



Child Safe Code of Conduct

1. PURPOSE

This Child Safe 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 child safety in the College environment. It provides guidance on how to best support students and how to avoid or better manage difficult situations. The MLC Board has endorsed this Child Safe Code of Conduct.

2. SCOPE

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to:

- all staff members, including non-teaching staff and temporary or casual staff;
- the College Board of Directors;
- Volunteers;
- parents and carers;
- Third Party Contractors;
- External Education Providers;
- Teacher candidates or other tertiary students on placement at the College;
- visitors.

Certain staff members, Volunteers and Contractors at the College may have professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate their profession or occupation. These codes of conduct must also be complied with. In the event that the staff member, Volunteer or Contractor considers that there is a conflict between these codes of conduct and the Child Safe Code of Conduct in a particular matter, the relevant staff member, Volunteer or Contractor must seek advice from their profession or occupational body and/or the Senior Child Protection Officer and must advise the Principal of their proposed course of action.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies across all College environments, including all MLC campuses (Kew, the Boarding House, MLC Banksia and MLC Marshmead), both during and outside school hours, within and outside the physical school environment (excursions, camps and tours) and the online environment.

3. CODE OF CONDUCT

The Child Safety Code of Conduct lists behaviours that are acceptable and those that are unacceptable. It provides a high-level statement of professional boundaries, ethical behaviour and acceptable and unacceptable relationships. For more detailed guidance refer to the College's Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy.

This Child Safety Code of Conduct is available to all members of the College Community via our public website. The Code is reviewed annually and endorsed by the Board of Directors.

3.1. Acceptable Behaviours

All members of the MLC Community are responsible for promoting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of students by:

- behaving as a positive role model to students
- promoting the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students
- being vigilant and proactive with regard to student safety and child safety issues
- providing age-appropriate supervision for students
- complying with guidelines published by the College with respect to child safety
- treating all students with respect
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of linguistically and culturally diverse students
- using positive and affirming language towards students
- encouraging students to 'have a say' and participate, and then listen to them with respect
- respecting cultural, religious and political differences
- helping to provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all students to interact, and socialise
- intervening when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others or acting in a humiliating or vilifying way
- reporting any breaches of this Child Safe Code of Conduct
- reporting concerns about child safety to one of the College's Child Protection Officers and ensure that your legal obligations to report allegations externally are met
- where an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student involved is safe
- calling the Police on Triple Zero (000) if you have immediate concerns for a student's safety
- respecting the privacy of students and their families and only disclose information to people who have a need to know.

3.2. Unacceptable Behaviours

All members of the MLC Community must 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 or disability.
- Engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of students.
- 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, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Engage in any form of physical violence towards a student including inappropriately 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 meetings with a child that is not your own, outside of school hours and without permission from the College and the child's parent.

- Engage in inappropriate personal communications with a student through any medium, including any online contact or interactions with a student.
- Take or publish (including online) photos, movies or recordings of a student without parental/carer consent.
- 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.

3.3. Agreement to the Child Safe Code of Conduct

A copy of this Child Safe Code of Conduct is provided to all members of the College Board, Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and Direct Contact Contractors at induction, or otherwise prior to them commencing work at the College. It is also communicated via refresher training at regular intervals for all Staff, Direct Contact Volunteers and relevant Contractors.

All Staff and Direct Contact Volunteers must acknowledge that they have read and will adhere to this Child Safe Code of Conduct prior to commencing work at the College.

This Child Safe Code of Conduct forms part of the contract between the College and Direct Contact Contractors. Therefore, all Direct Contact Contractors are deemed to have agreed to adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct upon signing the contract or upon commencing work at the College.

3.4. Consequences for Breach of the Child Safe Code of Conduct

Staff, Volunteers and Contractors who breach this Child Safe Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary actions that may result in a range of measures including (depending on the severity of the breach):

- corrective education
- counselling
- increased supervision
- the restriction of duties
- appointment to an alternate role
- suspension
- in the case of serious breaches, termination of employment, contract or engagement.

Where any other member of the College Community breaches any obligation, duty or responsibility within the Child Safe Code of Conduct, Methodist Ladies' College will take appropriate action.

4. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Child Safe Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Parent Code of Conduct
- Student Wellbeing Policy
- Mandatory Reporting Policy

5. GOVERNANCE

DOCUMENT DETAILS

Title:	MLC Child Safety Program – Child Safe Code of Conduct
Policy Approver:	Vice Principal
Policy Owner:	Director of Student Wellbeing
Date Created:	February 2021
Review Timeline:	Annual
Date of Next Review:	2022

VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Description
V1	Feb 2021	Replaces MLC Relationships Policy

AUDIENCE

All MLC staff
Students
Parents/Guardians
Wider community

PUBLICATION LOCATION

MLC Staff Hub > Document Central
MLC Student Hub
myMLCfamily
MLC external website