

Staff Code of Conduct Policy

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1. Purpose

1.1. The purpose of this Policy is to outline the minimum standards of conduct all staff of Christian Schools Tasmania are expected to uphold in their lives and during interactions with students, parents, each other and the wider community.

2. Scope

2.1. This Policy:

- applies to all staff of Christian Schools Tasmania (CST) whether employed on a permanent, temporary or casual basis; and
- covers the minimum standards of behaviour expected of all CST staff and volunteers including moral and ethical issues.
- is aligned with the Australian Human Rights Commission National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

2.2. Contractors and consultants are informed of the code of conduct required on all CST properties in CST's External Providers Conduct and Behaviour Policy provided during the contractor's induction and management process. Additional expectations for volunteers are explained in more detail in CST's Volunteer Policy.

2.3. The conduct of CST Board Members is outlined in various clauses in CST's Constitution, Board Code of Conduct Policy and Statement of Faith.

3. Policy

3.1. Definition of terms for the purpose of this Policy:

- **Reportable Conduct** is any behaviour or attitude which may jeopardise the safety, welfare or wellbeing of a child.
- **Stakeholder** means a person or entity of CST, including an employee, volunteer, parent, student, supplier or contractor.
- **Staff** is any person employed by CST either on a casual, part-time or permanent basis, a peripatetic instructor or a volunteer.

3.2. Christian Schools Tasmania is committed to the rights of all children and young people to feel safe and be safe when participating in our organisation's activities, services and programs.

3.3. CST staff are expected to behave in ways which promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people. Employees must actively seek to prevent harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed. While not all staff are required to manage and supervise students, it is important for all CST staff to understand and observe CST's Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy.

- 3.4. This Policy is intended to provide staff with clear guidance as to the behaviours expected of everyone who works within our community. We want staff to know the expectations we collectively have and also experience the joy and freedom of working within these in a way which brings honour and glory to God.
- 3.5. We have an enormous privilege to witness for Christ in the communities in which we live and work. As Christians we bear the name of God and we reflect to the world an image of Him through our attitudes and behaviours. As an organisation we also clearly refer to our 'Christian-ness' and how the way we conduct ourselves and relate together and respond to one another matters as we witness Christ living in and amongst us.
- 3.6. Furthermore, as an organisation tasked with the privilege of providing education, training and care for students, CST recognises education is for the whole person and about the whole of life. Students absorb the attitudes, values and lifestyle of teachers and others in the school community as much as the content of their lessons. Thus, the personal beliefs, values and conduct of our staff members need to reflect Christian teaching and ideals. The conduct and lifestyle of staff members outside of normal working hours will powerfully impact our community and therefore staff members are expected to act in a way which brings honour and glory to God both within and outside of school hours.
- 3.7. As a community we recognise we are a part of God's chosen people and the Lord has given us instruction on how we should respond to and behave with one another accordingly. *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him."* Colossians 3:12-17.
- 3.8. The following is important to our organisation as we seek to operate together as a Christian community:
- 3.8.1. Humility:
- Staff members are to treat students, colleagues, families, contractors and associated business representatives with respect. The needs of others, both work-related and personal, are to be considered in the workplace.
 - Leaders are to be treated with honour and disagreements of opinion expressed with politeness.
- 3.8.2. Truth:
- Staff members are to tell the truth while being sensitive to the emotional impact this may have on hearers and therefore staff members should ensure the time and place is right.
 - Speaking the truth may mean admitting fault. Staff members will tell the truth and take responsibility for their behaviour and decisions instead of blaming others. This may lead to a need for apology and reconciliation with students, colleagues, parents and others. We seek to be a grace-filled community.
- 3.8.3. Self-control:
- Staff members are to guard the dignity of students, colleagues and parents.
 - Staff members are expected to mature in and model self-control in all areas of their lives.

3.8.4. Contentment and Thankfulness:

- Staff members are to speak constructively about and promote a positive environment within the workplace and communities where they work.
- Any concerns should be brought to the relevant authority as per the CST Conflict Resolution and Grievance Response Policies.

3.8.5. Diligence:

- Staff members are expected to be dedicated and loyal workers who aim to do their best while improving the systems and effectiveness of the organisation's operations.
- Reasonable and lawful requests are expected to be followed promptly, fully and effectively.

3.8.6. Patience and forgiveness:

- We seek to be a community of peace, grace and restoration.
- Students are to be always treated gently, yet firmly.

3.9. Christian beliefs, conduct and lifestyle:

3.9.1. One Creator God: God created the heavens and the earth (Nehemiah 9:6) and created humanity, both male and female, in His own image. (Genesis 1:27) As a Christian community, we recognise that we are a part of God's creation, and that He has given instruction for how we respond to and behave with one another accordingly.

3.9.2. Humanity and the Fall: since God has shown us amazing grace by reconciling us back to Him through Jesus, we seek to be a community of peace, grace and restoration. Where there is disagreement or where relationships break down, we firstly look to the Scriptural principles for resolution.

3.9.3. Jesus Christ: our relationship with Jesus Christ is honoured and nurtured by daily prayer and study of the Bible. He gave us the great commandment to love God and to love others as He loved us. (John 14:12-13) Consequently, in our organisation, we strive to treat each other with honour, care, respect, and courtesy at all times.

3.9.4. The Holy Spirit: produces evidence of His presence – love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23) – which makes the work of Jesus Christ effective and produces in Christians the increasing likeness of Jesus in their character and behaviour. We therefore expect such evidence to be present in the lives and conduct of Christians.

3.9.5. The Bible: is the word of God and is our highest authority in all matters of faith, professional practice, and public and private lifestyle. (Matthew 5:17-19; 1 Thessalonians 2:13)

3.9.6. A Christian: as Christians, we are instructed to not be conformed by this world but rather be transformed by the renewal of our minds. (Romans 12:2) The Christian journey is designed to be undertaken with other believers in community that demonstrates the transformative love of God. Through shared worship, fellowship and service in the church, Christians are called to encourage, challenge and strengthen themselves and others by a common love of God and a desire for the life Jesus wants for His people. The organisation maintains its identity as a Christian learning community by employing only Christians with an active faith, are connected to a church community and who share the responsibility for delivering Christ-centred education to our students.

- 3.9.7. Marriage: is defined by God as the union between one man and one woman. (Genesis 2:24) Marriage is an institution that is to be honoured, whether or not we are called into it ourselves, and is the proper context within which God's good gift of sexuality is to be enjoyed. The family is the primary community in which parents teach their children to learn, love, serve and grow. God's plan and desire has always been for parents to raise their children to know and love Him and walk in His ways.
- 3.9.8. The Church: is the body of Christ (Romans 12:5) often defined as a local assembly or group of believers, those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be His holy people. (1 Corinthians 1:2; 2 Corinthians 1:1) As Christians, we are individual members of the Church (1 Corinthians 12:27) and we are instructed to meet together (Hebrews 10:25) to encourage one another and build one another up. (12 Thessalonians 5:11) Jesus Christ commissioned His Church to spread the news of God's plan to everyone, teaching them how to find and follow Him. He commands us to love God with all our heart, mind and strength, and to love others as ourselves.
- 3.10. This Policy applies to all staff and does not attempt to provide a detailed and exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of their work; rather, it sets out general expectations of the standards of behaviour required. All staff are expected to take responsibility for their conduct and work with colleagues cooperatively to achieve a consultative and collaborative workplace where people can work effectively and productively.
- 3.11. By accepting employment with CST, staff must be aware of and comply with this Policy, as it is amended from time to time. Therefore, all staff must:
- conduct themselves, both personally and professionally, in a manner which reflects Christian teaching and ideals;
 - conduct themselves in a manner that upholds the ethos and values of CST;
 - comply with CST policies and procedures and the policies and procedures of individual schools;
 - always act ethically and responsibly; and
 - be accountable for their actions and decisions.
- 3.12. This Policy is not meant to be contractual in nature and does not impose any contractual obligations on the organisation. Instead, this Policy is an important expression of how we agree to act and relate individually and as a community together.
- 3.13. CST reserves the right to vary or cancel this Policy at any time, recognising its strength and relevance lies in being responsive to questions and situations as they arise.
- 3.14. Failure to observe the Policy is considered as misconduct and could result in disciplinary action including dismissal.
- 3.15. **Staff Requirements:**
- 3.15.1. All people who work for CST are expected to have a clear understanding of and a commitment to its biblical basis, the Statement of Faith. They should act both in the workplace and in other areas of life in ways that are consistent with that basis: acknowledging all people are fallible and good can ultimately come only from God. Staff are expected to be committed to Jesus Christ and seek to serve and love one another as Christ loves them.
- 3.15.2. Work at CST involves serving and supporting those people for whom the organisation exists, namely students and their parents. Each staff member is expected to work as a member of a team pursuing this core function, serving and supporting each other in the tasks to which God has called them.

3.15.3. Each staff member is expected to contribute positively to the maintenance of a positive, purposeful, productive and safe workplace. CST expects its employees to be generous, open, team-focused, effective, efficient, attentive to detail and contributing to fruitful and positive working relationships.

3.16. Staff are expected to:

- follow reasonable instructions given by the Principal, Chief Executive Officer or their delegate, and comply with lawful directions;
- carry out their duties in a professional, competent and conscientious manner while seeking suitable opportunities to improve their knowledge and skills, including participation in relevant professional development;
- be accountable for their performance and decisions;
- act with integrity, honesty and in good faith in fulfilling duties;
- be courteous and responsive in dealing with colleagues, students, parents and members of the public;
- be acquainted with the policies, procedures and delegations applicable to their actions. Employees are to read and ensure they understand documents circulated or issued to them. If employees are uncertain about any aspect of such documents, they should seek clarification from their Principal or Manager. Principals or Managers are to provide employees with access to relevant policies, procedures and delegations;
- uphold and comply with:
 - applicable Commonwealth, State and local laws, regulations, industrial awards and agreements;
 - applicable professional standards and codes of practice that do not conflict with the government or CST policy; and
 - CST and government directives, policies and procedures.
- ensure their personal appearance and presentation are clean, tidy and appropriate for their work role in accordance with expectations of the school or workplace.

3.17. Respect for people:

3.17.1. All people are created in the image of God and, as such, are entitled to a fundamental respect for their person. Jesus Christ gave us the great commandment and instructed us to love God and to love others as ourselves; consequently, CST expects staff to treat each other with honour, demonstrable care, respect and courtesy.

3.17.2. Staff who work with students have a special responsibility in presenting themselves as appropriate role models for those students. Modelling effective leadership and respect in your interactions with students can have a profoundly positive influence on a student's personal and social development.

3.17.3. Similarly, it is important for staff to treat parents, colleagues and contractors with respect. Rude or insulting behaviour, including verbal and non-verbal aggression, abusive, threatening, intimidating or derogatory language and physical abuse or intimidation towards others, is unacceptable. Staff must not use information and communication technologies, such as email, mobile phones, text or instant messaging, blogs, social media sites and other websites to engage in this type of behaviour.

3.17.4. Staff must not discriminate against, harass or bully for any reason any employee, contractor, student or parent. Their obligations in this regard are set out in the Christian Schools Tasmania's Bullying Harassment and Discrimination Prevention Policy.

3.17.5. Staff should ensure they are aware of the CST's Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy. If they believe they are being unlawfully harassed, discriminated against or bullied:

- where they feel comfortable, they are to ask the person to stop or make it clear they find the behaviour offensive or unwelcome. It may be useful to speak with their Principal or Manager in the first instance to seek guidance on how to do this; and/or
- raise the issue as a grievance in accordance with CST's Complaints, Grievances and Conflict Policy as soon as possible after the incident(s) have occurred.

3.17.6. CST expects grievances or conflicts to be raised in good faith. If, after an investigation by CST, a staff member's complaint or statement is found to be false and malicious, disciplinary action may be taken against the worker who made the complaint in accordance with the CST Performance Management Policy and CST's Complaints, Grievances and Conflict Policy.

3.18. **Required reporting:**

3.18.1. All staff are required to inform their Principal or Manager if they are charged with or convicted of a serious offence or any offence which may reasonably be considered to have any connection with the nature of their role or impact on the reputation of the school. Staff must also inform their Principal or Manager if they become the subject of an Apprehended Violence Order.

3.18.2. If, through their employment with CST, staff become aware of a serious crime committed by another person, they are required to report it to the Principal or Manager, who may be required to inform the police.

3.18.3. Staff must report to the Principal or Manager:

- any concerns they may have about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of a child or young person;
- any concerns they may have about the inappropriate actions of any other worker, contractor or volunteer that involves children or young people;
- any concerns they may have about any other worker, contractor or volunteer engaging in 'reportable conduct' or any allegation of 'reportable conduct' which has been made to them;
- if they become aware a worker, contractor or volunteer has been charged with or convicted of an offence (including a finding of guilt without the court proceeding to a conviction) involving 'reportable conduct';
- if they become the subject of allegations of 'reportable conduct' whether or not they relate to employment in CST:
 - staff should refer to CST's Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy for further information about these obligations; and
 - teachers and some other staff have mandatory reporting obligations where they have reasonable grounds to suspect a child under the age of 18 years is at risk of significant harm and have current concerns about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of the child. Staff should refer to CST's Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy and Responding to Child Abuse and Allegations Policy for further information about these obligations.

3.19. Professional Relationships:

3.19.1. Being alone with students:

- 3.19.1.1. Staff should avoid situations where they are alone in an enclosed space with a student. Where employees are left with the responsibility of a single student, it should be in an open space in view of others. Where this is not possible or practical, it should be discussed with the Principal.
- 3.19.1.2. Staff should not drive a student in their car unless they have specific permission from the Principal or their delegate to do so. In the event of an emergency, discretion should be exercised, and then the matter reported to the Principal as soon as possible. Where there is a need for a staff member to drive with a student in their car, there should be two staff members in the vehicle.
- 3.19.1.3. If it is necessary to conduct a private conversation with a student, staff will consider the time and venue carefully to avoid placing themselves in a vulnerable or inappropriate situation. Staff will not locate themselves between the student and any open door.
- 3.19.1.4. When confiscating personal items, such as mobile phones, students should be asked to hand them over. Items should only be taken directly from students in circumstances where concern exists for the safety of the student or others, and the staff member's own safety is not jeopardised by this action.

3.19.2. Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements:

- 3.19.2.1. Overnight stays are to occur only with the authorisation of the Principal and of the parents of the children or young people involved.
- 3.19.2.2. Factors to consider, prior to departure for individual participation in overnight stays include:
 - the length of time away from home is appropriate to the age, developmental stage and education level of the attending participants;
 - participants feel comfortable and the stay is in their best interest;
 - participants behavioural issues, medical conditions, cultural and language barriers, separation issues or a history of abuse that may impinge on their ability to cope or speak out if they are feeling unsafe or uncomfortable.
- 3.19.2.3. Conduct by our staff and stakeholders during an overnight stay must be consistent with the practices and behaviours expected during delivery of our activities, services and programs and use of our facilities at other times.
- 3.19.2.4. Standards of conduct that must be observed by our staff and stakeholders during an overnight stay include:
 - providing children and young people with privacy when bathing and dressing;
 - observing appropriate dress standards when children and young people are present such as no exposure to adult nudity;
 - not allowing children or young people to be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the internet or magazines;
 - not leaving children and young people under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons such as hotel staff or friends;
 - not involving sleeping arrangements that may compromise the safety of children and young people such as, unsupervised sleeping arrangements, or an adult sleeping in the same bed as a child or young person;

- the right of children and young people to contact their parents, or others, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed during the stay;
- parents expecting that their children can, if they wish, make contact.

3.19.3. Bathroom / change room arrangements:

3.19.3.1. Staff and stakeholders are required to supervise children and young people in bathrooms and /or change rooms while balancing that requirement with a child or young person's right to privacy.

3.19.3.2. In addition:

- staff and stakeholders should avoid one-to-one situations with a child or young person in a bathroom and / or change room area;
- staff and stakeholders are not permitted to use the change room area to, for example, undress, while children and young people are present;
- staff and stakeholders need to ensure adequate supervision in public bathrooms or changerooms when they are used;
- staff and stakeholders need to provide the level of supervision required for preventing abuse by members of the public, adult service users, peer service users, or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a child's or young person's privacy;
- when monitoring bathroom and / or change room area, staff and stakeholders are to knock loudly / identify themselves prior to entering the area and where possible take another supervising adult;
- female staff are not to enter male bathrooms / change room and male staff are not to enter female bathrooms / change rooms without another staff member present;
- staff and stakeholders are to use bathrooms and change rooms specific to their identified gender.

3.19.4. Physical contact with students:

3.19.4.1. There is a place for appropriate physical contact between a staff member and a student. CST values and recognises touch is a normal and important part of communication, and right and proper touch is a beneficial and important part of everyday interaction and development; however, staff must be mindful of the potential for touch to be misconstrued.

3.19.4.2. When congratulating a student, a handshake or pat on the shoulder are acceptable as long as the student is comfortable with this action. Kissing students is never acceptable.

3.19.4.3. When physical contact with a student is a necessary part of the teaching / learning experience, staff must exercise caution to ensure the contact is appropriate and acceptable. Staff should seek reassurance from the student by asking for a volunteer, if necessary, to demonstrate a particular activity.

3.19.4.4. Physical touch required as a part of a student's management plan (e.g. the management of toileting) needs to be done with caution. When physical contact is regularly required, planning, details and contingencies will be recorded in the student's management plan.

3.19.4.5. Assisting a student who is injured or ill may necessitate touching the student. Staff will always advise the student of their intention and seek the student's consent.

3.19.4.6. Staff must not engage in conduct that could physically harm a student. Staff must not impose physical punishment on a student.

3.19.5. There may be occasions, however, where physical intervention is appropriate in order to protect students, self and others. In these circumstances, this would be deemed reasonable action providing the physical intervention is to prevent harm or further harm to students, and the staff member seeks to avoid inflicting physical harm where possible. Any physical intervention must be proportionate to the circumstances and must be reported to Management as soon as possible or by the end of the day.

3.20. Relationships with students:

3.20.1. Staff are strictly prohibited from initiating or engaging in any form of sexual or inappropriate relationship with a student either whilst that student is enrolled at a CST school or within two years following the student's departure from a CST school. This prohibition extends to all students, regardless of their age or legal status as adults.

- Exceptions to the aforementioned prohibition may be considered in limited circumstances, where a thorough evaluation by the school administration deems it appropriate. One such circumstance could arise when two former students, both of whom were enrolled in Year 12 have entered into a consensual romantic relationship following their departure from the school, or were in such a relationship while attending the school. In addition, one of the former students involved in this relationship has been employed as a Teacher Assistant at a CST school.
- In such cases, the school administration will carefully assess the nature of the relationship, ensuring that it adheres to all relevant legal and ethical standards. This evaluation will consider factors such as the age difference between the staff member and the former student, the time elapsed since their departure from the school, and any potential conflicts of interest or power dynamics.
- The decision to allow an exception will be made on a case-by-case basis, with the primary focus being the well-being and safety of all students and the preservation of the school's integrity and values. Any exception granted will be contingent upon the ongoing conduct and professional boundaries of the staff member involved, and it will be subject to periodic review by the school administration to ensure compliance with the school's Code of Conduct and relevant laws.

3.20.2. Staff interactions with students must be, and be seen to be, professional at all times.

3.20.3. Staff must not develop a relationship with any student which is, or which could be interpreted as having a personal rather than a professional interest in a student. An overly familiar relationship with any student a staff member is responsible for teaching, tutoring, advising, assessing or for whom pastoral care or welfare support is provided raises serious questions of conflict of interest, trust, confidence, dependency and equality of treatment. Such relationships may also have a negative impact on the student personally, the teaching and learning environment for other students and colleagues and may carry a serious reputational risk for the school and CST more broadly.

3.20.4. Staff must not provide or exchange personal contact details such as telephone numbers or email addresses with students unless there are specific work-related reasons. Similarly, staff must not enter into unauthorized electronic communication with students, such as text messaging, web casting and chat rooms.

3.20.5. Staff will not have current CST students (i.e. students who are currently enrolled in a CST school) added as 'friends' or contacts to their personal social media accounts without the express permission of their Principal or Manager.

3.20.6. Staff must not engage in behaviour that raises a reasonable suspicion they have engaged in or will engage in inappropriate activity or the standards applying to the professional staff / student relationship have or will be breached.

3.20.7. Staff must not attempt to sexualize a relationship with a student or engage in sexual misconduct with a student at any time. To do so is a breach of trust, an abuse of authority, professional misconduct, immoral and potentially criminal. Failure by the other person to reject such conduct does not necessarily imply meaningful consent because, in law, a minor cannot consent.

3.20.8. Sexual misconduct includes, but is not necessarily restricted to:

- conduct towards a person that would constitute a criminal offence of a sexual nature;
- conduct that is sexual harassment as specified in section 17(3) of the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998;
- any other sexual conduct directed towards or involving any student. Sexual conduct is any behaviour which might reasonably be interpreted as being designed or intended to arouse or gratify sexual desires.

3.20.9. The following behaviour constitutes either misconduct or sexual misconduct:

- unwarranted and inappropriate touching of students;
- suggestive remarks or action of a sexual nature;
- sexual exhibitionism;
- obscene gestures, language, jokes containing sexual references or deliberately exposing students to the sexual behaviour of others in any form, other than the case of prescribed curriculum material in which sexual themes are contextual;
- inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature;
- comments that express a desire to act in a sexual manner;
- personal correspondence (including electronic communication) with a student in respect of the adult's sexual feelings for a student;
- deliberate exposure of students to sexual behaviour of others, including the display of pornographic material;
- flirtatious behaviour;
- dating a student;
- spending significant time alone with a student other than to perform professional duties or without other reasonable explanation;
- expressing romantic feelings towards a student in any way.

3.20.10. Sexual misconduct can also include grooming behaviour. Grooming behaviour is a process where by sexual offenders condition and build rapport with children or young persons in order to reduce their resistance to and increase compliance with sexual abuse. The grooming process can include:

- misleading students by pretending to them that they are special, for example, by spending inappropriate time with students, inappropriately giving gifts, showing special favours to certain students but not to other students, allowing students to overstep school rules;
- breaking of accepted school standards of behaviour, for example, undressing in front of students, allowing students to sit on their lap, talking about sex, apparently incidental touch;
- engaging in inappropriate, personalised forms of communication.

3.20.11. Staff must discourage and reject any advances of a sexual nature initiated by a student. Should such a situation arise, the staff member must report such an instance immediately to their Principal to assist in preventing repetition and to avoid subsequent allegations. Allegations will be investigated thoroughly and may involve the police.

3.20.12. When speaking with students, care must be taken to use appropriate language. Students must be treated with respect and without favouritism. There is no place for sarcasm, derogatory remarks, inappropriate familiarity, swearing or offensive comments.

3.20.13. As part of a pastoral care role, staff may engage in discussion with students. This is entirely appropriate; however, caution must be exercised when making personal comments about a student or asking questions that probe the staff member's own or a student's sexuality or relationships. Staff members must not hold conversations with a student of an intimately personal nature where the staff member discloses deeply personal information about themselves.

- 3.20.14. Staff must not engage in tutoring or coaching students from the school without the express permission of the Principal.
- 3.20.15. Staff must not give gifts to students. They should also carefully consider their position before accepting any gift from a student.
- 3.20.16. Wherever practical, staff should avoid teaching or being involved in educational decisions involving family members or close friends. Where it is not practical to avoid such situations completely, another member of staff should make any significant decisions relating to the student's assessments and have those endorsed by a senior member of staff.
- 3.20.17. Staff should be aware of and sensitive to children with culturally diverse or indigenous backgrounds and cultural practices, which may influence the interpretation of the staff member's behaviour.
- 3.21. **Child protection:**
- 3.21.1. Staff must be aware of and comply with CST's Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy.
- 3.21.2. Staff must report to the Principal or Manager any concerns about any other worker, contractor or volunteer engaging in 'reportable conduct' or any allegation of 'reportable conduct' which has been made to the staff member. This includes self-disclosure.
- 3.21.3. Broadly, 'reportable conduct' includes:
- any sexual offence or sexual misconduct committed against, with or in the presence of a child (including a child pornography offence);
 - any assault, ill-treatment or neglect of a child; or
 - any behaviour which causes psychological harm to a child whether or not the child consents.
- 3.21.4. Reportable conduct does not extend to conduct which is reasonable for the purposes of the discipline, management or care of children, having regard to the age, maturity, health or other characteristics of the children and to any relevant codes of conduct or professional standards.
- 3.22. **Use, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs:**
- 3.22.1. While working or volunteering, staff must not:
- use, possess or be under the influence of an illegal drug;
 - use, possess or be under the influence of alcohol;
 - supply or purchase alcohol or drugs (including tobacco and tobacco related products) or restricted substances to children or young person within our organisation;
 - be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs.
- 3.22.2. Use of legal drugs other than alcohol is permitted, provided such use does not interfere with your ability to care for children and young people involved in our educational programs.
- 3.22.3. The only exception to this standard is that alcohol may be consumed by staff at a school event where children and young people are not present which has been endorsed by the Principal.
- 3.23. **Procedure for Dealing with Allegations and Apparent Breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct Policy:**
- 3.23.1. Breaches of this Policy, including apparent and potential breaches and allegations, will be dealt with in accordance with CST's Complaints, Grievances and Conflict Policy and/or the CST Performance Management Policy.
- 3.23.2. Staff may, when in breach of this Policy, seek access to dispute resolution processes.

3.23.3. Staff should report possible breaches by colleagues to their Principal or Manager as soon as possible or by the end of the day. If the possible breach is by their Principal or Manager, it should be reported to the CEO.

3.24. Conflict of interest:

3.24.1. A conflict of interest may exist when a staff member's private interests have the potential to interfere with their capacity to perform their duties and, in turn, compromise their integrity and that of the school. A potential or actual conflict of interest must be identified, declared and avoided or resolved in favour of the public interest and should not be undertaken without the express permission of the Principal or CEO.

3.24.2. Staff may not act in conflict with the organisation or the school's best interests. A conflict of interest can involve:

- pecuniary interests such as financial gain or loss or other material benefits;
- non-pecuniary interests such as favours, personal relationships and associations. It may not only be about their own interests but may include:
 - the interests of members of their immediate family or relatives where these interests are known;
 - the interests of their own business partners or associates, or those of their workplace; or
 - the interests of their friends.

3.24.3. Situations that may give rise to a conflict of interest might include:

- financial interests of the staff member, a friend or relative which could influence the impartiality of the performance of the staff member's duties;
- personal beliefs or attitudes not relevant to the situation which influence the impartiality of the advice given;
- personal relationships with other staff, applicants for positions, students or business customers;
- dealings with a friend, a relative or colleague who is also a student or parent;
- approval of expenditure that will benefit the staff member, a friend, a relative or an organisation with which the staff member identifies:
 - when faced with a situation in which conflict of interests may be present, staff should report any potential or real conflict to the Principal or Manager. Staff should also report situations where a superior or colleague who has an identified conflict is or may be perceived as unduly influencing the staff member's decision;
 - it is understood situations may occur where staff are working with family members or with persons with whom they develop close personal relationships. Where such relationships exist between staff or with prospective staff, the potential for conflict of interest should be noted;
 - as a general principle, all staff who participate in procedures for selection, granting of tenure, performance appraisal, termination or transfer of any person who is a family member or with whom they have or have had a close personal relationship should declare any potential conflict of interest, however, the existence of a close personal relationship or family relationship should not constitute a bar to the employment, promotion, granting of tenure or transfer of any individual.
 - staff should be aware that private part-time employment, including tutoring, which conflicts with or compromises employment with CST, may give rise to a conflict of interest. Staff should seek prior approval from their Principal or Manager for any such employment or activity;
 - in many cases, only individual staff members themselves will be aware of the potential for conflict. The onus is, therefore, on the individual in these cases to notify the appropriate supervisor of this potential conflict.

3.25. **Declaring gifts, benefits and bribes:**

- 3.25.1. Staff should be aware receipt of gifts from those considered as part of the broad client base of the organisation (e.g. students and families in a school setting) may present the potential for a conflict of interest.
- 3.25.2. Staff may be offered a gift or benefit as an act of gratitude. There are some circumstances when to refuse a gift would be perceived as rude, insulting or hurtful. Staff are expected to exercise sound judgment when deciding whether to accept a gift or benefit.
- 3.25.3. If a staff member is offered a bribe (i.e. anything given in order to persuade the staff member to act improperly), it must be refused with an explanation as to why it is being refused, and the matter should be reported immediately to the Principal or Manager.
- 3.25.4. Accepting gifts and other benefits has the potential to compromise a staff member's position by creating a sense of obligation and undermining impartiality. It may also affect the reputation of the organisation and its staff. Staff must not create the impression any person or organisation is influencing CST or the decisions or actions of any of its staff.
- 3.25.5. Staff members who are offered a gift or benefit should always consider the value and purpose of a gift or benefit before making any decision about accepting it. A gift that is more than nominal value must not become personal property. It should be politely refused, or the contributor should be advised it is accepted on behalf of the School.
- 3.25.6. When such a gift is accepted, the Principal must be advised, and the Principal will determine how it should be treated and make a record of its receipt. Depending on the nature and value of the gift, it may be appropriate to record the gift in the asset register as a donation or other such record established for that purpose.
- 3.25.7. Sometimes staff might, in the course of their work, win a prize of significant monetary value (e.g. a computer from another organisation). Prizes are usually considered the property of the school. If staff win a prize, they must advise their Principal, who will determine how the prize should be treated and recorded.

3.26. **Privacy, Confidentiality and Communication:**

- 3.26.1. Staff should be mindful of confidentiality when in discussions with parents. A guarantee of confidentiality cannot be provided if the matter under discussion requires mandatory reporting.
- 3.26.2. Staff should not disclose personal information about another staff member to students, members of the school community or the public or discuss their work performance except if authorised by the Principal in the context of grievance / conflict resolution or when required or authorised to do so by law or when called to do so in court.
- 3.26.3. All matters discussed in staff meetings and staff memos are to be treated confidentially and not discussed with students, members of the school community or the public.
- 3.26.4. The media should not be given access to students or allowed entry to the school without the express permission of the CEO.
- 3.26.5. Staff should not make any comments to the media about the school, students or parents without the express permission of the CEO.

3.26.6. Staff must be aware of and comply with the provisions of the Personal Information Protection Act as well as CST's Privacy Policy.

3.26.7. Sensitive and personal information should be provided only to people, either within or outside CST schools, who are authorised to have access to the information.

3.26.8. Staff should always exercise caution and sound judgment in discussing the personal information of students, parents, staff and other people with other CST staff. Normally information should be limited to those who need to know in order to conduct their duties.

3.27. Confidential information:

3.27.1. Staff of CST may be entrusted with access to information of a sensitive nature to enable duties to be carried out. Such confidential information must be used only for the work-related purpose it was intended.

3.27.2. Unless authorised to do so by legislation, staff must not disclose or use any confidential information without the express permission of the Principal or the CEO. This continues to apply after a person has left the employment of CST.

3.27.3. Staff must make sure confidential information, in any form, is handled carefully, and the integrity of such information is always in compliance with CST's Privacy Policy and any relevant privacy legislation. Staff must ensure this information cannot be accessed by unauthorised people.

3.27.4. Staff should always exercise caution and sound judgment in discussing the personal information of students, parents, staff and other people with other CST staff. Normally information should be limited to those who need to know in order to conduct their duties.

3.28. Use of CST and school resources:

3.28.1. Staff must ensure all school/CST equipment, resources and consumable items are used appropriately for the work and business of the school/CST. Limited and occasional private use of school/CST equipment and resources may occur, providing it does not adversely affect the performance of the staff member's work duties, or the work duties of others, or the business or reputation of the school/CST.

3.28.2. Staff must ensure school/CST equipment is maintained and used in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements and all use is both safe and legal.

3.28.3. Staff must have the approval to use school/CST equipment and resources off-site for work purposes and must ensure the equipment is safely stored and secured.

3.28.4. Staff must ensure they do not breach copyright law or licensing arrangements when copying any school/ CST property such as software, library and reference materials or copying other property for school/CST use.

3.28.5. Staff must not seek financial gain from work produced for the school/CST without the authorisation of the school/CST.

3.28.6. Staff whose work duties involve purchasing or managing resources on behalf of the school/CST must act within their delegated authority and comply with legislative requirements, policies and procedures for the purchase, use and disposal of any school/CST resource.

3.28.7. Staff can refer to the appropriate CST policy or policies for further information.

3.29. **Record Keeping:**

3.29.1. All staff have a responsibility:

- to create and maintain full, accurate and honest records of their activities, decisions and other business transactions; and
- to capture or store records in the organisation's record systems.

3.29.2. Staff must not destroy or remove records without appropriate authority.

3.29.3. Supervisors have a responsibility to ensure staff reporting to them comply with their records management obligations.

3.29.4. Staff responsible for assessing and recording marks for students' work must do so accurately, fairly and in a manner consistent with relevant policy and the requirements of the school.

3.29.5. Staff must maintain the confidentiality of all official information and documents which are not in the public domain or which have not been published.

3.30. **Copyright and intellectual property:**

3.30.1. When creating materials, staff need to ensure the intellectual property rights of others are not infringed and information is recorded about any third-party copyright or other rights included in materials.

3.30.2. Advice relating to sharing or licensing CST intellectual property should be sought from the CEO.

3.30.3. A school or functional entity cannot give away or assign its intellectual property rights without the approval of the CEO.

3.30.4. Any copyright of any material developed by a staff member which relates to their employment with CST will belong to CST. This may apply even if the material was developed in the staff member's own time or at home.

3.30.5. Staff should not use CST's intellectual property (including copyright) for private purposes without obtaining written permission from the CEO.

4. **References and Additional Related Documents**

- CST's Vision, Mission and Values Statement
- CST's Statement of Christian Faith
- CST's Safeguarding Children & Young People Policy
- CST's Responding to Child Abuse Reports and Allegations Policy
- CST's Volunteer Policy
- CST's External Provider Code of Conduct Policy
- Relevant Position Description and Person Specifications
- This Policy should also be read in conjunction with all other policies developed and produced by Christian Schools Tasmania.

5. **Record Keeping**

5.1 This Policy is to be kept for three (3) years until review, unless there is a significant legislative or organisational change requiring earlier review.

5.2 The master copy is kept in <https://www.cst.tas.edu.au/services> under Policy Documents, online in read-only in PDF form. Any printed or downloaded copies are deemed uncontrolled.

APPENDIX

GENERAL DEFINITION OF TERMS:

Where referred to in this document:

Christian Schools Tasmania (CST) means an association of Christians who, through their Board of Directors, are legally responsible for Calvin Christian School, Channel Christian School, Emmanuel Christian School and Northern Christian School.

The School refers to the CST school to whom the Policy applies.

The Board means the Board of Directors of Christian Schools Tasmania.

Executive is a forum including the Chief Executive Officer, Principals and the Business Manager.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the person appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Principal means the person charged with responsibility for the operation of an Association school, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Compliance Manager is the person appointed to the position of Compliance Manager of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Business Manager is the person appointed to the position of Business Manager of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Manager means a person appointed to a managerial position within CST.

Staff is any person either employed by CST either on a casual, part-time or permanent basis as well as volunteers, contractors and sub-contractors engaged in working at a CST School.

Parent is a person who is the legal guardian of a child enrolled at a CST school.

Child means any student enrolled at a CST school.