

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STAFF AND OTHERS WHO INTERACT WITH STUDENTS

The professional conduct of staff, volunteers and others who interact with students is characterised by the quality of the relationship they have with colleagues, students, parents and the school community.

The code of conduct identifies a set of principles which are developed in accordance with the relevant regulatory bodies and is designed to comply with the **Ministerial Order No 1359 - Implementing the Child Safety Standards - Managing the risk of child-abuse in schools and school boarding premises**. It also accounts for the teachings of Islamic values and ethical norms to help guide staff in their dealings and interactions with members of the school community. These principles provide general guidelines by describing the *professional conduct*, *personal conduct* and *professional competence* of an individual.

This Code of Conduct must be read in conjunction with the Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Code of Conduct and Code of Ethics, Policy for Mandatory Reporting of Physical or Sexual Abuse, Critical Incident Policy, Child Safe Policy, Child Safety Risk Management Policy, Virtual Classes Staff Code of Conduct Policy and Staff Guidelines for Safe and Responsible Use of Web Tools and Electronic Publishing.

PURPOSE:

- To uphold adherence to regulatory requirements, ethical values and religious ethos as recommended by the Child Safe Standards and Islamic values;
- to promote a culture of respect, trust and safety;
- to promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children;
- to provide guidance for staff in their everyday conduct;
- to affirm the accountability of the teaching profession; and
- to promote community confidence in the teaching profession and in Darul Ulum College's staff members.

Section 1: Professional Conduct

A) Relationship with Students

Staff (and visitors where applicable) must:

- 1.1 Adhere to the College's Child Protection and Child Safe policies and uphold the College's statement on commitment to child safety at all times.
- 1.2 Take all responsible and reasonable measures to protect students from all types of abuse.
- 1.3 Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- 1.4 Respect every child and their ability.
- 1.5 Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability.
- 1.6 Demonstrate cultural and religious sensitivity.
- 1.7 Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children, including children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- 1.8 Know their learners and how they learn, respect individual differences and cater for individual abilities.
- 1.9 Accept professional responsibility for the provision of quality teaching.
- 1.10 Maintain a safe and challenging learning environment.
- 1.11 Have high expectations of every learner, and recognise and develop individual's abilities, skills and talents.
- 1.12 Model and engage in respectful and impartial language and behaviour.
- 1.13 Only speak in English when communicating with students whilst on school premises unless it occurs for the purpose of teaching and learning another language in class.
- 1.14 Display the conduct of a positive role model.
- 1.15 Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children
- 1.16 Listen to every child and follow through with their concerns.
- 1.17 Ensure as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child. If a need arises, ensure to keep the door open or maintain a clear view during individual interactions. This is applicable to all school activities including tutorials, camps, excursions and incursions.
- 1.18 Promote an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact and socialise.
- 1.19 Intervene in a timely manner when students display inappropriate behaviour, bully one another or act in a humiliating or vilifying way.
- 1.20 Ensure as quickly as possible that all students are safe if any allegation of child abuse is made.
- 1.21 Encourage students to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.
- 1.22 Listen to and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and / or are worried about their safety or the safety of another.
- 1.23 Report any breaches of this Code of Conduct or Child Safe Policy to the Principal or relevant Head of School immediately.
- 1.24 Call police on 000 for any immediate concerns pertaining to a student's safety.
- 1.25 Only use behaviour management strategies and consequences outlined in the college's

Behaviour Management Policy and aimed at supporting positive change.

- 1.26 Respect a learner's privacy in sensitive matters - such as health or family issues - and only reveal confidential matters when appropriate to the relevant school personnel or when required by law.

A professional relationship will be violated if a staff member:

- 1.27 Uses put downs, passes judgements on a student's character / habits, screams or yells at students, displays prejudice or compares children with one another in any way or form.
- 1.28 Engages in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal matters).
- 1.29 Touches a learner without a valid reason.
- 1.30 Publicly disciplines or humiliates a student as a consequence of negative behaviour or as an 'example' to other students.
- 1.31 Invites, allows, or encourages students to attend the staff member's home.
- 1.32 Tutors own students outside school hours without the college's directions or approval.
- 1.33 Transports a student unaccompanied and without the preapproval and the consent of the student's parents.
- 1.34 Labels children or uses any form of discrimination or acts of prejudice based on colour, origin, background, ethnicity, gender, appearance or disability.
- 1.35 Uses any form of obscene gestures or language.
- 1.36 Discusses personal lifestyle details of self, other staff or children unless directly related to the learning topic and with the individual's consent.
- 1.37 Develops any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children).
- 1.38 Accepts gifts, which could be reasonably perceived as being used to influence them, from learners or their parents / carers / families.
- 1.39 Engages in communications with a learner beyond the boundaries of a professional relationship without a valid reason, including via written / electronic / online means (including social media).
- 1.40 Takes or publishes (including online) photos or recordings of a student without the school's and parent's consent. Where consent is given, such images or recordings can solely be for school purposes and must be transferred from the personal device to a school file within one week and must be deleted from the personal device.
- 1.41 Recites on students and/or staff rituals as a means of spiritual treatment/healing.

B) Relationship with colleagues

Staff demonstrate collegiality by:

- 1.1 Displaying courtesy and engaging in respectful relationships.
- 1.2 Helping to promote an Islamic and caring environment.
- 1.3 Sharing expertise and knowledge in a variety of collaborative contexts.
- 1.4 Sharing information to support the teaching, wellbeing and safety of learners.
- 1.5 Abstaining from making negative comments or discriminatory remarks about a staff member, their skills, knowledge or performance, to students, colleagues, parents or other pupils.
- 1.6 Refraining from mingling with the other gender on the school's public grounds unless related to each other (being a *mahram*).
- 1.7 Resorting to the conflict resolution procedures when a dispute arises without compromising the respectful relationship.

When dealing / interacting with colleagues, staff must refrain from:

- 1.8 Telling jokes that exceed ethical boundaries.
- 1.9 Exchanging of gifts between opposite genders.
- 1.10 Getting involved as a mediator in family resolutions, irrespective of position and status professional background.
- 1.11 Offering monetary help, seeking monetary help or borrowing money.
- 1.12 Promoting or buying/selling products / services of any type.
- 1.13 Collecting donations or alms on behalf of an individual or any given organisation.
- 1.14 Communicating in a language other than English in a public space and in the presence of others who do speak the language.
- 1.15 Communicating with the other gender on weekends or after hours for school/work related matters. All work-related communication must take place during working hours.
- 1.16 Using any form of social media/chatting forums to converse with the other gender, be it for work related matters or personal matters during working hours.
- 1.17 Holding conversations of a personal nature with the other gender or contacting a colleague via written / electronic means (including email, letters, telephone, text messages or chat lines) without a valid context.
- 1.18 Passing comments or remarks about personal issues which may include family grievances.
- 1.19 Passing comments or sharing / discussing private information about students or their families.
- 1.20 Accusing individuals in any context or circumstance. Staff must resort to conflict resolution procedures if a dispute arises.
- 1.21 Any engagement or conversation about controversial topics, including unethical matters pertaining to black magic or the like.

C) Relationship with parents / guardians

Staff members work in collaborative relationships with learners' families by adhering to the following:

- 1.1 Maintaining a respectful and professional conversation at all times.
- 1.2 Parents should only be contacted for their cooperation and for any concerns in regards to a student's academic performance, behaviour or wellbeing in a timely and respectful manner.
- 1.3 When providing constructive feedback to parents, substantiate the feedback with evidence, (for example work samples, exercise books, reader covers, homework book, discipline folder with evidence of misbehaviour or any other relevant material).
- 1.4 Avoid disclosing any information about a particular child to any stranger except to his/her mother, father or legal guardian to avoid breach of privacy.

Section 2: Personal Conduct

Teachers reflect community expectations in their personal conduct by:

- 2.1 Being positive role models in education settings, in the community and online.
- 2.2 Respecting and complying with the law.
- 2.3 Not exploiting their position for an inappropriate personal or financial benefit.
- 2.4 Ensuring their personal or financial interests do not interfere with the performance of their duties.
- 2.5 Abstaining from promoting commercial / financial interests.
- 2.6 Acting with discretion and maintaining confidentiality in all communications concerning their professional teaching responsibilities.
- 2.7 Being aware of the potentially serious impact that any demonstration of intolerance or prejudice could have on the safety and wellbeing of children, their standing as a teacher or the profession as a whole.

Section 3: Professional Competence

Teachers value their professionalism, and set and maintain high standards of competence by:

- 3.1 Being knowledgeable in their areas of expertise.
- 3.2 Are committed to pursuing their own professional learning.
- 3.3 Engage in reflective practice and identify professional learning needs.
- 3.4 Are able to demonstrate how their practice meets the Australian professional standards for teachers.
- 3.5 Complete their duties in a responsible and thorough manner.

Teachers must comply with the legal requirements of:

- mandatory reporting and other reporting obligations;
- the principle of negligence, which includes duty of care;
- laws preventing discrimination, harassment and vilification;
- protection of privacy;
- occupational health and safety; and
- teacher registration.

Teachers must be aware of:

- Child Safe Standards;
- Reportable Conduct;
- Islamic obligations towards children;
- United nations convention on the rights of the child; and
- any other relevant legislation, policies or regulations that pertain to the role of a teacher in child safety and wellbeing.

Addendum

Upholding the school ethos and vision / mission statements

The values that underpin our profession are integrity, respect and responsibility. As a faith based school, staff are expected to uphold the school ethos by:

1. Respecting and supporting the school's approach pertaining to its religious philosophy and values as per the vision statement.
2. Refraining from making negative comments/degrading remarks which may have a negative impact on the school's reputation and integrity, inside and/or outside the school
3. Adhere to the school's dress code policy.
4. Actively partaking in congregational prayers, *Ta'leem* and the school's religious professional development sessions (where applicable).
5. Refraining from criticising school policies and procedures. Staff must use appropriate channels to constructively raise concerns and grievances.
6. Refraining from promoting any religious sectarian ideologies or political views.

Prohibited actions (general)

Consistent with the child safe policy, teacher duties and responsibilities policy and other relevant school policies, staff must refrain from the following:

1. Use of mobile phones or other irrelevant electronic devices when on active duty i.e. teaching in class and / or any other rostered duties.
2. Eating and / or drinking while on active duty.
3. Socialising during active duties, especially during yard duties (i.e. with students, staff, parents or others) whereby one fails to carry out effective supervision.
4. Leaving students unsupervised in the classroom or in any other area, including excursions.
5. Leaving yard duty responsibilities prior to the arrival of the replacement yard duty staff member.
6. Leaving students unattended after yard duties despite the bell ringing.
7. Leaving school grounds without permission, excluding lunch break.
8. Distributing / promoting school irrelevant print or non-print material.
9. Interfering with duties and responsibilities of other staff when not empowered.
10. Using social media during school hours with the exception of lunch breaks.
11. Engage in any social media activities, during school hours or after hours, in a manner that may compromise the college's reputation.
12. Organising class parties.
13. Arranging food sharing activity amongst students or provision of food to students unless it is:
 - a. a school approved activity ordered through the Purchasing Department; and
 - b. it is a teaching/learning activity ordered through the School whereby the order must be preapproved by the relevant Head of School.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

It is the staff member's responsibility to read and familiarise him/herself with all College policies as they are made available.

Lack of awareness or familiarity of policy is NOT an excuse for breach of policy.

I have read and understood this Code of Conduct and the VIT Code of Ethics.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Date of Review	Next Review
Term 1, 2022	Term 1, 2024
Principal's Endorsement: <i>A. Ceballos</i>	