

CHILD SAFE CODE OF CONDUCT

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

NCAT has zero tolerance for child abuse. NCAT is committed to providing a child safe environment where students are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal students, students from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ students, as well as the safety of students with a disability.

Every person involved in NCAT has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all students is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

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

All staff, contractors, homestay hosts, volunteers and any other member of the school 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 and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, homestay hosts, 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 college's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the college's child safe policy
- treating students and families in the school community with respect both within the school environment and outside the school 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 young person has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another young person.
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of LGBTIQ students
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the college's leadership or Michelle Andrews, the Child Safety Officer.
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- if child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable behaviours

As staff, homestay hosts, 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)
- 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 (e.g. touching bottom, chest area)
- 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 innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- treat a student 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
- in the school environment or at other college events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy¹ or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

If you believe a student under 18 is at immediate risk of abuse, phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

¹ SPAG: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/alcohol.aspx>. School council approval must be sought before alcohol can be consumed on school grounds or at a school activity. Staff members should not consume alcohol during camps and excursions. Alcohol may be consumed by school staff, in moderation, and in line with the School Policy Advice Guide, at after hours and off site post Yr 12 functions, however staff are to be mindful of their duty of care obligations and are to remain professional at all times.