

Policy Title	Staff Code of Conduct (Including Child Safety Code of Conduct)
Date Policy Approved	July 2024
Policy Owner & Position	Board
Team Responsible for Policy	Principal
Authorised by	Board
Who is the Policy for?	All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and onsite contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College
Version Control	Version 5.3
Statutory/ Legislative Requirement	• Privacy Act • Discrimination Acts • Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015
Relevant cross references	• Ballarat Christian College Vision, Purpose, Objects & Values, Child Safety Undertaking, Principles and Statement of Faith • Failure to Disclose Act 2014 • The Family Law Act 1975 • Child Wellbeing Safety Act 2005 • Betrayal of Trust Act 2014 • Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 • Child Safety Policy • Child Safe Standards 2022 • Conflict of Interest Policy • Code of Professional Ethics for the Teaching Profession in Victoria (Victorian Institute of Teaching) • Ballarat Christian College Constitution • Grievance/Complaint Resolution Policy • Student Engagement Policy • Excursions Policy • Staff Handbook • Organisation chart
Include during Induction	Yes
Review Date	2027

Purpose of the Code of Conduct	All employees (including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and contractors) at Ballarat Christian College serve God in their role in accordance with scripture (Ephesians 6:4). Employees are encouraged to always show the fruits of the Spirit, as seen in Galatians 5:22-23. As employees they formally undertake to support the ethos of Ballarat Christian College as a requirement of their presence within the College environment both onsite and offsite and are expected to demonstrate their support for the Vision, Purpose, Objects & Values, Child Safety Undertaking, Principles and Statement of Faith. The purpose of this document therefore is to provide employees of Ballarat Christian College with a set of ethical principles guiding the standards of conduct that they are expected to uphold in their interactions with staff, students, parents, volunteers, each other, contractors and the wider community. <u>All policy, protocols, and procedures stem from the Ballarat Christian College Mission Statement:</u> <i>“Ballarat Christian College exists to provide Christian education which helps each student find the will of God for his or her life, and to provide for each student the human and practical resources, the environment, the encouragement and the opportunities to develop those gifts and talents, to the end that each student will respond to and fulfil the call of God in his or her life.”</i> The Board, Executive Leadership Team, staff, volunteers, visitors, and onsite contractors at Ballarat Christian College are required to abide by this Code. Personnel of Ballarat Christian College are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing, and empowerment to child safety at all times.¹ All employees including staff, , Board members, volunteers, visitors, and onsite contractors of Ballarat Christian College are required to observe child safe principles and expectations of appropriate behaviours towards and in the company of children, as noted below,² and as set out in Ballarat Christian College’s Child Safety Policy.
Responsibility for Management of Code of Conduct	Principal
Code of Conduct	Child Safety The Board, Principal and Executive Leadership Team will: 1. Be responsible for the overall welfare and wellbeing of staff, volunteers, onsite contractors and students. 2. Be accountable for managing and maintaining a duty of care towards staff, volunteers, onsite contractors and students. 3. Nominate a Child Safety Officer(s) to provide information and support to all staff, volunteers, children, young people and their carers, regarding child safety and protection matters.

- All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and onsite contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College will:
- Read and adhere to Ballarat Christian College's Child Safety Policy at all times - upholding Ballarat Christian College's statement of commitment to child safety; and work towards achievement of the mission, values, purposes and aims of the College.
- Hold registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) and maintain the currency of registration (teaching staff only). All other employees are required to hold a valid WWCC card linked to Ballarat Christian College and provide as requested a National Police Check (NPC issued by a state/territory Police authority, or alternatively, an Australia Post National Police Check). Be responsible for relevant administration of programs and activities in their area or given activity to ensure they are consistent with the Child Safety Policy
- Maintain a duty of care towards others involved in these programs and activities
- Establish and maintain a child-safe environment for children and young people in the course of their work to ensure the safety of all
- Be fair, considerate, and honest with others
- Treat children and young people with respect and value their ideas and opinions
- Ensure that giving of gifts to students is only undertaken in the context of a reward or prize in a public setting, where there is no element of secrecy, and with the consent of the Principal or supervisor
- Act as positive role models in their conduct with children and young people
- Children of staff should be managed with an understanding of not causing or creating a conflict of interest
- Staff with children at the College should be mindful that they will be afforded the same access as any other parents/carers and should not receive preferential treatment
- Teachers of staff children should communicate with parents/carers in the same manner that would apply for any other parent or carer. Staff children should not receive preferential treatment or consideration.
- Be professional in their actions
- Maintain strict impartiality
- Comply with specific College guidelines and policies on physical contact with children
- Adhere to the College's guidelines in respect to electronic communication with students, as detailed in the following section of this code: school internet, TASS, electronic mail, mobile phones and other means of electronic communication including social networking sites
- Respect the privacy of children, their families, and teachers/carers and only disclose information to people who have a need to know
- Operate in accordance with the policies and guidelines of Ballarat Christian College, and
- Contact the relevant authorities (Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, Child Protection or Police) should there be a concern that a

child or young person is at risk of abuse or neglect, as set out in the Child Safety Policy

No person including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and onsite contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College shall:

1. Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle, or degrade children or young people.
2. Unlawfully discriminate against any child including Aboriginal children or those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, with a disability.
3. Engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to harm them physically or emotionally.
4. Spend significant time alone with a student other than to perform one's professional duties or without other reasonable explanation.
5. Engage in activities which could be constituted as grooming.
 - a. Initiate unnecessary physical contact with a child or young person or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do for themselves.
 - b. Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily.
 - c. Develop a 'special' relationship with a specific child or young person for their own needs.
 - d. Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention.
 - e. Arrange contact, including online contact, with children or young people outside of the College's programs and activities.
6. Photograph or video a child or young person without the consent of the child and his/her parents or carers.
7. Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
8. Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children or young people.
9. Use inappropriate language in the presence of children and/or young people.
10. Do anything in contravention of the College's policies, procedures, or this Code of Conduct.

Professional and Ethical Conduct

All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors (where applicable) and onsite contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College:

1. Must act in a professional and respectful way that enhances their professional reputation and that of Ballarat Christian College.
2. Should be aware that personal conduct, comments, and lifestyle outside of normal working hours can reflect positively or adversely on the College, and therefore, should act appropriately in the presence of students both within, and outside of, school hours.
3. Must treat fellow colleagues, students, and others within their work environment with the respect and dignity that all deserve.

4. Have a responsibility to comply with duty of care requirements and not be engaged in inappropriate behavior such as illegal, anti-social, scandalous, or disreputable activities which impact adversely on them being seen as appropriate role models for students at the College.
5. Must be acquainted with and adhere to the policies, procedures and expectations that have been made available by the Principal and Executive Leadership Team.
6. Who are uncertain of any aspects of policies, procedures and/or responsibility which apply to them should examine information and seek advice from supervisors or relevant senior staff.
7. Must uphold and comply with:
 - a. applicable Commonwealth, State and Local Laws, regulations, industrial awards, and agreements to ensure the safety of all within the College.
 - b. applicable professional standards and codes of practice that do not conflict with government legislation or Ballarat Christian College's policies and procedures.
 - c. Ballarat Christian College policies, procedures, and responsibilities of staff.
8. Must act promptly in reporting breaches of all relevant legislation, Ballarat Christian College policies and procedures to the Principal or to an Executive Leadership Team member.
9. Are expected to always behave in a way that promotes safety, welfare and wellbeing of students, fellow employees, and others within the workplace environment in accordance with the Child Safe Standards and relevant occupational health and safety legislation.
10. Must perform their work duties competently and responsibly, with a focus on high quality educational services to students both within internal and external environments at the College.
11. Staff must maintain currency of professional competence through appropriate professional development and learning opportunities available to them. This information is to be recorded on a Ballarat Christian College data base.
12. Must maintain the confidentiality of all information used in professional dealings whilst ensuring accuracy and integrity of this data.
13. Staff must only take leave of absence from duties when authorised to do so, ensuring that correct leave forms are completed by the staff member themselves, in accordance with the leave provisions allowed.
14. Are required to ensure that personal appearance and hygiene are important elements of professional presentation.
15. Must ensure that Ballarat Christian College resources are not used inappropriately. Resources include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a. financial information
 - b. materials
 - c. intellectual, information, systems, and knowledge
 - d. work time management to ensure productive outcomes
16. Staff must attend all meetings as required by their Section when working at Ballarat Christian College.

Conflict of Interest

This Policy relates to all employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors (where applicable) and onsite contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College.

It is understood by all parties that a conflict of interest may arise due to parties being involved within the College, in multiple capacities (for example, teachers/contractors as parents and employees).

Once a conflict of interest has been appropriately disclosed, the Executive Leadership Team, (excluding any Executive Leadership Team member/s involved in the conflict) will decide whether those conflicted shall:

- decide on the persons continued involvement in the matter that raised the conflict
- decide on any changes to roles that might need to occur either temporarily or ongoing

Identification and Disclosure

Where an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest is identified (either by the individual themselves or other persons) it must be entered into the Ballarat Christian College Register of Interests as well as being raised with the Executive Leadership Team. The Register of Interests must be maintained by the Company Secretary/Business Manager, and record information related to a conflict of interest (including the nature and extent of the conflicts of interest and any steps to be taken to address it).

Notification of conflict is to be in written form.

Confidentiality of Disclosures

The Executive Leadership Team has access to all the information disclosed.

Duty of Care

All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College have a duty of care to do everything reasonably practical to protect others from foreseeable harm.

All students have a basic and expected right to a physical and emotional environment that is free from detrimental effect to the student's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing by any cause and includes minor harm that is cumulative in nature, and which would result in a detrimental effect of significant nature to the student if allowed to continue.

Amongst other things, harm can be caused by:

- physical, psychological, or emotional abuse or neglect
- sexual abuse or exploitation
- domestic or family violence
- student bullying
- one's own action

All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and onsite contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College:

- Are reminded of their responsibility as prescribed under the Children, Youth and Families 2005 Act (amended 2014), Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014, The Family Law Act 1975, Child Wellbeing Act 2005, Betrayal of Trust Act 2014 and as mandated reporter of child abuse and neglect
- Must actively seek to maintain a physically safe teaching environment for students in accordance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards as set out in the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015
- Must take reasonable steps to prevent harm to students and to support students who have been harmed
- Must not behave in ways that a reasonable person would consider to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating, or threatening. Such conduct might include but not restricted to:
 - Targeting students with unfair or continued criticism
 - Making excessive or unreasonable demands of others
 - And making any form, either oral or written (including electronic communication), of derogatory comments to others within the College community
- Must not engage in conduct that could physically harm a student, and this should be noted especially in cases involving disciplinary action
- Are prohibited to use corporal punishment
- Not use physical intervention with any student, unless it is required to protect themselves, students, and others; it must be a deemed appropriate action providing the intervention is to prevent harm or further harm
- Will ensure interactions with students are, and are seen to be, professional at all times
- Must not engage in grooming or sexual activity with a student
- Must not provide or exchange personal contact details such as telephone numbers or email addresses with students, unless for specific education-related reasons

The following behaviour constitutes either sexual abuse or grooming, and is misconduct:

- Unwarranted and inappropriate touching
- Suggestive remarks or actions of a sexual nature
- Sexual exhibition
- Obscene gestures, language, jokes containing sexual references or deliberately exposing students to sexual behavior of others in any form, other than in the case of prescribed curriculum material in which sexual themes are contextual
- Inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature
- Comments that express a desire to act in a sexual manner
- Personal correspondence (including electronic communication) with a student in respect of the adult's sexual feelings for a student

- Deliberate exposure of student to sexual behaviours of others including display of pornographic material
- Flirtatious behavior directed at a student
- Dating a student
- Spending significant time alone with a student
- Expressing romantic feelings towards a student in any way

Grooming behavior is a process whereby sexual offenders condition and build rapport with children or young persons to reduce their resistance to, and increase compliance with, sexual abuse.

The grooming process can include:

- misleading students by pretending to them that they are special (spending an inappropriate amount of time with students, giving gifts inappropriately, showing special favors, allowing students to overstep the accepted school rules)
- breaking of acceptable school standards of behaviour
- engaging in inappropriate, personalized forms of communication

Employees must discourage and reject any advances of a sexual nature initiated by a student. Should such a situation arise, then staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College must report such instances to the Principal, or delegate, immediately to allow for action to be taken to assist in protecting the student, preventing repetition and avoiding subsequent allegations.

Allegations will be investigated thoroughly in line with the internal investigation procedure outlined in the Child Safety Policy and may involve reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching and the Police as required by circumstances that may have eventuated.

Change Room Arrangements, including Off-Site Excursions

Supervision of students in change rooms must balance safety and the students' right to privacy. The purpose of supervision must be to protect students from abuse by members of the public, other staff or volunteers, contractors, or other students.

Change room supervision must never occur on a one-to-one basis. Change room supervision must be undertaken by a staff member or volunteer of the same gender.

Excursions

Please see separate Excursions Policy and Procedures.

Discrimination and Harassment

All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors and onsite contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College are committed to providing workplaces free from all forms of discrimination, victimisation and harassment.

Common forms include:

- Intimidating harassment
- Bullying
- Sexual harassment

All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College:

- must not discriminate against, victimise, or harass any colleague, student, parent/carer, visitor, volunteer, or contractor nor discriminate in how services are provided to the community
- Have a responsibility to act fairly and evenly towards other employees, students, parents/carers, contractors, visitors, volunteers, and the public in accordance with Ballarat Christian College Policies and relevant legislation including the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 and Equal Opportunity Act 2010

Discrimination, victimisation, or harassment will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with existing policies of Ballarat Christian College, including anti-discrimination and bullying.

Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, other Drugs and Medication

- Smoking is not permitted at Ballarat Christian College, nor within four (4) metres of boundary fences
- Smoking is not permitted whilst employees including staff, volunteers, visitors, and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College
- Use of illicit drugs at any time whilst supervising students, or on school property or school activities is strictly prohibited

All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College:

- Must not provide students with alcohol, nor condone or encourage the illegal use of alcohol (including underage drinking) or excessive consumption of alcohol
- Should endeavor to avoid direct social contact with a student, particularly where student consumption of alcohol or illicit use of drugs is suspected
- Must not consume or be affected by alcohol and/or illicit use of drugs in any circumstances where they are responsible for students
- Must not be under the influence of illicit drugs while on school property or school activities
- Are not permitted to consume alcohol at any event or activity where students may be present such as fetes, barbeques, formals etc.

- At the request of parents/carers and with agreement of appropriately trained staff, staff are authorised to administer prescribed medications in accordance with the directions as advised by the child's doctor and in accordance with school-based policies and procedures

Transporting Students

There may be occasions when it is necessary for a student to travel in the car of a staff member or volunteer. This should occur by exception only and with the agreement of the Principal, or delegate. In such circumstances, parent/carer consent is required that clearly indicates travel arrangements, the College must be satisfied that the driver holds a valid license, the vehicle is safe, insured, and registered. It is advisable to not be alone with a student in the vehicle, especially a student of the opposite gender.

Conflict of Interest

A conflict of interest may exist when an employee, including all staff, volunteers, visitors and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College, is engaged in private interests that have a potential to interfere with the proper performance of his/her work duties.

A potential or actual conflict of interest must be identified and declared to the Principal or Executive Leadership Team staff member to assist to resolve or avoid the conflict in favour of the public interest of the school.

It is understood that conflicts might occur when members work with family members or persons with whom a close personal relationship has developed. Where this exists a potential conflict of interest needs to be noted on file.

All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College who participates in procedures for selection, granting tenure, performance appraisal, termination or transfer of any person who is a family member or with whom they have or have had a close relationship with should declare a potential conflict of interest.

Existence of personal or family relationships should not constitute a bar to the employment, promotion, granting of tenure or transfer of any individual. Private part-time employment including tutoring which conflicts or compromises employment with Ballarat Christian College may also give rise to conflict of interest.

Privacy and Confidentiality

All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College:

- May be entrusted with access to information of a sensitive nature to enable them the ability to carry out their duties. This information must only be used for the work-related purposes that it was intended for
- Must ensure that confidential, private, and sensitive information is handled carefully at all times, and that integrity is maintained in compliance with privacy legislation. Therefore, unless authorised by appropriate legislation, the disclosure of information is prohibited
- Upon leaving employment with the College, must not use confidential information obtained whilst employed for other work or non-work-related purposes

With regards to social media:

- Employees should not act in an unlawful manner when using social media
- Online activities should not interfere with performance of work activities
- Should not disclose information obtained through work
- Views expressed through social media are personal and not related to the College and therefore should be clearly identified as such

Use of College and/or College Resources

All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College:

1. Must ensure all College equipment, resources and consumables are used appropriately for work and productivity of the College.
2. Limited occasional private use of College equipment and resources may occur if it does not adversely affect the performance of work duties of individual's or others, or the business or reputation of the College. Examples include:
 - a. use of private telephone calls
 - b. use of photocopier
 - c. use of internet
3. Must ensure College equipment is maintained and used in accordance with manufacturer requirements - both safe and legal.
4. Must ensure that all electrical items on College premises are checked and tagged.
5. Must obtain approval to use College equipment and/or resources off-site for work purposes and must ensure they remain safe and are stored and secured appropriately.
6. Must not breach copyright laws or licensing arrangements when copying on any device.
7. Must not seek financial gain from work produced, without authorisation from the Principal.

	College Internet, TASS, Electronic Mail, Mobile Phones and other means of Electronic Communication including Social Networking Sites College ICT protocols are to be adhered to at all times. All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College: • Must not use College resources including mobile phones, internet access, electronic mail systems, or other means of electronic communication for: ○ Accessing, storing, or transmitting words, images or other material that are illegal, sexually explicit, violent or that a person might find offensive ○ Gambling ○ Transmitting inappropriate jokes ○ Sending inappropriate programs, mail, or email ○ Excessive use of websites ○ Unauthorised use of College’s email distribution lists • Must not have contact with students by written or electronic format including emails (excluding use of TK5), letters, text messages, chat lines or social networking sites without valid professional reason and consent of the Executive Leadership Team • Must not invite students into personal social networking sites
Procedures for dealing with allegations and apparent breaches of the Code of Conduct	Potential breaches may be addressed in the context of established grievance policies or as detailed in other appropriate school-based policies. In the event of alleged or suspected serious misconduct, the Ballarat Christian College Board will be advised. All employees including staff, Board members, volunteers, visitors, and contractors involved in the care of children and young people on behalf of Ballarat Christian College should be aware of potential consequences if this Code of Conduct is breached. Depending on the nature of the breach, and the individual’s role in organisation, various consequences such as the following may be applied: • Appropriate warnings • Counselling • Reporting such actions to Victorian Institute of Teaching • Demotion • Suspension • Dismissal • Termination of contract • Laying of criminal charges or civil action • Reporting incident to Ballarat Police

Acknowledgement	• Leighland Christian School • Kerang Christian College • St Andrews Christian College • Waverley Christian College • Victoria Registration and Qualification Authority • Victorian Institute of Teaching
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¹ Adapted from VRQA, <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/resources.html>

² Adapted from VRQA, <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/resources.html>³ Adapted from VRQA,

³ <http://www.vrqa.vic.gov.au/childsafe/Pages/resources.html>

⁴ Duty of care in respect to child safety is detailed in the Child Safe Policy.

⁵ As per Ballarat Christian College Student Engagement Policy