



Carmel School Staff (Paid and Volunteer) Code of Conduct (Jan 2019)

The guidelines

Carmel School has developed practice and behaviour guidelines to help safeguard students from abuse or neglect.

Carmel School's staff code of conduct addresses the major areas where staff interact with the students who take part in all events at Carmel School, or at Carmel School events off campus.

NOTE:

Staff are required to report all objectively observable breaches of this Code of Conduct to the Principal or, where the breach observed was committed by the Principal, to the Chair of the school's governing body.

Purpose

The purpose of this code of conduct is to:

- promote child safety in the Carmel School environment
- set standards for staff behaviour and conduct when interacting with our students
- outline the possible consequences should this code of conduct be breached

It is important that all teachers and volunteers read and refer to the [TRBWA document](#) regarding teacher – student professional boundaries.

Scope

All individuals who are working in the Carmel School environment are required to comply with this code of conduct at all times. Such individuals include those who are:

- directly engaged or employed by Carmel School, such as its teachers, non-teaching staff, specialist coaches and music instructors
- a volunteer or a contracted service provider.

The Carmel School environment is any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by Carmel School for use by a child during or outside School hours, and includes:

- our main campuses on Woodrow Ave and 123 Cresswell Rd
- online School environments, including our email and intranet systems
- other locations provided by Carmel School for our student's use, including locations used for School camps, tours, sporting events, excursions, competitions and other events.

Summary of Standards of Conduct

All persons working or volunteering in the Carmel School environment will, to the best of their ability:

- respect the privacy of children
- protect children from violence, abuse, bullying, torment, ridicule and neglect
- protect children from child abuse
- treat everyone in the School community with respect
- maintain a duty of care towards children
- avoid covert or overt sexual behaviours when interacting with children
- maintain appropriate physical and emotional boundaries in their interactions with children
- not possess or use illegal drugs or alcohol when working with children
- behave as positive role models
- listen and respond to the 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/safety of another child
- promote the culture of safety, participation and empowerment of all children, regardless of age, gender, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity or ability
- report immediately to the Child protection authorities. Once you have formed a belief that a child is being sexually abused, you do not need to gain the permission of the Principal to report it.
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) is (are) safe

All persons working or volunteering in the Carmel School environment will not:

- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- behave in a discriminatory way towards children
- engage in conduct towards or in the presence of a child that suggests contempt, ridicule or intolerance because of the child's or another person's race, culture, religion, sex or ability
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate horseplay or sitting on laps)
- engage in prejudicial, oppressive or threatening behaviour towards a child
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- use offensive, profane, discriminatory or abusive language towards or in the presence of a child
- communicate privately with children outside the context of their professional or volunteer relationship
- share inappropriate, private information with students
- be in the presence of a child in the Carmel School environment when under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as offering

favouritism (for example, offering or receiving gifts or special treatment for specific children)

- have any online contact with a child (including by social media, personal email, instant messaging etc) or their family (unless necessary for a legitimate School purpose, eg by providing families with School information or assisting students with their school work)
- take photos or videos of children in the School environment, or publish photos or videos (including online), that are not for authorised School purposes, or taken or published without the authorisation of the child or the child's parents or guardians.

Sexual misconduct

Under no circumstances is any form of 'sexual behaviour' to occur between, with, or in the presence of, students and/or young people at our school. Engaging in sexual behaviour while participating in any event at our school is prohibited even if the young persons involved may be above the legal age of consent.

'Sexual behaviour' needs to be interpreted widely, to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered to be sexual in nature, including but not limited to:

- 'contact behaviour', such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a student through prostitution
- 'non-contact behaviour', such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

Behavioural Management

Carmel School strives to ensure that students participating in our programs and events are aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that we can provide a positive experience for all students and staff. However, there are times when staff may be required to use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure:

- an effective and positive environment
- the safety and/or wellbeing of students, young people or staff at our school.

We require our staff to use strategies that are fair, respectful and appropriate to the developmental stage of the students or young people involved. The student needs to be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect and regulate their behaviour in a positive manner.

Under no circumstances are our staff to take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

Adhering to role boundaries

Staff should not, of their own volition or at the request of a school user, act outside the confines of their duties (as specified in their Job Agreement) when helping to deliver our programs.

School staff must not:

- provide unauthorised transportation, for example, lifts home, to any students in our care
- engage in activities with students outside authorised programs and school events, such as extra play dates or trips
- provide any form of support to a student or their family, unrelated to our school
- seek contact with students or young people outside school.

A staff member may accept an invitation, to attend a private social function of a student **only under the following circumstances:**

- The invitation must be issued by the parent of the student, and
- the parent of the student must be supervising throughout the event.

In circumstances that lie outside 'normal' life cycle events and functions, it is advised that the staff member advise the Head of School regarding their attendance.

If any of our staff become aware of a situation in which a student requires assistance that is beyond the confines of that person's role, or beyond the scope of our organisation's usual role, they should at the earliest opportunity:

- refer the matter to an appropriate support agency or
- refer the student to an appropriate support agency or
- contact the student's parent or guardian or
- seek advice from Carmel School management.

Use of language

Language and/or tone of voice used in the presence of students should:

- provide clear direction, encourage and / or affirm them
- not be harmful to students – in his respect, avoid language that is:
 - discriminatory, racist or sexist
 - derogatory, belittling or negative, for example, by calling a student a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat'
 - intended to threaten or frighten
 - profane or sexual.
 - A commentary on their physical appearance

Supervision

Staff are responsible for supervising the students to ensure those students:

- engage positively with and within our School
- behave appropriately toward one another, for example, no bullying or untoward behaviour
- are in a safe environment and are protected from external threats, for example, supervised at all times with no access for intruders etc.

Our staff are required to avoid one-to-one unsupervised situations with students, and (where possible) to conduct all activities and/or discussions with students in view of other staff.

Use of electronic communications

Electronic communication between staff and students should happen only using the school email server and system. The communication should relate only to school work or school activities.

Where possible, 'whatsapp' groups and Facebook groups with students should be avoided. If they cannot be avoided than the staff member must include another staff member in the communication.

Staff members must not become 'friends' with students over social media. It is advised that staff check their privacy settings on social media to avoid any difficulties that may arise if students are 'friends of friends' in this forum.

Giving gifts

Giving of gifts by staff to students is subject to:

- The gift being in a manner of a reward or prize, and in a public manner
- obtaining prior authorisation from a supervisor or Principal
- parents or other responsible adults being made aware of any gift given.

Photography and images of students

Under these guidelines:

- students may be photographed while involved in our programs and events only if:
 - Parents have not informed Carmel School management in writing that they do not wish for their child to be photographed.
 - the context is directly related to Carmel School activities
 - the student is appropriately dressed and posed
 - the image is taken in the presence of other staff, or in a place where other staff and students have ready access to enter.
- Images are not to be distributed (including as an attachment to an email) to anyone outside our school other than the student photographed or their parent, without management knowledge and approval.
- Photos should not be taken on personal phones or camera. If there is a situation where photos have been taken on a personal phone or camera, these photos should be downloaded onto the Carmel School network as soon as is practicable and immediately be deleted from one's personal files.

Physical contact with students

Any physical contact with students must be appropriate to the delivery of our programs, (such as activities related to outdoor education), and based on the needs of the student (such as to assist or comfort a distressed young person) rather than on the needs of our staff.

Any physical handling of a student, when appropriate to the delivery of programs, must be with prior advice and a clear acknowledgment from the student prior to handling.

Under no circumstances should any Carmel School staff have contact with students that:

- involves touching of:
 - genitals
 - buttocks
 - the breast area (female students)
 - mouthother than as part of delivering medical or allied health services.
- would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation
- is intended to cause pain or distress to the student – for example corporal punishment
- is overly physical – as is, for example, wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing
- is unnecessary – as is, for example, assisting with toileting when a student does not require assistance
- is initiated against the wishes of the student, except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the student/young person or to others, which case:
 - physical restraint should be a last resort
 - the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances, and aimed solely at restraining the student to prevent harm to themselves or others

- the incident must be reported to management as soon as possible.
Any physical contact initiated by a student that is sexual and/or inappropriate must be reported to Head of School as soon as possible.

Toileting Procedure

- When on an excursion off campus with primary students, staff will check the toilets before allowing students to enter. If there is difficulty in checking the toilets of the opposite gender then teachers will endeavor to do so to the best of their ability (calling out prior to entry is one solution).
- During all excursions and all camps, staff will ensure that students go to the toilets in pairs and remain in close proximity to the toilets while students are in there.
- While on Carmel Campus, staff should not use the student toilets.

Overnight stays / sleeping arrangements / Camps

Overnight stays and camps are to occur only with the authorisation of the Principal and of the parents/guardians of the students involved.

Practices and behaviour by our staff during an overnight stay must be consistent with the practices and behaviour expected during delivery of our programs at other times.

Standards of conduct that must be observed by our staff during an overnight stay include:

- providing students with privacy when bathing and dressing
- observing appropriate dress standards when students are present – such as no exposure to adult nudity
- not allowing students to be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the Internet or magazines
- not leaving students under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as hotel staff or friends
- not involving sleeping arrangements that may compromise the safety of students such as unsupervised sleeping arrangements, or an adult sleeping in the same bed as a student.
- the right of students to contact their parents, or guardian, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed during the stay
- parents expecting that their students can, if they wish, make contact.

Change room arrangements

Staff are required to supervise students in change rooms while balancing that requirement with a student's right to privacy. In addition:

- staff should avoid one-to-one situations with a student in a change room area. Where this is not possible due to age or specific requirements, another staff member should be in the vicinity and able to access if needed
- staff are not permitted to use the change room area to undress, while students are present

- staff need to provide the level of supervision required for preventing abuse by members of the public, adult school users, peer school users, or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a student's privacy
- female staff are not to enter male change rooms and male staff are not to enter female change rooms. In the case of primary swimming lessons there may be a case where female staff need to enter the male change room to assist students.

Use, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs

While on duty, or on the school premises, or on premises at which a school function, event, camp, trip or excursion is being conducted, staff must not:

- use, consume, possess or be under the influence of any illegal substance
- consume alcohol
- smoke tobacco
- be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs`.

At no time may staff supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to students.

Staff are able to have 'after work drinks and nibbles' and alcohol may be served at staff only functions. However, even at these events, which have a casual and relaxed atmosphere, staff need be mindful that their behaviour remains appropriate and befitting that of a Carmel School employee.

Staff are to be mindful of not being under the influence of alcohol in the presence of students while at communal or social events outside of school hours.

Use of prescribed or other medications is permitted, provided such use does not interfere with the ability to care for students or undertake any duty associated with the staff member's employment.

Transporting students

Students may be transported only in circumstances that are directly related to school activities, but they may not be given casual lifts.

Students are to be transported only with prior authorisation from the Principal and from the student's parent/guardian. Gaining approval involves providing information about the proposed journey, including:

- the form of transport proposed, such as private car, taxi, self-drive bus, bus with driver, train, plane or boat
- the reason for the journey
- the route to be followed, including any stops or side trips
- details of anyone who will be present during the journey other than our staff, who are involved in delivering our programs, schools and events
- Staff may not be 1:1 in a car with a student, therefore at least 2 students, or 2

staff members in the car at all times.