WERRIBEE SECONDARY COLLEGE

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CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

Date	January 2025	**Review Cycle**	2 Years	**Approved By**	College Council, Principal

INTERPRETER SERVICE

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact our college on 9741 1822 or werribee.sc@education.vic.gov.au so interpreters may be arranged via VITS or local services.

On commencement of employment, and again at the beginning of each new school year, all WSC staff must read and accept the digital form version of this same Child Safety Code of Conduct.

PURPOSE

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets out the expected behaviour of adults with children and young people in our school.

All Werribee Secondary College staff, volunteers, contractors, service providers, school council members and any other adult involved in child-connected work must follow the Child Safety Code of Conduct.

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).

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ACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

As Werribee Secondary College 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 the Werribee Secondary College's Child Safe Policy and upholding the College's statement of commitment to child safety at all times.
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- treating everyone with respect (we speak civilly and respectfully with students or adults, avoid embarrassing anyone particularly in front of others, speak in a way in which we would like to be spoken)

- listening and responding 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
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LQBTIQ+) students.
- not questioning a child's gender identification or sexual orientation
- ensuring that adults are not left alone with a child except where / when necessary (e.g. confidential counselling by wellbeing or careers personnel in 'visible settings')
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns to the Director of Student Wellbeing and Inclusion or Principal Class, and ensuring any allegation is reported to the relevant authorities.
- understand and comply with all reporting and disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures and the PROTECT Four Critical Actions.
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe by mitigating the risk (e.g. changing classes)
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them

UNACCEPTABLE BEHAVIOURS

As Werribee Secondary College staff, volunteers, contractors and member of our school community involved in child-connected work we must not:

- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm, or pass judgment, whether the information comes from a child or an adult.
- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as 'grooming' or 'favouritism' (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- display behaviours or engage with students in ways that are not justified by the educational or professional context
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (avoid touching a student in any way, unless to prevent injury to themselves or others); necessary physical contact (e.g. demonstrating throwing actions in a PE class) should occur in a public space
- ignore an adult's overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour towards a student
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking classroom or office doors); in low visibility rooms, leave the door open and do not stand between the student and the door
- 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 in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities).
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children ('inappropriate' includes swearing, adult themes, lewd jokes, discussions of alcohol or drug use), or, discuss intimate topics or use sexualised language, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against or treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity
- have social contact with a child or their family outside of the College without the Principal's knowledge and/or consent (e.g. no babysitting, attending parties or gatherings) – Accidental and fleeting contact, such as seeing people in the street, is usually considered appropriate, but if in any doubt of the interaction, needs to be discussed with the Principal.
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) 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
- have any online/social media contact with a child or their family (unless necessary)
- photograph, video or audio record a child or student in a school environment except in accordance with the Photographing, Filming and Recording Students policy or where required for duty of care purposes or pre-approved by the Principal and parents/carers.
- run clubs or activities without the knowledge and/or approval of the Principal registering student participation (e.g. a roll)
- consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present.
- be dressed in clothing deemed unsuitable for working with, and in the company of, children.
- have non-professional communication with parents or students *(i.e. discussions not related to school)* and limit correspondence to office hours on school days, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought.

BREACHES TO THE CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

All Werribee Secondary College 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 Department of Education and Training Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Werribee Secondary College Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal, or the Director of Student Wellbeing and Inclusion (unless either is the named party). If the breach or suspected breach relates to the above-named contacts, notify another member of the Principal Class.

If reporting breaches or suspected breaches relate to the principal then please contact South Western Regional Office, 03 8397 0303.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

For risks of a non-urgent nature:
Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS): 1300 664 977
Child First: 1300 775 160
IRIS Alert (DET): 9589 6266

ACCEPTANCE OF CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

(It is preferred staff submit the digital acceptance form)

By observing these standards, you acknowledge acceptable and unacceptable behaviours outlined in this code of conduct as well as your understanding and responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the Principal Class or Director of Student Wellbeing and Inclusion:

Name: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____