



Our Commitment: Creating environments for children and young people to thrive – Code of Conduct for Anglican Schools and Education & Care Services



Quick Reference Guide (v1.1)

'Our Commitment: Creating environments for children and young people to thrive - Code of Conduct for Anglican Schools and Education & Care Services' details **the expected conduct of staff and volunteers within Anglican Schools and Education & Care Services (ECS)**. Staff and volunteers are expected to agree to this Code, as part of their employment or volunteering agreement.

This Code aims to help protect children and young people, and reduce opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists staff and volunteers to understand how to avoid or manage risky behaviours and situations.

Expected conduct refers to behaviour in both the physical and online environment that includes, relates to, or impacts upon a person who the staff member or volunteer has contact with **as part of their role** within the School or ECS. For example, the Code applies when the staff member or volunteer's relationship with a child or young person is as a result of their role at the School or ECS.

The terms child and young person are both used to reflect persons enrolled or recently enrolled (e.g. within two years) at a School or ECS. This includes young people who are 18 years or older. Children and young people are also commonly referred to as students.

It is recognised that staff and volunteers may be subject to more than one Code of Conduct or similar requirement. However, where Schools or ECS have had a pre-existing Code that applies to staff and/or volunteers, it is replaced with this Code. Role specific requirements not detailed in this Code, are captured by the School or ECS in other supporting documents.

If an apparent contradiction occurs between this Code and any other Code or requirement, seek advice from an appropriate authority within the School or ECS. As a general rule, a requirement that provides the greater protection to children and young people's safety applies.

How to read Our Commitment:

Relevant sections of Our Commitment consist of three parts:

- The **Preamble** (in blue), introduces the section.
- The **Standards** (in green) state the expectations for personal behaviour and the provision of service. Where a staff member or volunteer does not meet the Standards, this will indicate an area requiring redress. This may result in formal disciplinary action as a breach of employment conditions.
- The **Guidelines** (in purple) explain and illustrate best practice, highlighting practical ways to achieve this. Staff and volunteers are encouraged to follow the Guidelines. Where this is impractical, an exercise of judgement will be required to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those with whom they work and themselves. Disregard of the Guidelines may indicate an area where staff and volunteers require guidance and specialised help, or may indicate a breach of the standards and be managed as such.

A large portion of the Code is section 6, **Key Terms**. This section provides definitions that help users to apply the Code with its intended effect.



Standards

The Standards of expected behaviour that apply to staff and volunteers are:

- It is the responsibility of each staff member and volunteer to be aware of and meet the standards of this Code.
- Do not penalise, discriminate or take action against other staff or volunteers because of any action taken in good faith under this Code.

Conduct with children and young people:

- Take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the children and young people in your care.
- Do not abuse children or young people.
- Do not administer corporal punishment to children or young people in your care.
- Do not make available to children or young people any prohibited material. This includes enabling access inadvertently; for example, allowing a student to use your computer where prohibited material may be located. The only exception is wine in the context of a Holy Communion service.
- Before accepting your appointment as an employee or commencing as a volunteer, you are to disclose to a person with appropriate authority if you:
 - are currently charged with or convicted of an offence against a child;
 - have been acquitted of a charge of an offence against a child;
 - have had a charge of an offence against a child not proceed;
 - have had a prohibited status under applicable 'working with children' screening legislation lifted; or
 - have been the subject of any disciplinary proceedings involving child abuse.
- Following your appointment or commencement, if you are aware of behaviour of a staff member, volunteer or visitor to the School/ECS, or of a child or young person, that leads to you or others feeling uncomfortable or concerned, speak with an appropriate authority.

If you know or reasonably suspect a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm from abuse, or if you know or reasonably suspect a staff member or volunteer has demonstrated inappropriate behaviour, comply with your roles and responsibilities as detailed in, but not limited to:

- Policy and Procedures for Student Protection in Anglican Schools; or
- Policy and Procedures for Child Protection in Anglican Education and Care Services.

All conduct:

- Conduct yourself in an ethical and respectful manner. Treat people honestly, fairly, lawfully and without discrimination, and do not behave or communicate in a manner that brings the School/ECS into disrepute. Your behaviour or communication should reflect well on the School/ECS and not misuse power or position.
- Seek at all times, to maintain or enhance confidence in the integrity of the service you perform. Avoid behaviour that gives the impression of favouritism or inappropriate relationships.
- Do not engage in bullying, emotional abuse, harassment, physical abuse, sexual abuse or spiritual abuse.
- Act in the best interests of the children and young people you are providing a service to. You must recognise any potential conflict of interest and take steps to resolve it, including consultation with a supervisor.
- Do not inappropriately discriminate between people.
- Do not disclose confidential information received in your School/ECS role to someone else, without the consent of the person providing the information, except where:
 - the information is known publicly;
 - as required or allowed by law; or
 - it is in the public interest (such as to avoid the risk of serious injury or harm to any person).
- When on leave or unable to fulfil your responsibilities through illness or any other reason, make alternative arrangements through advising the appropriate supervisor at the School/ECS.
- Be responsible in your use of alcohol and other mind altering or addictive substances or services. This includes not undertaking School/ECS service when impaired by alcohol or any other mind-altering or addictive substances.
- Do not use any prohibited substance.

- Do not take property belonging to others, including intellectual property.
- Do not knowingly make statements that are false, misleading or deceptive.
- Do not knowingly use offensive language.
- Do not view, possess, produce or distribute restricted material, without a legitimate purpose.
- Observe the law. This includes, but is not limited to, the Acts and Regulations that relate to your duties.
- Do not, as a result of your position or relationships formed as part of your role, seek personal advantage or financial gain for yourself or your family, beyond your stipend or wage, and recognised allowances and deductions.
- Do not allow yourself to be influenced by offers of money or financial reward.
- Avoid situations of conflict between personal financial interest and School/ ECS responsibilities.
- Arrange personal and School/ECS finances to ensure clear account and transaction boundaries are maintained.
- Fully disclose and be publicly accountable for all School/ECS monies you handle.

Additional Standards that apply to School or ECS leadership:

- If you have appropriate authority in a School/ECS, ensure all staff and volunteers for whom you are responsible are made aware of this Code.
- If you have appropriate authority in a School/ECS, ensure:
 - proper systems for the safety and welfare of children and young people participating in the School/ECS are implemented and maintained;
 - all applicable requirements of the civil authorities, the church authority and the School/ECS are complied with; and
 - all staff and volunteers for whom you have responsibility and who work with children and young people:
 - comply with all civil and School/ECS screening and selection requirements;
 - receive regular training in child protection; and
 - are aware of the provisions of this Code.
- Before allowing a person who:
 - is currently charged with or convicted of an offence against a child;
 - has been acquitted of a charge of an offence against a child;
 - has had a charge of an offence against a child not proceed;
 - has had a prohibited status under applicable 'working with children' screening legislation lifted; or
 - has been the subject of any disciplinary proceedings involving child abuse;
 to participate in activities involving children or young people:
 - a) consult with:
 - for Schools owned or controlled by the ACSQ or ECS for which the ACSQ is the Approved Provider: the Director of Professional Standards or the Executive Director, Anglican Schools Commission;
 - for other Anglican Schools or ECS, the Chair of either the School's governing body or the ECS management committee, or their delegate; ensure a risk assessment is undertaken; and
 - b) be satisfied no child or young person will be at an increased risk of harm.
- If you have appropriate authority in a School/ECS, ensure staff and volunteers for whom you are responsible are provided with:
 - a safe working environment, including safe housing, where housing is provided;
 - opportunities to maintain and enhance their relevant skills; and
 - personal encouragement, support and regular feedback.
- If you have appropriate authority for financial management in a School/ ECS, ensure:
 - proper systems for financial integrity and accountability are implemented and maintained;
 - all staff and volunteers, for whom you have responsibility and who have authority for financial management in a School/ECS, are informed of their roles and responsibilities; and
 - all stipends, wages and allowances payable are adequate, and paid promptly and in full.

Guidelines

- If you are aware of behaviour of a staff member, volunteer or visitor to the School/ECS, or of a child or young person that leads to you or others feeling uncomfortable or concerned, speak with an appropriate authority.
- If you have reason to believe a member of staff or a volunteer has not met a standard or guideline of this Code, always inform an appropriate authority if you consider:
 - a person may have suffered harm or has been placed at risk of harm; or
 - the staff member or volunteer is persisting in disregarding the standard or guideline.

Where neither a) nor b) apply, you can approach the staff member or volunteer and identify the concern.

- Avoid situations where you are vulnerable and where your conduct may be construed as a breach of the standards of conduct in this Code.

Topic specific guidelines include:

Contact with Children and Young People

- Recognising The Characteristics And Effects Of Child Abuse (p13)
- Recognising The Characteristics Of Sexual Offenders (p13)
- Ensuring The Safety Of Children And Young People (p13)
- Screening And Selection Of Personnel (p13)
- Your Role And Your Capacity To Perform It (p14)
- Use Of External Service Providers (p14)
- Supervision (p15)
- Activities (p16)
- Venue (p17)
- Health And Safety (p18)
- Transport (p18)
- Physical Contact (p20)
- Behavioural Guidance (p21)
- Communication And Technology (p22)
- Photographs And Images (p23)
- Record Keeping (p24)

All Conduct

- Personal Behaviour (p29)
- Boundaries (p30)
- Communication (p31)
- Confidentiality (p33)
- Record-Keeping And Privacy (p34)
- Financial Management Practices (p34)
- Gifts (p34)
- Personal Financial Obligations (p34)

Key terms

- Abuse, including Child Abuse (p37 -47)
 - characteristics and effects of child abuse
 - impact of abuse
 - bullying, including cyberbullying
 - emotional abuse
 - harassment
 - neglect
 - physical abuse
 - sexual abuse of an adult, including sexual assault, exploitation and harassment
 - sexual abuse of a child
 - grooming
 - characteristics of sexual offenders
 - spiritual abuse
- Appropriate authority (p48)
- Appropriate authority for financial management (p48)
- Appropriate supports for children and young people (p49)
- Children and young people (p49)
- Child exploitation material, including child pornography (p49)
- Church (p50)
- Church authority (p50)
- Church body (p50)
- Civil authorities (p50)
- Conflict of Interest (p50)
- Corporal punishment (p50)
- Education and Care Service (ECS) (p50)
- Inappropriate behaviour (p51)
- Inappropriately discriminate (p52)
- Offensive language (p53)
- Prohibited material (p53)
- Prohibited substance (p53)
- Restricted material (p53)
- Risk management plans (p54)
- Risk management strategy (p55)
- School (p56)
- Service (p56)
- Staff (p56)
- Supervisor (p56)
- Volunteers (p56)