



Penola
CATHOLIC COLLEGE
EST. 1995

Safeguarding Children and Young People

Code of Conduct

Penola Catholic College

[11/07/2016]

Penola Catholic College is a community of students, parents and staff guided by the teachings of Jesus Christ and inspired by the example of Saint Mary of the Cross MacKillop.

Enlightened by the Gospel values of Faith, Love, Hope and Compassion, we strive to provide a holistic education which meets the needs and develops the gifts of each student. As a community we recognise that this is best achieved in a welcoming environment with a commitment to justice, service and collaboration.

Penola Catholic College strives to involve its members in the life of the wider society. Through parish participation, local community activity and appreciation of national and global issues, we endeavour to foster critical awareness, a sense of belonging and a desire to work towards God's Kingdom of justice and peace.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at **Penola Catholic College** against sexual, physical, psychological and emotional abuse or neglect. It is intended to complement other professional and/or occupational codes.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members at **Penola Catholic College** 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.

Acceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the school's child safe policy and upholding the school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone in the school community with respect

- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has 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 children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the school's leadership
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*
- reporting any child safety concerns to the school's leadership
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

Unacceptable behaviours

All staff, volunteers, contractors, clergy and board/school council members must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- initiate unnecessary physical contact which children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have any online contact with a child (including by social media, email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary eg by providing families with e-newsletters or assisting students with their school work)
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school's leadership knowledge and/or consent or the school governing authority's approval (for example, unauthorised after hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sport coaching). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.

- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at school in the presence of children or young people
- consume alcohol irresponsibly at school events.

Workplace Health and Safety

All employees and volunteers are expected to:

- present for duty in sufficient physical and mental health to be capable of complying with their duty of care to their colleagues and students – this includes being unimpaired by alcohol, medication or drugs
- take reasonable care to ensure their own health and safety at work and avoid adversely affecting the health and safety of others – this includes following any established safety guidelines
- present to work in professional attire that is safe and appropriate to the role or functions of the staff member
- refrain from behaviour which constitutes bullying, discrimination or any form of harassment

Support the Mission and Reputation of the Church and Penola Catholic College

All employees and volunteers are expected to:

- respect the moral values and teachings of the Catholic Church and ensure that their public conduct is consistent with that respect
- support the aims, philosophy and Josephite ethos of the school by their conduct and interactions with the school
- respect and comply with all Federal, State and local laws
- conduct themselves in a manner that will not discredit the Church or Penola Catholic College
- act ethically and with integrity at all times

Professional Conduct

All employees and volunteers are expected to:

- carry out their duties in a professional, conscientious and timely manner
- communicate (personally, in writing or via electronic communications) with all persons in a manner which is respectful, honest and courteous at all times

- respect the inherent dignity of all persons and maintain a proper regard for their welfare
- manage and declare situations that may give rise to a conflict of interest or the perception of such a conflict
- observe confidentiality in relation to confidential information and disclose such information only to authorised persons
- respect the privacy of personal and sensitive information (except where legal or moral reporting obligations exist)
- refrain from improperly using information gained in the course of their employment for personal or commercial gain for themselves or others
- comply with any lawful and reasonable direction given by the college Principal or Executive.

6. Leaders

Leaders includes Penola Catholic College Board Members, Principal, Deputy Principals, Business Manager, and other staff holding positions of leadership or responsibility in the College.

In addition to the expectations of all Penola Catholic College staff and volunteers outlined in Section 5, **Leaders** have additional responsibilities to:

- set a good example for all persons
- make decisions fairly, impartially and promptly, considering all available information, legislation, policies and procedures
- act expeditiously in response to a complaint from any person
- provide opportunities for employees and volunteers to participate in decisions which affect them
- ensure all persons are treated fairly and equitably
- ensure that employees and volunteers understand what is expected with regard to the Code of Conduct and how complaints will be managed

7. Non-compliance with the Code of Conduct

Penola Catholic College employees and volunteers are required to comply with this Code of Conduct.

Any person who holds a reasonable, good faith belief that this Code may not have been complied with may raise this matter with the Principal of the College in the first instance. If the matter relates to the Principal it may be referred directly to the Members of the Penola Catholic College Board, usually through the Board Chair.

Following appropriate investigation, non-compliance with this Code may give rise to a range of outcomes, including counselling and/or disciplinary action including suspension or dismissal where appropriate. In the case of staff members, the performance management and dispute resolution

procedures of the relevant industrial agreement will be honoured (subject to mandatory and professional reporting obligations).

In some cases, non-compliance with the Code may also constitute civil or criminal offences and may result in civil action or criminal prosecution.

All members of the College community also have access to the provisions of the Concerns and Complaints Policy.