child;
- 2.15. ensure (as far as practicable) that adults are not alone with a child;
- 2.16. comply with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic);
- 2.17. raise concerns about suspected abuse with a CPO as soon as possible;
- 2.18. record and act upon all allegations or suspicions of abuse, discrimination or harassment;
- 2.19. if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe;
- 2.20. be professional in their actions;
- 2.21. maintain strict impartiality;
- 2.22. comply with the College's guidelines on contact with children, including via social electronic media;
- 2.23. respect confidentiality when sharing information about children in accordance with the Child Protection Policy and Procedure and your reporting obligations;
- 2.24. maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people; and
- 2.25. operate within the policies and guidelines of the College.

The College recognises that you may have appropriate incidental contact with children as part of your community engagement activities. This could include contact with children as part of organised church or fellowship activities, social events with other families, and church camps.

The College encourages your engagement in these community activities, but reminds you that you are still a member of the College and that all interactions with children should be consistent with this Code of Conduct.

### **3. UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOUR**

All people involved in the care of children on behalf of, or in connection with, the College must not:

- 3.1. ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
- 3.2. put a child at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors for an improper reason);
- 3.3. speak to a child in a way that is or could be construed by any observer as harsh, threatening, intimidating, shaming, derogatory, demeaning, or humiliating. Some examples are:
  - a. swearing or using inappropriate language in the presence of a child;
  - b. yelling at a child, except in an emergency situation where the a child's safety may be in danger;
  - c. dealing with a child while the adult is angry with the child; and
  - d. use of hurtful sarcasm.
- 3.4. express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of a child (unless the child is a member of your family);
- 3.5. discuss sexual activities with a child unless it is a specific job requirement and the person is trained to discuss these matters, or the child is a member of your family;
- 3.6. have contact with a child or their family outside of school if the contact is:
  - a. in connection with your professional relationship with the child (such as coaching or tuition) and you have not notified the College's leadership or a child safety officer; and/or
  - b. for an improper purpose.
- 3.7. have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc.) or their family (unless necessary e.g. by providing e-newsletters, assisting students with their school work, or the child is a member of your family);

- 3.8. use any personal communication channels/devices such as a personal email account to communicate with a child (unless the child is a member of your family);
- 3.9. exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses with a child (unless the child is a member of your family);
- 3.10. use, possess, or be under the influence of alcohol while in the presence of or while supervising a child (unless the child is a member of your family or your contact with the child is accidental/incidental and you are not performing your professional obligations);
- 3.11. use, possess, or be under the influence of illegal drugs while in the presence of or while supervising a child;
- 3.12. provide or allow a child to consume alcohol (unless the child is a member of your family and you comply with all relevant legislation);
- 3.13. provide or allow a child to consume illegal drugs;
- 3.14. initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves (unless the child is a member of your family and you comply with all relevant legislation);
- 3.15. engage in rough physical games, hold, massage, kiss, cuddle or touch a child in an inappropriate and or/culturally insensitive way (unless the child is a member of your family and you comply with all relevant legislation);
- 3.16. engage in any sexual contact with a child. For the purposes of this Code, sexual contact is defined as vaginal intercourse, anal intercourse, oral intercourse or the touching of an erogenous zone of another (including but not limited to the thighs, genitals, buttocks, pubic region or chest) for the purpose of sexually arousing or gratifying either person;
- 3.17. take a child to their home or encourage meetings outside program activities (unless the child is a member of your family or parental permission has been provided);
- 3.18. be naked in the presence of a child (unless the child is a member of your family);
- 3.19. possess sexually explicit printed materials (magazines, cards, videos, films, clothing, etc.) in the presence of children;

- 3.20. sleep in the same bed, sleeping bag, tent or cabin with a child (unless the child is a member of your family);
- 3.21. discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender identity, sex, race, culture, sexuality, or disability;
- 3.22. engage in any activity with a child that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them;
- 3.23. be alone with a child unnecessarily and for more than a very short time (unless the child is a member of your family);
- 3.24. develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child for their own needs (unless the child is a member of your family);
- 3.25. show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention (unless the child is a member of your family);
- 3.26. photograph or video a child without the consent of the child and his/her parents or guardians;
- 3.27. do anything in contravention of the organisation's policies, procedures or this Code of Conduct.

#### **4. PHYSICAL CONTACT / TOUCHING**

- 4.1. All teachers are required to follow the Victorian Institute of Teaching's ("VIT") Code of Conduct. Example:
  - a. Principle 1.2: Teachers treat their students with courtesy and dignity:
    - 4.1.a.1. work to create an environment which promotes mutual respect;
    - 4.1.a.2. model and engage in respectful and impartial language;
    - 4.1.a.3. protect students from intimidation, embarrassment, humiliation or harm.
- 4.2. Employees, directors, volunteers, and contractors are prohibited from using physical discipline in any way for behaviour management of children. This prohibition includes spanking, slapping, pinching, hitting, or any other physical force as retaliation or correction for inappropriate behaviours by children.
- 4.3. Physical contact may be required in an emergency situation to remove children quickly from danger or threat of danger.

4.4. Appropriate contact between employees, directors, volunteers, contractors, and children is part of normal human relationships. Some considerations and guidelines include the following:

- a. consider the child's age, developmental level, maturity and level of care required, for example, touching a child to gain their attention, guiding or comforting a distressed child;
- b. work in an open environment; for example, in confidential interviews or a one-to-one meeting, the door should be open with visual access. Exceptions apply for professions with strict confidentiality requirements;
- c. be alert to cues from children about how comfortable they are in your proximity and respect their need for personal space;
- d. be sensitive when interacting with children who may misinterpret your actions, such as those who may have been traumatised by abuse or adolescents seeking attention from a member of the opposite sex;
- e. be aware of cultural norms that may influence the interpretation of your behaviour;
- f. be cautious about physical contact in games or practical instruction. If you need to make physical contact for demonstrations, explain the activity and what you will do, maintain a safe and appropriate distance;
- g. physical contact should be made in a way that makes children feel comfortable, for example, shaking hands, a congratulatory pat on the back or rub on the side of their arm for reassurance. Massaging a child or allowing a child to massage you is inappropriate physical contact (unless the child is a member of your family and you comply with all relevant legislation);

4.5. All forms of physical contact with children should therefore be avoided where possible (unless the child is a member of your family).

4.6. The College's Policies on (MP03.5) Discrimination, Harassment, Vilification, Victimisation & Bullying; (MP03.5.3) Student Bullying; (GP05.2) Staff Performance & Conduct Management; also addresses physical contact.

## **5. TRANSPORTATION AND OFF-SITE EVENTS**

5.1. Other than in an emergency or other abnormal situation where no other option could be reasonably foreseen, it is not acceptable to transport children without written permission of their parent, carer or guardian.

- 5.2. It is prohibited to have unnecessary and/or inappropriate physical contact with children while in vehicles.
- 5.3. Children should be transported directly to their destination. No stops should be made other than those that are reasonably scheduled for meals or comfort stops. This obligation does not apply to children that are a member of your family.
- 5.4. It is prohibited to have children spend the night at the residence of an employee, director, volunteer or contractor without parental/guardian prior approval.
- 5.5. Changing and showering facilities or arrangements for adults must be private and separate to facilities or arrangements for children (unless the child is a member of your family).

## **6. CONFIDENTIALITY**

- 6.1. When children are having a written or verbal interaction with employees, directors, volunteers and/or contractors of the College, that interaction is confidential to the organisation not to the individual. This means that an employee, director, volunteer or contractor is able to talk with other employees, directors, volunteers or contractors in a way that identifies the child. That said, where possible the privacy of the child should be respected at all times. When considering breaching their privacy who and how many people are told should be based on what is believed to be in the best interests of the child.
- 6.2. Employees, directors, volunteers and contractors should not discuss confidential matters about children with people outside the organisation in a way that identifies that child except when they have the express permission of the child, it complies with the College's Child Protection Policy, Procedure and Code of Conduct, or the child is a member of their family. In circumstances where employees, directors, volunteers and/or contractors believe that there is not enough knowledge within the organisation to provide the best possible assistance to a child, they are able to seek expertise external to the College. When communicating with people outside the college the child's identity should be protected.
- 6.3. It is the responsibility of the College to communicate the limits of confidentiality in the College to children who are likely to have an ongoing relationship with the College. These guidelines should be published in an accessible place for children.

## 7. WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU BREACH THIS CODE OF CONDUCT

If you breach this Code of Conduct you will face disciplinary action, including and up to termination of employment or cessation of engagement with the organisation.

### HEATHDALE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE RELATED DOCUMENTS:

<i>Reference</i>	<i>Policy/Guideline</i>
GP 03.1	Privacy Policy
GP 03.2	Risk Management V2
MP 03.2.1	Risk Management Procedures V2
GP 03.4	Grievance Management Plan
GP 03.5	Discrimination, Harassment, Vilification, Victimisation & Bullying
MP 03.5.3	Student Bullying Policy
GP 03.7	Child Protection: Policy
MP 03.7.1	Child Protection: Procedures
MP 03.7.2	Child Protection: Code of Conduct
GP 05.1	Equal Opportunity Policy
GP 05.2	Staff Performance & Conduct Management Policy
MP 05.3.1	Employment Procedures Guideline
GP 05.6	Working with Children Guideline
GP 06.3	Policy for Student Discipline
GP 07.4	Mandatory Reporting Policy
GP 07.5	Working with Children

## REFERENCES

### Legislative and other external references

- Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)
- Crimes Act 1958 (VIC)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (VIC)
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (VIC)
- VIT Teachers Code of Conduct.

Reviewed every 3 years

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chairman)

Print name: Trevor Sawyer