

# Child Protection Responsibilities

## Reportable Conduct

All staff are expected to act professionally and in accordance with the school's expectations regarding staff conduct toward children. Members of staff receive guidance and professional development in relation to appropriate interactions with students, how to exercise duty of care and how to maintain professional boundaries.

We uphold that staff have a duty of care to:

- ◆ Ensure no child is exposed to foreseeable risk of harm;
- ◆ Take action to minimise risk;
- ◆ Supervise actively; and
- ◆ If we see others acting inappropriately with children, report concerns to the Principal or seek further advice from the CSBB Office for Safeguarding team.

School staff also understand that they are in a position of trust, authority and influence in relation to children and that it is important that we do not take advantage of that position to mistreat or misguide students either intentionally or inadvertently. Staff strive to:

- ◆ Demonstrate appropriate relationships with children that cannot be misinterpreted as overly personal or intimate.
- ◆ Remain within the responsibilities of their roles and allow those appropriately trained to deal with student welfare concerns.
- ◆ Minimise physical contact with children unless it is necessary to exercise appropriate duty of care.
- ◆ Follow the school's policies and procedures relating to pastoral care and wellbeing including serious incidents and reporting risk of harm.

We are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for both students and staff. This includes addressing complaints of inappropriate behaviour by staff towards any child or young person.

Such complaints are guided by the legal obligations established by the NSW Children's Guardian Act 2019. The Office of the Children's Guardian is a government agency which requires schools and other organisations working with children to ensure systems are in place for recording and responding to all allegations of a child protection nature against staff. The definition of 'staff' includes volunteer helpers as well as paid staff.

If you have concerns about alleged inappropriate behaviour by a staff member towards any child or young person, it is important that you discuss your concerns with the Principal who in turn will consult with the CSBB's Office for Safeguarding.

All complaints are investigated and resolved through a fair and confidential process which involves listening to 'both sides of the story' and giving all involved an opportunity to be heard. If the concerns involve alleged criminal behaviour, they will be reported to the Police and the CSBB will wait for the outcome of the Police investigation before continuing its own investigation.

At the end of an investigation a finding will be made and appropriate follow up action determined. In relation to the staff member this may include no action, increased support, professional development, increased supervision/monitoring or disciplinary action, removal from duties or termination of employment.

If harm has occurred to a child, counselling or other support will be offered to the child.

### ***Parent Volunteers***

Parent participation, involvement and help are welcome and appreciated for various activities both in school and on excursions. It is important that all parent helpers/volunteers are aware that they are subject to child protection legislation. This means all volunteers must:

- ◆ not engage in any inappropriate behaviour towards any children. Although volunteers are technically not employed by the school, they are considered to be 'staff' for legal purposes and need to be aware that complaints about inappropriate behaviour towards any child or young person must be investigated.
- ◆ sign on at the front office, be inducted and get a visitors' badge from the office as per school procedure.
- ◆ check with the school what the current legal requirements are for working with children.

