



Brookside College: Child Safe Code of Conduct 2019

Purpose

Brookside College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and 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 children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

Brookside College is a child safe school.

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

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

All staff, contractors, volunteers 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 college situations, including camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Statement of Commitment and Principles

Brookside College is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of our care and decision-making.

Brookside College has zero tolerance for child abuse.

Brookside College is committed to providing a child safe environment where children and young people 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 children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved at Brookside College 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 children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision-making and operations Brookside College will

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety;
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives;
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount;
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children;
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development;

7. Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues;
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities;
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk;
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.

Acceptable behaviours

As staff, volunteers, contractors, and any other member of the College 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.
- treating 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 cultural safety, participation and empowerment of indigenous 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
- reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the College's leadership
- understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- ensuring that as quickly as possible student(s) are safe and protected from harm if child abuse is suspected.

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)
- 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
- 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 child 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 College work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter.
- photograph or video a child in a College environment except in accordance with College 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 or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.