Safeguarding Children and Young People

CODE OF CONDUCT – CHILD SAFETY

Document Title	Code of Conduct – Child Safety Appendix 1 to Child Safety Policy
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Central to the mission of Avila College is an unequivocal commitment to fostering the dignity, self-esteem and integrity of children and young people, and providing them with a safe, faith-filled, supportive and enriching environment to develop spiritually, physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially.

Purpose
Avila College's Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at Avila College against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement child protection legislations, school policies/procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to Avila College employees.

All employees, direct contact contractors, direct contact volunteers, clergy and Avila College Advisory Board members (College Board) are expected to actively contribute to a school culture that respects the dignity of its members and affirms the Gospel values of love, care for others, compassion and justice. They are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

The Code of Conduct provides guidance on appropriate and inappropriate behaviours. As referenced in the Victorian Catholic Multi Enterprise Agreement (VCEMEA 2018 Clause 13 Managing Performance Concerns where an employee breaches the code, Avila College may take disciplinary action and in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal as referenced in the Victorian Catholic Multi Enterprise Agreement (VCEMEA 2018) Clause 19.2.

Acceptable Behaviours

All employees, direct contact contractors, direct contact volunteers, clergy and College Board members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- reading and adhering to the school's Child Safe Policy (available on the College's website and Staff Handbook) and upholding the College's Statement of Commitment to child safety at all times;
- being observant and proactively taking all reasonable steps to protect students from abuse;
- treating everyone in the College community with respect (modelling positive and respectful relationships and acting in a manner that sustains a safe, educational and pastoral environment);
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child have been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child;
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students e.g. by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self identification;
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds e.g. by having a zero tolerance policy towards discrimination;
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability;
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a students and, if an adult is alone with a child, this must only occur in the context of teaching/counselling;
- avoiding being with a student in a room that does not enable others to see into the room
- ensure that an ill student who needs supervision overnight is, as far as practical, with another student and two teachers e.g. Overseas immersions;
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns, or breaches of this code of conduct to a member of the College Executive Team;
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.);
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring that the child(ren) are safe as quickly as possible.

Wherever there are concerns that a student is in immediate danger please call the Police on 000.

Unacceptable Behaviours

All employees, direct contact contractors, direct contact volunteers, clergy and College Board members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
- engage in a relationship with a student that in not professional nor directly related to their role in the school as employees, direct contact contractors, direct contact volunteers, clergy and College Board members in an education setting;
- develop any 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism e.g. the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students;
- exhibit behaviours with students which may be construed as unnecessarily physical e.g. inappropriate sitting on laps;
- engaging in any form of sexual behaviour with students including sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material;
- engaging in behaviours or disciplinary action that would result in serious physical, emotional or psychological harm;
- put children at risk of abuse e.g. by locking doors;
- initiate unnecessary physical contact with students or do things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves;
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of students e.g. discussion of personal social activities;
- use inappropriate language, or express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students;
- discriminate against a student on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability;
- seek to form a friendship with a student's family with the purpose of getting to know the students out of the school environment;

- have direct online contact with a student (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc. unless necessary e.g. by providing families with E-newsletters or assisting students with their school work);
- use any personal communication channels/devices such as a personal email/social media account;
- exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking sites or email addresses;
- meet with students, even in a group, outside the school environment so as to form a friendship or offer hospitality e.g. meet students for a coffee without their parents being present/permission;
- photograph or video a student without the consent of the parents/guardians;
- use school images for personal use;
- posting online any identifiable information about a student (with the exception of College or approved publications);
- work with students while under the influence of alcohol;
- work with students while under the influence of illegal drugs;
- consume alcohol at a school event unless approved by the Principal.

I, _____ , confirm that I have read and understood the requirements of the Avila College Code of Conduct (Child Safety) and agree to comply with these requirements.

Signed: _____ Date: _____ / _____ / _____

Child Safety Policy
For further information regarding Child Safety please review the Avila College Child Safety Policy and Mandatory Reporting Procedure. These documents provide guidance in relation to matters of child safety.

Our Mandatory Reporting Procedure provides specific information for employees, direct contact contractors, direct contact volunteers, clergy and College Board members about who to contact, and the steps involved in making a report of suspected child abuse.

Other people who interact with the school community who have concerns about Child abuse are to contact Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing.

Information will be managed confidentially on a strict need to know basis.

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Date Issued	(Minor, Major Change)
August 2016	August 2016	New
July 2018	31 July 2018	Minor under Unacceptable Behaviours
February 2019	5 February 2019	Minor VCEMEA 2013 to VCEMEA 2018
August 2019	December 2019	Minor

Document approved by Principal and ratified by the Avila College Advisory Board 2016	
Next Review Date	August 2020
Person/s Responsible	Deputy Principal Student Wellbeing Principal
Related Documents	
References	