

Code of Conduct

Conduct Statement 1

You act safely and competently. Just as a good Catholic school is a good school – a safe school begins with school community members who know how to perform their roles well and safely.

Remember – this Code applies to all members of the school community and not just staff members.

Your staff members may wish to reorder any of the Conduct Statements to emphasise their priority.

This CS also emphasises individual responsibility that is the hallmark of professionalism.

This is one of several CS that would cover 'grooming behaviour'. The term 'grooming behaviour' is deliberately not used in the CS. 'Grooming behaviour' implies a sexual intent that is not visible. It is preferable to describe behaviours and decisions that are visible as they are easier to observe and describe when notifying the Principal or other authority.

There is also the risk that people are less likely to notify 'grooming behaviour' because they do not want to be responsible for alleging that someone is preparing to sexually abuse a child.

It is easier for a Principal to make and defend decisions based upon the outward behaviour or decision making of a person than trying to interpret their intent.

The CS recognises that sometimes people can be in breach of this Code through no fault of their own – ie students leave the classroom and the teacher finds themselves answering a question alone with a student. It therefore encourages people to self-notify of any breaches and offer an explanation.

It deliberately uses the word 'notify' rather than 'report' as 'notify' is more neutral and describes informing someone of an observation rather than 'report', which can imply a pre-judgement that may deter people from informing the Principal about what they observed.

This CS places child safety within a wider 'safety' context – that of professional competence and occupational health and safety. You may wish to add other standards to the list.

As with all the Code, the CS reminds you that it is your responsibility to inform yourself about the Code and its application and to seek answers if you are unsure about any part of it.

Conduct statement 2

You give priority to students' safety and well-being in all your behaviour and decision making. There should be no doubt in anyone's mind that the primary consideration in all that you do is the safety and well-being of students. This statement sounds self-evident and even 'easy' – until it is tested.

The safety and well-being of students takes priority over:

- The reputation of your school or individual staff members
- Friendships between staff members, parents or anyone else
- The risk of embarrassment caused in seeking advice from the CEO or other advisory body
- The risk of being wrong
- Money

Your responsibility for students' safety and well-being cannot be delegated to students in part or in whole. You can require students to comply with disciplinary standards and be educated to look after their own safety, however the responsibility for their care still rests entirely with you.

A child can never be held responsible for being harmed by another person – including another child.

The term 'grooming' is deliberately not used in this CS or anywhere in the Code for three reasons:

- It implies an understanding that the person has sexual intent towards a student
- It requires a bystander to make a judgement about the sexual intent of another staff member when 'intent' is an internal state that cannot be observed but only interpreted from behaviour
- The first two reasons deter bystanders from acting on 'grooming behaviour' because they don't want to believe that the person intends to harm a child and they don't want to be responsible for ruining a someone's career or reputation if they wrongly interpret their behaviour.

The Code relies on making you responsible for behaving in ways that are clearly meeting student needs and for you to notify any behaviour that you observe does not meet that standard – regardless of any intent.

You simply need to describe to the Principal the behaviour you observed without judgment or interpretation. It is the Principal's responsibility to interpret the information you give them about the person's behaviour and decide what to do. The CS also encourages the free flow of information about the person's behaviour and decide what to do.

The CS also encourages the free flow of information about student safety and well-being and makes no distinction about the form or 'label' the information is in or its source. It asks the question: What does this information tell me about the safety and well-being of students?

All information held by a school is in the 'possession' of the Principal, regardless of where it is actually stored – physically or in people's minds. This is because the Principal has the legal and moral responsibility for the safety and well-being of students and must therefore have all information that allows them to discharge it.

The safety and well-being of students is not a passive activity. It requires your active and sometimes pro-active partnership with their parents, the Principal and other members of the school community. It requires you to be alert to risks to students' safety and well-being and to inform the Principal about those risks.

There are universal principles about how to conduct relationships with students that should not require specific rules about digital media. The Code does not specifically mention digital media as

the principles stated in the CS are broad enough to cover all forms of engagement with students, including Facebook, email, text messaging, and any future digital media applications and platforms. If you believe that your school Code requires express statements about digital media then you should add them as appropriate.

Conduct statement 3

You act in accordance with the values of the Gospel as defined in the Code of Ethical Conduct. 'Gospel values' is a broad term that the Code defines by referring to the Code of Ethical Conduct. You may wish to discuss with staff members and elaborate upon if necessary. Be mindful that the more specific you define terms, the more people may seek to rely on exceptions, so try and keep a balance.

You should also make sure that any additional values you seek to add have their source in the Gospel and are not merely 'feel good' statements or affirmations.

School staff members are already bound by the CECWA Code of Ethical Conduct that defines Gospel Values and is part of their employment agreement.

Other people who join or engage with your school community in any capacity, regardless of their faith tradition or personal beliefs, can be asked to acknowledge that they will be treated in accordance with the Code of Ethical Conduct, and that you expect them to do likewise as a condition of their engagement with your school. Such acknowledgement does not require or signify a change in their personal faith beliefs or non-beliefs. Members of the school community can agree to a set of values or behaviours without having to agree to their spiritual source.

Conduct statement 4

You conduct yourself in accordance with laws, agreements, policies and standards relevant to your relationship with the school community.

This is similar to CS2 except that it covers your school policies, the EBAs and employment contracts and the laws rather than standards of each employee's profession or industry.

It makes it clear that each member of the school community must notify any breach of the agreement between another member and the school, or school policies and agreements. The role of the 'bystander' in keeping students safe is fundamental and each member of the school community must be clear that they do not have a discretion as to whether to notify of any breaches. They are not alleging harm to a student or pre-judging what they observed. They are simply notifying a breach of a rule and leaving it to the Principal or other decision maker to inquire into the context and make a decision.

It also makes explicit the right of anyone to take matters outside the school if they believe that the school has not responded appropriately.

It also reminds people that the school property and resources – including work time - are to be used for serving the school community and not for any private purpose or personal gain.

Conduct statement 5

You respect the dignity, culture, values and beliefs of each member of the school community.

This CS is self-explanatory.

You may wish to add other values that are particular to your school or congregational tradition.

There may be some questions about whether this CS conflicts with the employment obligations of staff members to 'contribute actively towards the maintenance of the Catholicity of the school through a manner of life and stated beliefs which are in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church.'

This would be a useful catalyst for discussion about what the so-called 'Manner of Life' obligations are for staff members and whether a close reading of the CS does present a conflict.

You may wish to ask the question: 'Do you think that it is in keeping with the teachings of the Catholic Church to express homophobic attitudes and behaviours towards a colleague or any person?'

Conduct statement 6

You treat personal information about members of the school community as private and confidential.

This may be a catalyst for reviewing your school privacy policy and checking whether it is posted on your website and that you comply with it.

It may also invite discussion around when is a school required to disclose student or other personal information to a third party. Some examples include:

- If the student or their parent consents
- If there is a subpoena from a court that requires production of the information
- If the police or the Department of Child Protection and Community Services requests information about the well-being of a student.

The law deems that the Principal has 'constructive possession' and control of all records and information held by your school, regardless of where it is actually stored.

Conduct statement 7

You give and seek the best, honest and most accurate information about the education and care of students.

As parents are partners with school staff members in the education of their child, you should share as much information with each other as openly and constructively as possible.

You should always make decisions based on the best available information and not rely on information that is second-hand, from someone who may be biased (e.g. one parent's opinion about their ex-partner), or that requires an expert opinion.

Relationships between adult members of the school community should be based on the assumption that as adults, you are each able to receive and adapt to bad news, admissions of mistakes, risks to student health or safety, or other information that may not be flattering to you, them, their child or the school, if such disclosures are made respectfully and constructively and in the best interests of student safety and well-being.

You should not try to 'protect' other members of the school community from difficult or confronting truths and should keep them as informed as circumstances allow and in the best interests of students.

You should not rely on the 'expertise' of members of the school community who may be specialists such as doctors, lawyers, police officers or tradespeople unless they are in an official capacity such as on the school board. You should seek advice from specialists in the CEO.

Conduct Statement 8

You support all members of the school community in making informed decisions about students.

Parents have a right to be kept reasonably informed about the education of their children so that they can fulfil their primary carer and educator roles.

You should continue to share information with both parents despite breakdowns in relationships between parents and between parents and their child.

The law says that both parents retain their individual rights and responsibilities over their children in spite of any breakdown in their relationship, unless there is a court order to the contrary. You should assume that both parents are entitled to the same information about their child, and do your best to accommodate their involvement in the child's education and school activities.

You should avoid 'descending into the arena' during parental disputes or taking on face value any information given by one parent about the other.

You should invite the parent to meet with you to speak in person or write directly to any parent and disclose to them any concerns you have about their child's education, rather than relying on your assumptions about what they may know or think, or what the other parent or student or third party has told you.

If you are a teacher, you should remind parents that you are their child's educator and you perform that vocation in partnership with the parent. You remind them that is your expertise and you will continue to provide that expertise to both their child and the parent in the best interests of the child. You understand that there may be lots of other issues in the parent's and child's life, however you are focussed on their safety and well-being while you are educating them.

Parents will vary in their levels of engagement with you and your school. There may be extreme cases where a parent is absent from the child's life through their choice or family breakdown or even through imprisonment. While these factors will obviously affect your ability to share information about the child with the absent parent, you should still make available the same amount of information to that parent as the other. In short, the student should not suffer a detriment due to the neglect of their parent.

You need to be mindful that your style tone and level of communicating with parents is that between adult 'partners' in their child's education. There may be exceptional circumstances where it may not be in the best interests of a student or students to disclose to a parent or parents information relevant to their safety and wellbeing. These are so rare that you should only withhold information with the written advice of your Principal, and based on expert advice. Information should not be withheld simply because its disclosure may lead to a complaint or adverse publicity about the school or other damage to the school's reputation.

Conduct statement 9

You promote and preserve the trust and privilege inherent in your relationship with all members of the school community.

Meeting these standards of separation between the educational and social relationships between staff members and students is the foundation of child safety and well-being. This may be harder to maintain in country schools. However, you must put the safety and well-being of a student ahead of all other considerations, including potentially being 'on duty' during social events. It is not the student's responsibility to maintain appropriate relationships with staff members.

It is not even their parent's responsibility to do so as parents may not understand the risks to their child of allowing them to interact socially with you; ie that it creates a precedent that another person may take advantage of to harm their child. The onus is on you.

A student can never consent to a friendship or more intimate relationship with you due to the power imbalance. You cannot rely on a student's behaviour towards you as 'permission' for you to decide that it is okay to form a more personal relationship with them.

It is a criminal offence for a member of school staff to have any form of sexual relationship with a student who is under 18, regardless of their 'consent' or the 'consent' or any knowledge of their parents. This Code also recognises that the power imbalance doesn't automatically cease upon graduation or the student turning 18. A former student may still be unable to exercise independent judgement about a relationship with you for a time after they cease to be a student in your school. Therefore it prevents you from having any personal relationship until they turn 21.

The onus is on you to behave professionally with students at all times and to not put yourself in a position where a reasonable person may be unsure of the level of intimacy in your relationship, regardless of the reality or your intentions.

You may have good and innocent intentions when engaging with a student in an overly familiar fashion. The problem is that another person may not, and a third party observer cannot tell the difference.

The Code removes the need to interpret 'intent' and requires you to act in an unambiguous way in your engagements with students.

Conduct statement 10

You maintain and build on the community's trust and confidence in Catholic schools and the Church.

The onus is on you to inform the Principal about your involvement in any activity or relationship that may put the safety and well-being of students at risk. The most obvious is any interaction with law enforcement agencies such as the police. It extends to your relationship with a person who may be under investigation or been charged for offences involving children.

Parents need to trust their children to your school's care and therefore you need to make sure you do not do anything that undermines that trust in you or the school.

The 'protection' of the school's reputation does not take precedence over the safety and wellbeing of your students. If you have information that must be disclosed to parents to enable them to make decisions about their children's safety and well-being, but may also risk bringing adverse publicity or criticism to the school, you must disclose.

If you have information about the safety and well-being of students you should take it to your Principal at first instance and only disclose it to an external party if you believe it is in the best interests of the students.

Conduct statement 11

You act reflectively and ethically.

You must allow yourself the time to learn from your experiences and to share those lessons with others. You should allow yourself to debrief on issues and have formal opportunities to incorporate your experiences into continuous learning of your school and the System.

You can only care for students to the high degree required if you and your colleagues are fit and well. This includes spiritually as well as physically, emotionally and mentally.

Conduct Statement 12

You allow students to have a voice in their education, safety and well-being.

You should engage with students in the drafting of this Code so that their opinions are heard and they feel connected to it.

You should look for other ways in which to allow students to be involved in decisions that affect them or to express any concerns they have about their individual or collective safety and wellbeing.

St Brigid's Catholic Primary School Code of Conduct

Purpose

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to describe minimum standards of conduct in all behaviour and decision making to ensure the safety and well-being of students.

Application

The Code applies to staff members, students, volunteers, parents and guardians as applicable. The term 'parents' includes guardians.

Introduction

You acknowledge the inherent vulnerability of the students in your care.

You recognise that the safety and well-being of students depends upon your vigilance and diligence and the vigilance and diligence of all adults.

The Code does not give you detailed professional advice on specific behaviour. Rather, it describes the minimum requirements expected of you.

The Guidelines are illustrative and not an exhaustive list of the behaviours covered by the Code.

If your behaviour varies from the standards described in this Code and Guidelines, you should be prepared to explain and justify your decisions and actions.

While mandatory language such as 'must', 'shall' and 'will' is not used throughout the Code, there is a presumption the conduct described is mandatory and therefore not discretionary.

The Principal expects you to conduct yourself personally and professionally in a way that maintains public trust and confidence in your school and the Church.

You have a responsibility to students and their family, other members of the school community and the wider community to provide and support safe and competent education and care of students.

In cases of conflict between parts of the Code, between the Code and other school policies, or in any decision making choices, you give priority to the outcome that will be in the best interests of the safety and well-being of the child.

Breaches

Breaches of the Code must be notified to the Principal and it is a breach of the Code not to do so. A breach of the Code may constitute a failure to follow a lawful direction from the Principal and therefore, the Principal will have the discretion as to what action to take, which may include counselling, professional development or sanctions under any agreement between you and the Principal. If you are a parent, volunteer or visitor, the Principal may take such action as is appropriate in your circumstances to maintain the safety and well-being of students.

The Principal must notify the appropriate authorities of any breach of the Code that was grooming behaviour: ie. deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a student, to lower the student's inhibitions in preparation for engaging in sexual activity with the student. Examples include:

- developing relationships that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students)
- being alone with a student in circumstances where you are unseen or unlikely to be randomly interrupted
- initiating unnecessary physical contact with students or doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engaging in personal disclosures (including personal contact details), or exchanges containing sexual content with or in the presence of a student
- organising contact with a student or their family outside of school without the Principal's knowledge and/or consent (e.g. tutoring, sport coaching).
- having any non-curriculum related online contact with a student (including via digital media) or their family
- using any personal digital media account to contact students or their family
- photographing or videoing a student without the consent of the parent
- being in the presence of a student whilst under the influence of alcohol or nonmedically prescribed drugs or offering either to a student.

The Principal must notify the appropriate authorities of any breach of the Code that was sexual abuse of a child: ie sexual behaviour in circumstances where:

- the student is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence;
- the student has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
- there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

Principal

Conduct Statements

1. You act safely and competently.
2. You give priority to students' safety and well-being in all your behaviour and decision making.
3. You act in accordance with the values of the Gospel as defined in the Code of Ethical Conduct.
4. You conduct yourself in accordance with laws, agreements, policies and standards relevant to your relationship with the school community.
5. You respect the dignity, culture, values and beliefs of each member of the school community.
6. You treat personal information about members of the school community as private and confidential.
7. You give impartial, honest and accurate information about the education, safety and wellbeing of students.
8. You support all members of the school community in making informed decisions about students.
9. You promote and preserve the trust and privilege inherent in your relationship with all members of the school community.
10. You maintain and build on the community's trust and confidence in Catholic schools and the Church.
11. You act reflectively and ethically.
12. You allow students to have a voice in their education, safety and well-being.

Conduct Statement 1

You act safely and competently.

Guidelines

1. You are expected to put the safety of students ahead of every other relevant but secondary consideration.
2. In doing so, you are expected to act within the scope of your expertise and role within the school community.
3. If the safety and well-being of a student requires skills and experience outside your core competency, you must refer the student to the appropriate expert.
4. You are personally responsible within the context of your position in the school community for the provision of safe and competent student education. It is your responsibility to maintain the competence necessary to fulfil your role. Maintenance of competence includes participation in ongoing professional development to maintain and improve knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to your role in your school.
5. You recognise that the Principal, staff, parents and students assess your ability to act safely and competently based on your behaviour and decision making, and you do likewise in your assessment of them. You are responsible for conducting yourself in all things such that there is no speculation, doubt or ambiguity that you do so in the best interests of students. You must take reasonable steps to avoid situations where your decisions or behaviour could be interpreted as putting students at risk. You must also notify the Principal as soon as possible if you found yourself in such a position of ambiguity so that you can explain the circumstances.
6. You recognise each student's and their parents' right to receive accurate information; be protected against foreseeable risk of harm; and be involved in and informed about decisions in relation to their education.
7. You perform your role in the school within your professional or industry competency and according to school policies and any standards or codes applicable to your profession or industry.
8. You notify an appropriate person or the Principal of any information relevant to maintaining student safety and well-being, or any observation of questionable, unethical or unlawful behaviour, including breaches of this Code, and intervene to safeguard the student if the circumstances require it.
9. You ensure that any information you receive relevant to the safety and well-being of students is either acted upon by you in the best interests of the student if you are the relevant decision maker, or passed to the relevant decision maker for them to act.
10. You perform your work in a safe and competent manner that is not compromised by personal health limitations, including the use of alcohol or other substances that may alter your capacity to act safely. If your health threatens your ability to work safely and competently, you have a responsibility to seek assistance to address your health needs. This may include making a confidential report to an appropriate authority.

11. You perform duties in partnership with parents and school staff members and in accordance with the standards of your profession or industry (e.g. Teachers Registration Board).

12. You perform duties in accordance with wider standards relating to safety and quality in education and student care and responsibility for a safe school, such as those relating to occupational health and safety, mandatory and critical incident reporting, and participation in incident analysis and formal open disclosure procedures.

13. You make decisions about students based on their age, ability, and in the best interests of the student's sense of security, and physical, social, emotional and mental safety.

14. You seek advice, assistance and second opinions from experts and Principal as necessary.

Conduct statement 2

You give priority to students' safety and well-being in all your behaviour and decision making.

Guidelines

1. You accept that you and all adults have individual and joint responsibility for the safety and well-being of students.
2. You ensure the safety and well-being of students are the primary focus of your actions and decisions and take precedence over any other considerations including the reputation of the school and your own needs.
3. You support the safety, health and well-being of each student, promoting and supporting decisions and behaviour that contribute to the student's self-confidence, safety and wellbeing.
4. You do not behave in any way that risks creating ambiguity about whether you are acting in the best interests of a student.
5. You respectfully communicate in plain language and in a way the student and those supporting their education can understand so they may fully participate in that education.
6. You support informed decision making by advising the student as appropriate and those supporting their education about education options, and assist the student and their supporters to make informed decisions about that education.
7. You endeavour to ensure the voice of the student is heard as appropriate, taking into account age and circumstances.
8. You seek out, welcome, and learn from information relevant to the safety and well-being of students in any form, including advice, disclosures, complaints, criticisms, feedback and performance reviews. You look for opportunities to engage in formal and informal group and self-reflection and professional development about your own and others' decisions so that you and the school can learn and continuously improve.
9. You recognise that all information about students collected by school staff members is done so on behalf of the Principal and for the benefit of the student. Therefore, all information is disclosed to and accessible by all who have a need to know it in order to support the education, safety and well-being of the student.
10. You respectfully advocate for the safety and well-being of students above all other considerations.
11. You recognise the importance that students' education continues without interruption or disturbance.
12. You disclose to the Principal any information that a reasonable person would recognise may be relevant to the safety and well-being of students so that the Principal may make appropriate decisions to manage any risk to them. This includes any relationship with any person who may have been accused of harming children or acting unsafely towards them.

13. You recognise that students and their parents are entitled to assume that the sole focus of your engagements with students is to educate them within a safe environment that puts their well-being above all else. You understand that this trust by parents and students puts the onus on you to use your relationship with students solely for their education. You use all engagements with students and their parents, whether in person, through a third party, or via digital media for the purpose of teaching the curriculum.

14. You do not accept gifts or benefits that could be viewed as a means of influencing your objective decision making.

Conduct statement 3

3. You act in accordance with the values of the Gospel as defined in the Code of Ethical Conduct.

Guidelines

1. You are mindful that your decisions and behaviour are opportunities for students and others to see Gospel values in action and how faith integrates with life. Therefore you are responsible for educating yourself and anyone you lead on the content of those values, and their practical application in your decision making.

2. You acknowledge that as a member of a Catholic school community, you are required to strive to develop and live out your relationships with all people in a manner that is based on Gospel values as defined in the CECWA Code of Ethical Conduct.

3. You accept that as a member of a Catholic school community, your conduct reflects on Catholic Education and the Church, and therefore you must strive to uphold the letter and spirit of the Code of Ethical Conduct.

4. You are called upon by the Code of Ethical Conduct act in a manner that is:

- Based on Christian ethics
- Professional
- Timely
- Contextually appropriate

5. The Code of Ethical Conduct requires you to take an ethical approach based on the living out of Gospel values which find expression in:

- Respect for the dignity of each person
- Acknowledgment of the giftedness of each person
- Commitment to building positive relationships
- Confidentiality
- Accountability

6. Respecting dignity is based on:

- A conscious appreciation of the sacredness of the individual's creation
- A sensitivity to the fact that each individual has emotions, fears, hopes and an innate goodness which flows from creation in the image of God

7. Recognising the giftedness of others involves:

- Discerning these gifts
- Naming and acknowledging these gifts
- Empowering individuals and groups to use their gifts

8. Fostering positive relationships which flow from being:

Welcoming and open

- Honest and loyal
- Trusting and trustworthy
- Willing to share knowledge, skills, resources and insights

9. Committing to appropriate confidentiality based on:

- Respect for others
- Professionalism

10. Committing to:

- The Mandate of the Bishops of Western Australia
 - The acceptance of responsibility for any action or initiative at a personal and professional level.
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Conduct statement 4

You conduct yourself in accordance with laws, agreements, policies and standards relevant to your relationship with the school community.

Guidelines

1. Your relationship with other members of the school community is defined by whatever written or verbal agreement has given rise to that relationship. If you are a member of staff, it is your employment agreement. If you are a parent or acting in a parental capacity, it is the student's enrolment agreement. If you are a member of the school board, it is your school board constitution. If you are a visitor, it is in accordance with the permission of the Principal to be on school grounds on condition that you act safely and competently.
 2. If you witness the unlawful or unsafe conduct of any other member of the school community, or breaches of policy or this Code, whether in teaching, administration, school support services, or while engaging with students in person or via digital or other media, you have both a responsibility and an obligation to notify such conduct to the Principal or an appropriate authority and take other action as necessary to protect students.
 3. Where you notify the Principal or a delegate of unsafe conduct, including breaches of this Code, and that notification fails to produce an appropriate response in the circumstances, you may take the matter to an appropriate external authority.
 4. You respect both the person and property of students and their families, and of other members of the school community, and the property and finances of the school.
 5. You use school property and resources responsibly and for the purposes of the school.
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Conduct statement 5

You respect the dignity, culture, values and beliefs of each member of the school community.

Guidelines

1. You respect both the person and capacity of each member of the school community, treat them with dignity, show respect for their culture, values, and beliefs.
 2. You interact with members of your school community in an honest and respectful manner.
 3. You perform your duties and conduct your relations with students and members of the school community with fairness and justice. This includes taking appropriate action to ensure the safety and quality of the education and care of students are not compromised because of harmful or prejudicial attitudes about culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, religion, disability, spirituality, political, social or health status.
 4. In planning and providing education and school support services, you uphold the standards of culturally safe and competent care. This includes according due respect and consideration to the cultural knowledge, values, beliefs, personal wishes and decisions of each member of the school community. You acknowledge the changing nature of families and recognise that families can be constituted in a variety of ways.
 5. You do not express racist, sexist, homophobic, ageist and other prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours toward any member of the school community. You take appropriate action when observing any such prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours.
 6. In making professional judgements in relation to the interests and rights of a member of the school community, you do not contravene the law or breach the human rights of any person.
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Conduct statement 6

You treat personal information about members of the school community as private and confidential.

Guidelines

1. You use personal information in accordance with your school Privacy Policy.
 2. You have ethical and legal obligations to treat personal information as confidential. You protect the privacy of each member of the school community by treating the information gained in the relationship as confidential, restricting its use and disclosure to the purposes defined in your school Privacy Policy.
 3. If a third party asks for access to personal information, you must take reasonable steps to confirm the identity of the third party, and that it is lawful to disclose the information to them. You must inform the member of the school community that you have disclosed their personal information unless you are satisfied that there are legal reasons for not doing so.
 4. You seek advice if you identify a conflict between protecting personal information and any resulting risk to the safety and well-being of a student.
 5. You create and keep accurate records of conversations about significant decisions involving the safety and well-being of students.
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Conduct statement 7

You give and seek the best, honest and most accurate information about the education and care of students.

Guidelines

1. You give and seek accurate advice relevant to the education, safety and well-being of students, based on primary rather than secondary sources.
 2. You fully explain the advantages and disadvantages of any options so all involved can participate constructively in decision making to deliver the best results for the student.
 3. You accurately represent the role you play in the education, safety and well-being of students.
 4. Where the education, safety or well-being of a student requires expert knowledge or experience, you seek these out for the benefit of the student.
 5. You seek out first hand sources of information directly from parents, colleagues and experts, or in documents and policies when making decisions or giving advice rather than relying on hearsay, opinion, rumour or assumptions.
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Conduct Statement 8

You support all members of the school community in making informed decisions about students.

Guidelines

1. You recognise that parents are the first educators of their children and equal partners in the education of students.
 2. You understand that each member of the school community has skills, experience and knowledge that may be a unique resource that can be directed to towards the safety and well-being of students.
 3. You actively share information about students with their parents and the Principal so that they may make informed decisions about students. You listen to everyone with courtesy and respect.
 4. You treat the opinions of parents and school staff members about the education and well-being of students with respect and dignity, even if you do not agree with it or believe it is misinformed or misguided.
 5. You use plain language with appropriate style, tone and level in your written or verbal communication, particularly when expressing technical or expert advice, and you actively seek confirmation that you have been understood.
 6. You engage with all parents equally and fairly, regardless of their relationship status, mindful that, in the absence of court orders to the contrary, each parent has equal and joint parental responsibility for their child. You do not allow your opinion about the behaviour of parents to prevent you from engaging openly and honestly with each of them about their child's education.
 7. You continue to inform and engage with a parent about the education and well-being of their child on the assumption that it is in the student's best interests to do so, regardless of the parent's level of engagement with you or the child. You respect any decision by a parent to disengage with you or their child, and you remain open to re-engage in the future.
 8. You act to strengthen, preserve, restore and promote positive relationships between the student and their parents, family members, and those significant to the student, regardless of any breakdown in these relationships.
 9. You do not use the behaviour of either parent as a reason for denying them or their child access to information or support from the school that are in the best interests of the student, unless doing so would place the student or school community at risk of harm.
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Conduct statement 9

You promote and preserve the trust and privilege inherent in your relationship with all members of the school community.

Guidelines

1. You promote and preserve the trust inherent in your relationship with students and with their parents.
2. You recognise that an inherent power imbalance exists within your relationship with students that may make the students and their family vulnerable and open to exploitation. You actively preserve the dignity of all people through practised kindness and by recognising the potential vulnerability and powerlessness of each student and their family. You recognise that the power relativities between you and a student can be significant, particularly where the student is very young, has a disability, a difficult family background, has cultural differences, or experiencing emotional turmoil. This vulnerability creates a power differential in your relationship with students that must be recognised and managed with care.
3. You take reasonable measures to establish a sense of trust to protect the physical, psychological, emotional, social and cultural well-being of each student. You protect students who are vulnerable, including but not limited to students with disability, from exploitation and harm.
4. You have a responsibility to maintain appropriate boundaries with students and to actively support other adults to do likewise, including bringing to their attention any failure to do so.
5. You may have personal or recreational relationships outside your school role with students' families and friends, or with school staff. You are aware that dual relationships may compromise student care and well-being. In cases of overlap or conflict between your dual relationships, you act with the primary intent of the safety and well-being of the student, which may require you to withdraw from a social relationship.
6. You do not engage in any behaviour with a student that could be interpreted by a reasonable person as being a friendship.
7. You do not engage in any behaviour with a student that a reasonable person could interpret as creating an opportunity to engage in emotional, physical or sexual intimacy with a student.
8. You recognise that the power imbalance between you and students means that the onus is on you to avoid any ambiguity or misunderstanding by a student or third party about your intent in your behaviour towards them.
9. You understand that the power imbalance between you and students means a student is unable to give their consent to engaging in emotional, physical or sexual intimacy with you, regardless of the legal age of consent, or the student's age or maturity. You must therefore not seek nor rely on such express or implied consent from a student to engage in an intimate relationship.
10. You understand that the power imbalance between you and students may continue to

influence students' choices beyond the date when they cease to be students at your school. You must therefore not engage in emotional, physical or sexual intimacy with a former student within two years of them ceasing enrolment at your school, or them turning 21, whichever occurs latest.

11. You take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and security of the possessions and property of students and their families that are in your care.

12. You do not knowingly mislead parents or make misrepresenting statements to them, or withhold information relevant to their ability to make informed decisions about their children unless required by law.

13. You recognise that there may be rare exceptions to full disclosure to parents. Such disclosure of information may compromise law enforcement or other risk management processes, or the privacy and reputation of those involved. You seek legal or other expert advice in resolving such situations, recognising that parents have the right to know about any risk to their children.

Conduct statement 10

You maintain and build on the community's trust and confidence in Catholic schools and the Church.

Guidelines

1. Your conduct maintains and builds public trust and confidence in your school, other members of the school community, and the Church.
 2. Any unlawful and unethical actions in your personal life risk adversely affecting both your own and the school's reputation in the eyes of the public. If the good standing of either you or the school was to diminish, this might jeopardise the inherent trust between the school and parents, as well as the community more generally, necessary for effective relationships and the best education of students.
 3. You notify the Principal of your involvement in any criminal investigation or other legal process that may undermine trust and confidence in your judgement or care of students.
 4. You consider the interests of the school and the Church when exercising your right to freedom of speech and participating in public, political and academic debate, including publication.
 5. You never place the reputation of the school above the safety and well-being of students.
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Conduct statement 11

You act reflectively and ethically.

Guidelines

1. You engage with the school reflectively and ethically to ensure that you consciously put student safety and well-being at the forefront of your behaviour and decisions.
 2. You develop and maintain appropriate and best practice advice, support and care for each student and their family.
 3. You evaluate your conduct and competency according to this Code, the terms and conditions of your relationship with the school, and school policies.
 4. You contribute to the professional development of school staff members as appropriate.
 5. You contribute to continuous improvement by supporting opportunities to record, assess and learn from incidents involving student safety and well-being.
 6. You advise the Principal of any reduction in your capacity to act in the best interests of the safety and well-being of students due to health, social or other factors, while you seek ways of addressing the deficiency.
 7. You take care of the safety and well-being of all members of the school community so that you all may fully contribute and cooperate in providing for the safety and well-being of students.
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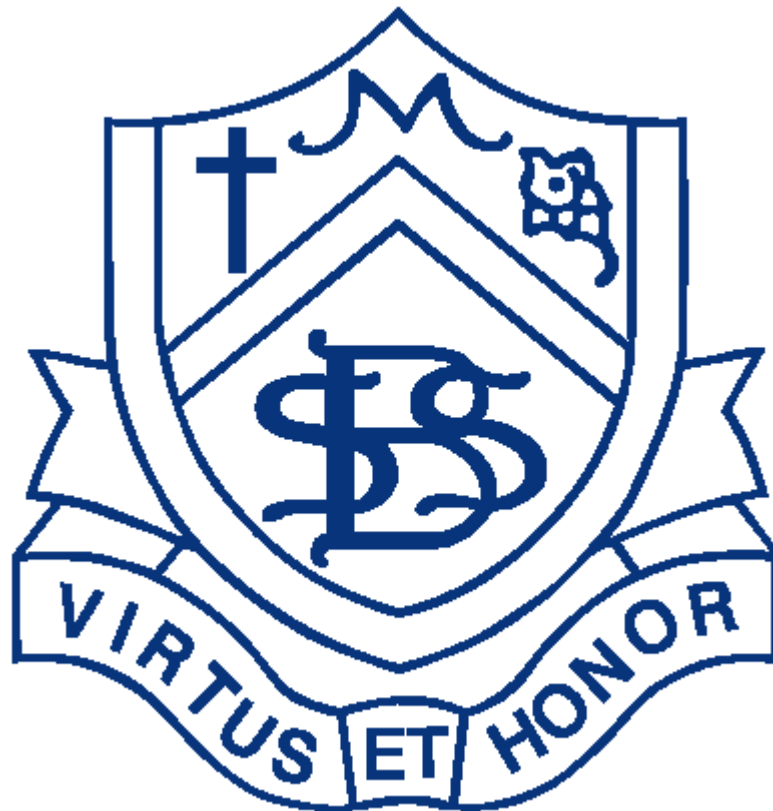
Conduct Statement 12

You allow students to have a voice in their education, safety and well-being.

Guidelines

1. You recognise that while you and all adults have responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of students, students have opinions and ideas about their education and well-being.
 2. You allow age-appropriate opportunities and forums for students to reflect on and express their opinions and ideas and you treat those expressions with respect and care.
 3. You regularly invite students to participate in decision making about their education and well-being and offer them constructive feedback on their ideas and opinions.
 4. You encourage students to inform you or the Principal of any concerns they have about their own or other students' education, safety or well-being. You follow up those concerns and keep students informed of how they are resolved.
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**CODE OF CONDUCT
ST BRIGID'S SCHOOL
BRIDGETOWN**



The purpose of the St Brigid's Catholic Primary School, Bridgetown, Code of Conduct, is to provide minimum standards of conduct in all behaviour and decision making to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students.

The Code applies to all within our school community including staff members, students, volunteers, parents and guardians as applicable.

The Code of Conduct and Guidelines are available on our website.

Breaches of the Code must be notified to the Principal, Mr Andrew Kelly

The twelve conduct statements are:

1. I act safely and competently.
2. I give priority to students' safety and wellbeing in all your behaviour and decision making.
3. I act in accordance with the values of the Gospel as defined in the Code of Ethical Conduct.
4. I conduct yourself in accordance with laws, agreements, policies and standards relevant to your relationship with the school community.
5. I respect the dignity, culture, values and beliefs of each member of the school community.
6. I treat personal information about members of the school community as private and confidential.
7. I give impartial, honest and accurate information about the education, safety and wellbeing of students.
8. I support all members of the school community in making informed decisions about students.
9. I promote and preserve the trust and privilege inherent in your relationship with all members of the school community.
10. I maintain and build on the community's trust and confidence in Catholic schools and the Church.
11. I act reflectively and ethically.
12. I allow students to have a voice in their decision, safety and well-being.

I agree that I have read, understood and will comply with the Code.

Name

Signature

Date