

## Child Safety Code of Conduct

### Child Safe

Viewbank College is a child safe environment in accordance with the Victorian Government Guidelines. Viewbank College actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of all students, and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment, in accordance with their legal obligations including child safe standards. Viewbank College has a Child Safety Code of Conduct consistent with the Department of Education and Training's exemplar.

Viewbank 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.

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 of Education and Training 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 Viewbank College will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide an inclusive, safe and orderly College and other learning environments. The Principal and College leaders of Viewbank 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 College camps and in the use of digital technology and social media.

### 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 school's statement of commitment to child safety at all times and adhering to the school's Child Safe policy.
- 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) students.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with Culturally and/or Linguistically Diverse (CALD) backgrounds.
- Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.
- Fostering a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and Intersex (LGBTQI) students.

- Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the College's leadership or Child Safety Officer.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- If child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

**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.

*Staff, volunteers, contractors and any other member of the College community are required to sign and date this document as proof that they have received and read it.*

*Staff member name: .....*

*Signature: .....*

*Date: .....*