

# HHA Child Safety Code of Conduct

## Rationale:

Hester Hornbrook Academy (HHA) has zero tolerance to child abuse and is committed to the protection and wellbeing of all students whilst participating in school activities both during and outside school hours. We hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school.

## Purpose:

This Child Safety Code of Conduct has a specific focus on safeguarding children and young people at Hester Hornbrook Academy against sexual, physical, psychological, and emotional abuse or neglect. The Child Safety Code of Conduct applies to all physical and online environments used by students. It also applies during or outside of school hours and in other locations provided by the school for student use (for example, a school camp).

All staff, volunteers, contractors, and community members of HHA are required to undertake child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

## Acceptable Behaviours:

All HHA staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of our school community involved in child-connected work, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Adhering to HHA's Child Safety Policy at all times
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from abuse
- Treating students and families in the school community with respect – both in our school environment and outside our school environment as part of normal social and community activities. Modelling positive and respectful relationships and act in a manner that always sustains a safe learning environment.
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children and young people, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child or young person has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child or young person

- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification.)
- Ensuring racism in the organisation is identified, confronted, and not condoned or permitted. Any instance of racism will be reported to the Principal and HHA will follow appropriate consequences.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero-tolerance policy towards discrimination).
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children or young people with a disability, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTIQA+) students
- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not alone with a child or young person – one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult.
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Head of Campus and/or Principal immediately
- Understanding and complying with all reporting and disclosure obligations as they relate to child safety, mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) and the **PROTECT** Four Critical Actions.
- Reporting any child or young person's safety concerns to a member of the HHA Leadership team immediately.
- If child abuse is suspected or 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 or young people that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)

- Exhibit behaviours with children or young people in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context and/ or as unnecessarily physical (for example, inappropriate sitting on laps)
- Put children or young people at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or young people or do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children or young people (for example, personal social activities)
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children or young people
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children or young people
- Discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance
- Ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- Discriminate against any child or young person, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity, or disability
- Have contact with a child/young person or their family outside of the work of the school without the knowledge of the of a member of the HHA Leadership Team/or consent (for example, unauthorised after-hours tutoring, private instrumental/other lessons or sporting coaching, professional discussions in the community); accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street is appropriate
- Have any online contact with a child or young person (including by social media, email, SMS, instant messaging, Facebook and any other social media platform or application etc.) or their family (unless necessary e.g. by providing families with e-newsletters, school emails or assisting students with their school work). Except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to schoolwork or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter.
- 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 or young person without the consent of the parent or guardians.

- Work with children while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Consume alcohol or drugs at school or at a school event in the presence of children or young people.

### **Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct**

All HHA staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member of the school community involved in child-connected work who breach this Child Safety Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary procedures in accordance with their employment agreement or relevant industrial instrument, professional code or terms of engagement.

In instances where a reportable allegation has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the schools Reportable Conduct Procedure and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police. All breaches and suspected breaches of the HHA Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal (1800 517 218). If the breach or suspected breach relates to the Principal, contact the HHA MCM Business Partner (1800 517 218).

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (insert staff member name), confirm that I have been provided with a copy of the above Code of Conduct.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have completed this staff declaration form as a mean of confirming my understanding of the conduct required by me to ensure I adhere to the child safe requirements for school staff at all times.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Safeguarding Children and Young People**

**Declaration of Contact with Children and Families**

The Safeguarding Children and Young People Code of Conduct lists a number of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (staff member name), declare below any contact with a student and/or family that I have outside of school of a personal or formal nature that requires the permission of the Principal.

Details of contact (including type of contact, reason and frequency).

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Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_ (Principal HHA) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Principal's permission granted/not granted

Comments:

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Signed:

\_\_\_\_\_ (staff member/volunteer) Date: