CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

INTRODUCTION

Victory Christian College (VCC) is committed to creating and maintaining a child-safe and child-friendly environment, where children and young people are safe and feel safe. It is vital that we are diligent ambassadors for child safety as an expression of our Christian values and ethos.

AIMS

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, college policies and procedures, and professional standards, codes, or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

DEFINITIONS

Child abuse
This term includes physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, family violence, neglect, grooming and forced marriage of children. The legal definitions of 'child' and 'young person' are outlined more specifically in the Child Protection policies (Mandatory Reporting, Grooming, Failure to Disclose and Failure to Protect)

Child Safety Champions
Child Safety Champions are staff nominated to support the principal to implement our child safety policies and practices, including staff and volunteer training. The Child Safety Champions include the Chaplain and Year Level Coordinators. The Child Safety Champions are responsible for assisting staff to make reports.

Potentially vulnerable children
In the context of this code of conduct, the term 'potentially vulnerable children' pertains to children and young people who are:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- from religiously, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- living with disabilities
- unable to live at home (including international students)
- impacted by family violence
- expressing romantic or sexual attraction to people not of the opposite sex, whether they describe themselves as lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual or otherwise
- expressing a sense of personal identity inconsistent with their biological sex whether they describe themselves as trans, gender diverse, queer or otherwise
- living with a difference/disorder of sexual development, whether they describe themselves as intersex or not
- very young
- dealing with prior trauma, including many refugee children
- living in remote locations
- currently going through an adverse life event
- likely to have fewer connections to trusted adults and less confidence or ability to speak out, including children whose additional safety needs are not being addressed by the adults around them

Please note that students may have overlapping or cumulative risk factors.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Principal and College leaders of Victory Christian College will support the implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide an inclusive, safe and orderly school including other learning environments such as camps and excursions. They will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, volunteers, contractors, Board members and any other member of the College community involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all school situations, including school camps, excursions and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Further information about VCC's commitment and strategies regarding child safety are detailed in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Acceptable behaviours

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

- Upholding the College's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the College's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Treating all students and families in the College community with respect both within the College environment and outside the College environment as part of normal social and community activities
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of all students, particularly **potentially vulnerable students** (see definitions).
- Understanding all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse in line with the obligations set out in the Child Protection- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Reporting other child safety concerns (that do not amount to a mandatory report being needed) to the Child Safety Champions in line with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- If child abuse is suspected, 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 College 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)
- Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily and for more than a very short time
- Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context
- Ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- Use sexual innuendo with students
- Discuss content of a sexual nature, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of delivering the curriculum content or a therapeutic setting with a trained counsellor.

- Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, beliefs 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 schoolwork 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 college policy (i.e. ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy) or where required for duty of care purposes
- In the College environment or at other College events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to college policy, smoke cigarettes or the like including e-cigarettes or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
- Bullying and Harassment Policy
- Camps and Excursions Policy
- Child Protection- Failure to Disclose Policy
- Child Protection- Failure to Protect Policy
- Child Protection- Grooming Policy
- Child Protection- Mandatory Reporting Policy
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Gender Identity Administrative Guidelines
- ICT and Internet Acceptable Use Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Student diary entry- Child Protection Fact Sheet and PROTECT Child Protection Poster
- Swimming Policy
- Visitors Policy
- Volunteers Policy