

Yarrowonga College P-12 is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our school community recognises the importance of, and a responsibility for, ensuring our school is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement Child Protection legislation, Department of Education policy, school policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The Principal and school leaders of Yarrowonga College P-12 will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide an inclusive, safe and orderly school and other learning environments. The Principal and school leaders of Yarrowonga College P-12 will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

PURPOSE

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

All 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 and are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below.

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 (including social media) and in other locations provided by the school for student use (for example, a school camp).

Acceptable behaviours

As school staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work individually, we are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Upholding the school's commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's Child Safe Policy and Statement of Commitment to Child Safety.
- Treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school environment as a part of normal social and community activities.
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they disclose that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety or the safety of another child.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Koorie 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 (LGBTIQ+) students.

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- Ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a child and that 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 or other child safety concerns to a member of the Principal group or Student Engagement & Wellbeing team.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) in line with our child safety responding and reporting policy and procedures and the [PROTECT Four Critical Actions](#).
- If child abuse is suspected or an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the school community involved in child-related work we must not:

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts or special treatment)
- Display behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, professional, or service delivery context
- Put children at risk of abuse (e.g. by locking doors)
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual language or innuendo with students, except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance (such as in the context of parental guidance or a therapeutic setting)
- Discriminate against or treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
- 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 school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter.
- Photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes ^s¹
- Consume alcohol against school policy or take illicit drugs in the school environment or at school events where students are present

¹ SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/photoandfilm.aspx> . The policy says the school should get consent before taking and publishing photos of a student. This applies every time a photo is taken. The same policy applies for excursions and school activities.

- Have contact with any student outside of school hours except when needed to deliver the school curriculum or professional guidance and parental permission has been sought.
- College Staff are not permitted to make or accept “friend” requests with students on social medial.
- In the school environment or at other school events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy² or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

Breaches to the Child Safety Code of Conduct

All Yarrowonga College P-12 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 Pri[or other governing authority] Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy and may be subject to referral to Victoria Police.

All breaches and suspected breaches of the Yarrowonga College P-12 Child Safety Code of Conduct must be reported to the Principal.

If the breach or suspected breach relates to the Principal, contact current Goulburn Area SEIL directly or via Regional Office on 03 5785 3124

Approval and review

Created date	19th August 2022
Consultation	5 th September 2022
Endorsed by	YCP-12 School Council
Endorsed on	13 th September 2022
Next review date	September 2024

Resources & References:

Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools, Ministerial Order 870, Standards 1 – 7.
 Section 3b) The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct
 Yarrowonga College P-12 Child Safe Policy & Statement of Commitment
 Student Engagement & Wellbeing Policy
 Reporting and Responding Obligations (Mandatory Reporting) Policy & Procedures

² SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/alcohol.aspx>. The policy says the school must obtain school council approval before alcohol can be consumed on school grounds or at a school activity. The policy says staff members should not consume alcohol during camps and excursions. It is silent on whether they can consume alcohol at other school events where students are present, this is a matter that the school needs to decide upon – draft text is provided in the guidance fact sheet