



Santa Maria College

Code of Conduct

All staff, volunteers, contractors and Board members of Santa Maria College are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of Santa Maria College are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to Santa Maria College *Child Safe Policy* at all times
- upholding Santa Maria College *Statement of Commitment to Child Safety* at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.

Child abuse (Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS) definition) is an act by parents or caregivers which endangers a child or young person's physical or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident, but usually takes place over time.

- Physical abuse occurs when a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from an injury inflicted by a child's parent or caregiver. The injury may be inflicted intentionally or may be the inadvertent consequence of physical punishment or physically aggressive treatment of a child. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures.
- Sexual abuse occurs when a person uses power or authority over a child to involve the child in sexual activity and the child's parent or caregiver has not protected the child. Physical force is sometimes involved. Child sexual abuse involves a wide range of sexual activity.
- Emotional Abuse occurs when a child's parent or caregiver repeatedly rejects the child or uses threats to frighten the child. This may involve name calling, put downs or continual coldness from the parent or caregiver, to the extent that it significantly damages the child's physical, social, intellectual or emotional development.
- Neglect is the failure to provide the child with the basic necessities of life such as food, clothing, shelter, medical attention or supervision, to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed.

- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, 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. Students should be encouraged to voice their concerns to Village Leaders.
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities).

Disability (under *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*) means (a) total or partial loss of a bodily function; or (b) the presence in the body of organisms that may cause disease; or (c) total or partial loss of a part of the body; or (d)

malfunction of a part of the body, including (i) a mental or psychological disease or disorder; or (ii) a condition or disorder that results in a person learning more slowly than people who do not have that condition or disorder; or (e) malformation or disfigurement of a part of the body— and includes a disability that may exist in the future (including because of a genetic predisposition to that disability) and, to avoid doubt, behaviour that is a symptom or manifestation of a disability.

- ensuring as far as practicable that adults if alone with a child are in a visible space.
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to Santa Maria College Leadership Team, and ensure any allegation to reported to the police or child protection.
- reporting any child safety concerns to Santa Maria College Leadership Team
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- encouraging children to ‘have a say’ and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.

Staff and volunteers must not:

- develop any ‘special’ relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit and/or initiate behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessary physical contact. (for example, hugging as a greeting or consolation)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking or closing doors when alone with a student)
- 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 relationships or social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability. .
- have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without College Leadership Team’s knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). The College Leadership Team or its delegate will maintain a register of disclosed relationships (for example, parent, aunt, family friend, sports coach or Godparent of a student). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.
- have any online contact with a child or their family unless necessary (for example providing families with e-newsletters or emailing a parent with a concern). Any necessary online contact should be made with SMC devices, using SMC email address and, if communication is with a student, via their SMC email address.
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to Santa Maria College Leadership Team.

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

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Signature:

Date: