



CHILD SAFETY Code of Conduct

July 2022

Catholic Education Sandhurst Limited (CES Ltd), operates and governs all Catholic Primary and Secondary schools within the Diocese of Sandhurst (excluding FCJ College Benalla, Marist College Bendigo, Catherine McAuley College Bendigo and St Joseph's College Echuca).

Central to the mission of CES Ltd is an explicit commitment to providing a safe and supportive environment where the emotional, social, intellectual, spiritual and physical wellbeing of our students is a priority.

All students enrolled at CES Ltd schools have the right to feel safe and be safe. The wellbeing of children and young people in our care will always be our priority and we have 'no tolerance' for child abuse. We aim to create a child-safe and child-friendly environment where children and young people can live life abundantly without any concern for their safety.

Child safety is everyone's responsibility. All CES Ltd Board members, CES Ltd Board committee members, School Advisory Council members, Principals and all other staff and volunteers, service providers and any other adult involved in child connected work are expected to actively contribute to a child safe culture by respecting the dignity of all, affirming 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.

This Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviour of adults with children and young people. It is intended to complement other professional and occupational codes.

This code applies to all physical and online environments used by students. It also applies during and outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the school for student use (e.g., a school camp, excursion, sporting event).

Signed: _____

1. Acceptable behaviours

All CES Ltd Board members, CES Ltd Board Committee members, School Advisory Council members, the Principal, and all other staff and volunteers, service providers and any other adult involved in child connected work are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- upholding our commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- treating students and families in our school communities with respect, both in and outside our school environments, as part of normal social and community activities
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they disclose that they or another student has been abused or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child or student
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and students of diverse sexuality.
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult
- ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm if child abuse is suspected
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958* (Vic.)
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to a school's officer responsible for child safety.

2. Unacceptable behaviours

All CES Ltd Board members, CES Ltd Board Committee members, School Advisory Council members, the Principal, and all other staff, volunteers, service providers and any other adult involved in child connected work are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, by offering gifts)

Signed: _____

- display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context
- ignore an adult’s overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum (for example, Christian Education for Personal Development) or professional guidance
- treat a student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school leadership or child safety officer’s knowledge and/or consent (accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate)
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, phone, instant messaging, texting etc)
- photograph or video a student in the school environment except in accordance with the CES Ltd Photography, Filming and Recording Students Policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- work with students while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs or consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of students.

3. Breaches to this code

Where a member of staff is suspected of breaching this Code of Conduct, CES Ltd may start the process under clause 13 of the *Victorian Catholic Education Multi-Enterprise Agreement 2018* (VCEMEA 2018) for managing employment concerns. This may result in disciplinary consequences.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with CES Ltd Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal.

Where the Principal is suspected of breaching this Code of Conduct, the concerned party is must contact the CES Ltd Chief Executive Officer.

Signed: _____

I _____ confirm that I have been provided with a
copy of the above Code of Conduct and will abide by it.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

(PRINT NAME)