



Child Safe Code of Conduct

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 college 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.

This Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships. For more detailed guidance refer to the College's Staff and Student Professional Boundaries policy.

When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is educated about the Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the College environment becomes much more transparent and people are accountable for their behaviour. Above all, a Child Safe-Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff members, including non-teaching staff and temporary or casual staff;
- Volunteers
- students
- parents and carers
- Third Party Contractors
- External Education Providers
- the College Board
- teaching students on placement at the College;-
- visitors
- clergy.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct set out below is designed to stand alone. It can also be incorporated in whole or part into broader codes of conduct that are developed within the College, including other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular staff at the College.

The Code is made available to all staff, volunteers, families and students.

Our Child Safe Code of Conduct

This Child Safe Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards students. The Code serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote child safety in the College environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. Where a staff member breaches the Code, Thomas Carr College may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal. The College revises the Code annually.

Thomas Carr College has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within our College community. This includes all teaching staff, non-teaching staff, the College Board, Volunteers, Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers and parents/carers.

Acceptable Behaviours

- adhering to the College's Child Safe Policy and upholding the commitments contained within it at all times;
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children 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 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 (e.g. by having a zero tolerance policy towards discrimination);
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (e.g. 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; and
- the responsible consumption of alcohol at College events held in public places.

Unacceptable Behaviours

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (e.g. the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children);
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (e.g. inappropriate sitting on laps);
- put children at risk of abuse (e.g. 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 (e.g. 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 College's leadership or Child Safety Officer's knowledge and/or consent or the College's 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; and
- consume alcohol or drugs at school or at school events in the presence of children.

Our Child Protection Program includes a Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy that provides detailed guidance for all adults at the College on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults at Thomas Carr College.

Report any concerns

The Program also includes information for members of the College Board, staff and Direct Contact Volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to our College's nominated Child Safety Officer.

It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

Third Party Contractors, External Education Providers, Indirect Contact Volunteers, students, parents/carers or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact the College's Child Safety Officer

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis'.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, the Police should be contacted on 000.

Code of Conduct Consent

Thomas Carr College is committed to ensuring the members of the college Community are familiar with this Code of Conduct. Members of the College of Community includes the following:

- All staff members, including non-teaching staff and temporary or casual staff;
- Volunteers;
- students;
- parents and carers;
- Third Party Contractors and service providers (including External Education Providers);
- members of the College Board;
- teaching students on placement at the College;
- visitors; and
- clergy.

This Code of Conduct is distributed to members of the College Community by:

- Providing staff with access to the Fundamentals site where they can access the document online; or
- Providing a printed copy to members of the College Community who must read the Code of Conduct and acknowledge that they have done so by signing the document.

Disclosure

If I have, or anticipate I will have a personal relationship with children and families connected with the College, I agree to disclose this by notifying the Principal via the attached Acceptance and Disclosure Statement. If this relationship may cause any potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest, I agree to work with the Principal to resolve this.

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

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Policy status:	Reviewed
Key Stakeholders:	College staff, students, parents, volunteers, contractors
Endorsement Body:	College Executive
Ratification Body:	College Board Policy
Author:	Child Risk Committee
Date of Approval:	2019
Date of Scheduled Review:	2022

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



Acceptance and Disclosure Statement

I, (print name)..... do/ do not (circle) have relationship/s to disclose with student/s of the School.

(If there is a disclosure obligation, specify name/s of students and nature of relationship/s)

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If circumstances should change after the signing of this statement, I agree to disclose this by notifying the Principal.

I declare that I have not been charged with nor found guilty of any offence which would be incompatible with my position of trust and responsibility.

Signature: Date:.....