

CODE OF CONDUCT & DUTY OF CARE FOR EMPLOYEES

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| Relevant to: | All Staff |
| Developed by: | Management Team |
| Date of Introduction: | October 2016 |
| Date of Most Recent Review: | 2021 |
| Date for Review: | 2024 |
| Approved: | Principal – S. Norris |
| Related Documents: | OHSW, Grievance Policy, Child Protection Policy |

PURPOSE

1. To provide guidance to all employees on the acceptable standards of conduct that the school requires as a condition of employment. The school aims for high standards of conduct.
2. To comply with the Schools Registration Board Standard 4.11: Code of Conduct

BACKGROUND

Tamar Valley Steiner School seeks to provide, through the professional attitude and behaviour of all staff, a secure and supportive environment that:

- Promotes the care and education of students through the philosophical framework of Steiner education,
- Develops good relationships among staff
- Develops the confidence of parents

The school expects that all staff behave professionally, with respect and consideration towards colleagues, parents, students and general community members. Employees must undertake to support the ethos of the school and the school's statements of principles and practices. The ethics articulated in this Code are governed by the principles of service, impartiality and a continuous improvement.

The school seeks to provide a workplace that is free from discrimination and harassment, where employees act with due care and diligence in the fulfilment of the requirements of their employment contracts, whilst complying at all times with the Australian law.

Procedures

The Code of Conduct and all relevant policies will be made available to all employees. It is the responsibility of all employees to be familiar with the content.

Teaching staff who need clarification or advice on any policy or procedure should seek advice from Faculty. Non-teaching administration staff should seek advice from the Business Manager. If necessary the College Chair or Business Manager will seek advice from the School Council.

1. Professional and Ethical Conduct

- 1.1 In the course of their employment, employees must act in a professional and respectful manner that enhances their reputation, the reputation of the school and the standing of Steiner education
- 1.2 Employees must treat fellow employees, students and others within their work environment in a fair and just manner, assisting the school to promote a supportive environment that is free from harassment, victimisation and discrimination.
- 1.3 Employees are expected to behave in a manner which promotes the safety, welfare and well-being of students, colleagues and others in their workplace environment.
- 1.4 Employees whose work involves interaction with students have an additional responsibility to comply with Duty of Care statements and provide appropriate role models for students.
- 1.5 Employees must perform their work duties competently and responsibly, with a focus on delivering or supporting high quality educational services to students based on the philosophical framework of Steiner Education for child development and education.
- 1.6 Employees need to maintain professional competence through appropriate professional development or learning experiences with a particular focus on the principles of Rudolf Steiner education.
- 1.7 Employees need to maintain accuracy and integrity and comply with the schools Privacy Policy in relation to students, parents, staff and visitors.
- 1.8 Employees must act promptly in reporting breaches of the law and this Code of Conduct to the College Chair or an appropriate member of the School Council.
- 1.9 Employees must comply effectively with all lawful and reasonable decisions and directions given by the School management or a person having authority to give such directions.
- 1.10 Dress, personal appearance and hygiene are important elements of professional presentation. Employees must ensure that their personal appearance and presentation are appropriate for the workplace and are in accordance with the expectations of the school.

2. Duty of care

- 2.1 Duty of Care is a duty to do everything reasonably practicable to protect others from foreseeable harm, as outlined in the school's Duty of Care statement.
- 2.2 Teachers have a Duty of Care towards students due to their unique working relationship, based on trust.
- 2.3 Employees have a responsibility to assist in the provision of as safe physical and emotional environment, free from harm. Harm includes any significant detrimental effect to a staff member's or students physical, psychological or emotional well-being and includes minor harm that is cumulative in nature and which would result in a detrimental effect of a significant nature to an employee or student if allowed to continue. Amongst other things, harm can be caused by:
 - Physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
 - Sexual abuse or exploitation, or
 - Domestic or family violence, or
 - Bullying, or
 - Self-harm
- 2.4 Employees are referred to the schools' Child Protection Policy which contains the reporting procedures required of employees based on their obligations under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997

3. Physical Contact

- 3.1 Employees must not use any form of discipline that involves corporal punishment, or engage in contact that could physically harm a student or another adult.
- 3.2 There are occasions where physical intervention is appropriate such as when it is employed to prevent physical harm to students, staff or other individuals in the School environment. Any physical intervention needs to be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.

4. Discrimination

- 4.1 The school will endeavour to provide a workplace free of discrimination, bullying and harassment. Employees must not discriminate against a student or an adult on the basis of age, disability, family responsibilities (including breast feeding), gender, sexual orientation, irrelevant medical or criminal record, marital relationship or parental status, political or industrial belief or activity, pregnancy, race or ethnicity or religious belief or activity in accordance with relevant school policies and legislation include the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998.

5. Sexual Misconduct

- 5.1 The school seeks to provide an environment that is free from harassment, including sexual harassment.
- 5.2 Employees' interactions with students and other employees must be, and be seen to be, professional at all times.
- 5.3 Employees have a particular responsibility towards students. Employees must not attempt to sexualise a relationship with a student. To do so is a breach of trust, an abuse of authority, professional misconduct and criminal.
- 5.4 The following behaviour constitutes either misconduct or sexual misconduct:
 - Unwarranted and inappropriate touching;
 - Inappropriate communication or actions of a sexual nature;
 - Obscene behaviour including gestures, language and jokes;
 - Inappropriate and deliberate exposure of students or other employees to the sexual behaviour of others;
 - Dating a student;
 - Expressing romantic feelings towards a student;
 - Inappropriately responding to advances of a sexual nature initiated by a student.

6. Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, Other Drugs and Medication

- 6.1 Upon the written request of parents, employees are authorized to administer prescribed medication in accordance with the School Policy on The Administration of Medication.
- 6.2 Employees have an obligation to ensure that any use of alcohol or drugs, whether illicit, over-the counter, or prescribed as medication, does not adversely affect their work performance or endanger the health and safety of others.
- 6.3 Employees must not provide students with alcohol, tobacco or drugs and must not encourage or condone the illegal use or the excessive use of such substances.
- 6.4 Smoking is not permitted in school facilities or no any School endorsed activity where staff members have contact with students.
- 6.5 Use of illegal substances is not permitted in school facilities or on any School endorsed activity where staff members have contact with students.

6.6 Employee consumption of alcohol is generally not permitted at any school activity or event where students may be present such as fairs, barbecues and graduations. However, in special circumstances where the School Executive has authorised the selling or serving of alcohol, the limited consumption of alcohol by adults may be permitted.

7. Use of School Resources

7.1 School equipment and resources must generally only be used for the work and business of the school.

7.2 Limited and occasional private use of school equipment and resources may be authorised on occasions where it does not adversely affect the employee's performance, the performance of others, or the business or reputation of the school. Employees must have approval to use school equipment and resources for private purposes, and must ensure that it is safely stored and secure at all times.

7.3 Employees must not use any school resource, including mobile phones, the internet, electronic mail systems or other means of electronic communication for accessing, storing or transmitting words, images or other material that are illegal, sexual explicit or violent.

8. Procedure for Dealing with breaches of the Code of Conduct

8.1 Potential breaches of the Code of Conduct, including apparent breaches and allegations will be dealt with in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. Potential breaches will be addressed in the context of the school Grievance Policy of Staff Issues Resolution Process depending on the breach.

8.2 Employees have an obligation to report breaches of the Code of Conduct to the College Chair or a member of the College Executive.

8.3 Employees should be aware that the College Executive may apply sanctions if the Code of Conduct is breached. Depending on the nature of the breach, various sanctions such as the following may be applied:

- Appropriate warnings or discussion,
- Counselling
- Enforced leave,
- Dismissal,
- Laying of criminal charges
- Initiation of civil action.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please read the Code of Conduct for Employees policy carefully to ensure that you understand the policy before signing this document.

I, _____ acknowledge that I have read and been informed about the content, requirements, and expectations of the Code of Conduct for Employees at Tamar Valley Steiner School.

I have received a copy of the policy and agree to abide by the policy guidelines as a condition of my employment and my continuing employment at Tamar Valley Steiner School.

I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding the Code of Conduct for Employees policy, I will consult with my immediate supervisor (being the College Chair or Business Manager).

I understand that this signed acknowledgement will be kept on my personnel file.

Employee Signature: _____

Employee Printed Name: _____

Date: _____