

# Student Safety Code of Conduct

## November 2022



Brigidine College is committed to providing students with a caring, nurturing and protective learning environment. Learning in a safe and nurturing environment may underpin students' capacity for learning and maximise potential for personal development and ultimately enhance their wellbeing and life opportunities.

The Student Safety Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviours and acceptable and unacceptable relationships.

The Student Safety Code of Conduct helps to protect children from harm.

When individuals are clear about behavioural expectations, they are much more likely to act appropriately with each other and with children. When everyone is educated about the Code of Conduct and the reasons it is so important to uphold, the College environment becomes more transparent and people are accountable for their behaviour.

This Code of Conduct is made available to all employees, volunteers, families and students and is reviewed annually.

This Code of Conduct applies to:

- all College employees, including non-teaching staff and temporary or casual staff
- volunteers (of all types)
- students
- parents and guardians
- third party contractors and service providers (including External Education Providers)
- members of the College Board
- work experience students and pre-service teachers on professional experience at the College
- visitors

### **Student Safety Code of Conduct**

The Student Safety Code of Conduct outlines appropriate standards of behaviour for all adults towards students. The Code serves to protect students, reduce any opportunities for abuse or harm to occur, and promote student safety within the College environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. Where an employee breaches the Code, the College may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal.

The College has the following expectations of behaviours and boundaries for all adults interacting with students within the College community.



# Student Safety Code of Conduct

## DO

- Comply with all policies, guidelines procedures and reporting processes published by the College with respect to student protection.
- Behave as a positive role model to students.
- Promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students.
- Be vigilant and proactive with regard to student safety and child protection issues.
- Provide age appropriate supervision for students.
- Treat all students with respect.
- Use positive and affirming language toward students.
- Encourage students to 'have a say' and then listen to them with respect.
- Promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students.
- Respect cultural, religious and political differences.
- Help provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact and socialise.
- Intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way.
- Report any breaches of this Student Safety Code of Conduct.
- Report concerns about student safety.
- Ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met.
- Where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe.
- Call the Police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety.
- Respect the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.
- Handle all personal information in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy.



# Student Safety Code of Conduct

## DO NOT

- Engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour.
- Use prejudice, oppressive behaviour or inappropriate language with students.
- Express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of students or discriminate against any student based on culture, race, ethnicity, disability or sexuality.
- Engage in open discussions of an adult nature that is offensive or inappropriate to the age and/or maturity of the student in their presence.
- Engage in any form of sexual conduct with a student including making sexually suggestive comments and sharing sexually suggestive material.
- Engage in inappropriate or unnecessary physical conduct or behaviours including doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves.
- Engage in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriate rough physical play.
- Use physical means or corporal punishment to discipline or control a student.
- Engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm.
- Develop 'special' relationships with students that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students).
- Engage in undisclosed private meetings with a student that is not your own child.
- Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- Personal devices must not be used to take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without prior consent from the College or parent/guardian.
- Post online any information about a student that may identify them such as their: full name; age; e-mail address; telephone number; residence; school; or details of a club or group they may attend.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.



# Student Safety Code of Conduct

## Communicating with Students

- Staff **must not** be 'friends' with any student on any form of social media eg Facebook, Snapchat.

An exception to this requirement is when prior written approval for the connection has been obtained from the Principal on the basis that an employee and a student will appropriately interact within the valid context of a legitimate purpose (for example, both are family members/relatives/family friends, or both are members of a community sporting team and interactions are purely for the purpose of participating in that sport). The staff member must ensure that they do not breach professional standards in these interactions.

- Staff **must not** communicate with students via mobile phone (voice or text). Staff must use official College communications channels to communicate with students.
- Students **must** communicate with staff using their College account. Staff must politely and professionally redirect the student to the College communications channels in the event a student contacts them outside of an official College communication channel. The staff member must copy their manager on the response to the communication to ensure transparency. Staff who do not have College email accounts (coaches/tutors) must communicate via their College Manager.
- Contact with past students may be appropriate if it is in relation to official College functions and activities, eg arranging alumni activities. College communications channels must be used and it may be appropriate to use the former student's personal contact details. All communications must be transparent and must remain polite and professional in nature.

A relationship with a person who was previously the teacher's student, may be lawful but may still generate concerns that a teacher may previously have abused their position or crossed professional boundaries by using their position as a teacher to prepare a student for a relationship. A teacher may, for example, find that concerns arise as to whether a relationship with a former student arose from a breach of professional boundaries, including grooming behaviour while the former student was under the care of the teacher. If the emotional intimacy of the relationship developed while a teacher-student relationship existed, the teacher will have abused their position. By ensuring that a teacher's relationships with his or her students are strictly professional and do not breach boundaries, a teacher who forms a relationship with a former student will be less likely to come under scrutiny, if considerable time has passed between the time when the student was at school and the commencement of the relationship.<sup>1</sup>The Student Protection Program includes guidance for all staff and volunteers (direct and indirect) on how to maintain professional boundaries between students and adults at the College.

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<sup>1</sup> Source (accessed 19 May 2022)

<https://www.trb.wa.gov.au/DesktopModules/mvc/TrbDownload/PublishedDoc.aspx?number=D19/065558>

This section was adapted and developed from information published by the Government of South Australia – Department of Education & Child Development - page 10 of "Protective practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people –Guidelines for staff working and volunteering in education and care settings, June 2005, [https://www.decd.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/protective\\_practices\\_for\\_staff\\_in\\_their\\_interactions\\_with\\_children\\_and\\_young\\_people.pdf?v=1455240007](https://www.decd.sa.gov.au/sites/g/files/net691/f/protective_practices_for_staff_in_their_interactions_with_children_and_young_people.pdf?v=1455240007) at 20 August 2019.

Additional information (accessed 19 May 2022):

[Professional Boundaries videos – Rachel Drew Lawyer and Partner Holding Redlich Brisbane](#)

[Professional Boundaries – A Guideline for Queensland Teachers](#)



# Student Safety Code of Conduct

The Program also includes information for members of the College Board, employees and direct contact volunteers as to how to identify key risk indicators of child abuse and how to report child abuse concerns to one of our College's nominated Student Protection Contacts.

It also contains detailed procedures with respect to the reporting of child abuse incidents to relevant authorities.

## Report any concerns

Third party contractors, external education providers, indirect contact volunteers, students, parents or other community members who have concerns that a child may be subject to abuse are asked to contact the Principal or the Dean of Student Formation. Where the complaint is about the Principal, the Board Chair should be contacted. Complainants must not make direct contact with the person who is or potentially is the source of the concern.

Further information may be obtained from the College's Student Protection Guidelines and Student Protection Processes, which are available on the College's website.

Contact the College Reception in person or by calling 07 3870 7225.

Communications will be treated confidentially on a 'need to know basis' and all personal information will be dealt with in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy.

Whenever there are concerns that a child is in immediate danger, the Police should be contacted on 000.

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Approved by Brendan Cahill  
Principal of Brigidine College Indooroopilly



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Signature of Brendan Cahill  
2022