

Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct

Commitment to Child Safety

Thomas Carr College is a dynamic Catholic learning community, guided by the Gospel. Excellence and opportunities to develop are pursued. Through our hope and service to others we shine our light into the world. The college holds the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of Catholic education. This commitment is drawn from and inherent to the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel.

The College is committed to ensuring that all those engaged in our school promote the inherent dignity of children and young people and their fundamental right to be respected and nurtured in a safe school environment. This is particularly so for our most vulnerable children, including aboriginal children, those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with a disability.

We strive to create a nurturing school environment where children and young people are respected, their voices are heard and where they are safe and feel safe.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at Thomas Carr 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 Thomas Carr 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 College's Child Safety Policy and upholding the commitments contained within it at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone in the school 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 children, 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 children (eg 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 (eg by having a zero tolerance policy towards discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (eg 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 Principal, Deputy Principal, Child Safety Officer or Student Wellbeing Team Leader
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory
- reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)
- reporting any child safety concerns to Principal, Deputy Principal, Child Safety Officer or Student Wellbeing Team Leader
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe

Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff and volunteers must not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (eg the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (eg inappropriate sitting on laps)
- put children at risk of abuse (eg 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 with or in the presence of children (eg 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 age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of school without the school's leadership or Child Safety Officer's 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.
- have any online contact with a child or their family unless related to College business or student issues. This contact must only be made via the staff member's College email address
- 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 or at school events in the presence of children

I, _____ (print name), confirm I have been provided with a copy of the Thomas Carr College Code of Conduct.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

| | |
|---|---|
| Responsibility for Implementation: | Staff, students, volunteers and parents/guardians |
| Status: | New |
| Key Stakeholders: | College staff and students |
| Endorsement Body: | College Executive |
| Ratification Body: | College Board |
| Policy Author: | Director of Student Services |
| Date of Approval: | 2016 |
| Date of Scheduled Review: | 2019 |

The content of this document can be changed at the College Board's discretion at any time without notification.