

# Code of Conduct

APPROVED BY	School Council	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	Senior Vice Principal
DATE OF APPROVAL	25 May 2016	PROSPECTIVE REVIEW DATE	2019 – or prior if changes in legislation occur
CIRCULATION:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Members of School Council, Foundation Board, Governance Committees</li> <li>✓ Staff</li> <li>✓ Volunteers (including parent volunteers)</li> <li>✓ Contractors</li> <li>✓ Parents</li> </ul>	BRIEFING HISTORY	Staff Briefing: 10 May 2016

## I. RATIONALE

I.1 Mentone Girls' Grammar School (the School) behaviours of being:

I.1.1 Personal, Personable and Professional in everything we do;

I.1.2 Authentic, Respectful and Ethical in our communications with students, parents, colleagues and peers;

I.1.3 Collaborative, Enterprising and Bold in our approach to our work underpin the Code of Conduct.

I.2 The Code of Conduct (Code) outlines the standard of behaviour expected by the School Community. It is designed to assist individuals to understand their responsibilities and obligations and provide guidance on expected behaviour at the School, or if faced with an ethical dilemma or conflict of interest in their work involving colleagues, students and the School community.

I.3 The Code provides standards for the way individuals must conduct themselves and provides a practical set of protocols to help individuals make decisions in their day to day work, whatever role they fulfil. The Code does not seek to encompass all possible scenarios, however, it provides a set of principles to guide staff on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The Code should be read in conjunction with School policies, procedures and workplace agreements which can be found on *mConnect*.

I.4 The Code is designed to promote a culture of fair, respectful and ethical behaviour and to ensure the School meets its obligations under State and Commonwealth legislation.

## 2. TO WHOM DOES THIS CODE APPLY?

2.1 This Code applies to all School Council members, Foundation Board Members, School Governance Committee members, employees, contractors and volunteers (including parents who volunteer).

2.2 Some individuals will also be members of a recognised professional body (such as teachers, psychologists, accountants etc.) with their own professional codes of conduct and must also adhere to these. Nothing in this Code is expected to require any individual to breach their relevant professional code. Should there be an occasion where you are unsure, please consult with either the Senior Vice Principal or the Business Manager.

### **3. WHEN DOES THIS CODE APPLY?**

- 3.1 This Code applies whenever an individual would be reasonably expected to be identified as a member of the School community. This may include occasions outside working hours and off-campus, including online activities, school camps, sporting events, excursions and competitions.

### **4. WHAT HAPPENS IF I BREACH THIS CODE?**

- 4.1 Failure to comply with the principles of this Code will be considered a serious breach of this Policy. Breaches of the Code will be investigated and may result in disciplinary action. Complaints will be dealt with in accordance with relevant School policy.

### **5. WHAT IF I AM NOT SURE?**

- 5.1 The Code cannot anticipate every possible circumstance, but if you are in doubt it may be helpful to reflect on the following:

- 5.1.1 *What would my colleagues, students or members of the School community expect me to do?*
- 5.1.2 *What would be the reaction if this was reported publicly?*
- 5.1.3 *What impact might this have on the School's reputation and my personal reputation?*

## **CORE PRINCIPLES OF THE CODE**

### **6. WE HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCHOOL'S BEST INTERESTS**

- 6.1 Perform the duties associated with your position diligently, impartially and conscientiously, to the best of your ability.
- 6.2 Perform your duties competently and responsibly in a manner that supports the highest quality of education to students, recognising that you are accountable for the decisions you make and the actions you take.
- 6.3 Use all of the School's systems and equipment appropriately and observe the acceptable and appropriate use of all electronic and digital devices.
- 6.4 Dress appropriately and in a professional manner that demonstrates respect for others and models appropriate standards for students.
- 6.5 Conduct yourself as an appropriate role model for students and colleagues and maintain high standards of personal conduct at all times.

### **7. WE HIGHLY VALUE CHILD SAFETY AND HAVE ZERO TOLERANCE FOR CHILD ABUSE<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> **child abuse** includes:

- a) any act committed against a child involving –
  - i. a sexual offence; or
  - ii. an offence under section 49B(2) of the *Crimes Act 1958* (grooming); and
- b) the infliction, on a child, of –
  - i. physical violence; or
  - ii. serious emotional or psychological harm; and
- c) serious neglect of a child.

- 7.1 Support the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children/students and uphold the School's commitment to the highest standards of child safety at all times.
- 7.2 Take all practicable steps to protect children/students from child abuse.
- 7.3 Listen and respond to the concerns of children, either for themselves and/or others.
- 7.4 Promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children, particularly Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children, children with a disability, children who are vulnerable and children with racial, ethnic, linguistic and gender diverse backgrounds.
- 7.5 Report any child safety concerns to the Principal or other appropriate staff member and ensure that any suspected, alleged or actual child abuse is reported to the authorities (police, Department of Health & Human Services) in accordance with the School's Child Protection Policies, as listed in 7.6. Please remember that it is your responsibility to report to the authorities and that the School will support you in that process, but it is not sufficient to report the matter to the Principal.
- 7.6 Relevant School Child Protection policies related to reporting suspected, alleged or actual child abuse are as follows:
  - 7.6.1 Child Protection - Mandatory Reporting Policy
  - 7.6.2 Child Protection - Reporting of Child Sexual Offences by Non-Mandatory Reporters
  - 7.6.3 Child Protection - Abuse, Grooming & Neglect Identification & Initial Notification

## **8. WE TREAT OTHERS WITH RESPECT, VALUE DIFFERENCE AND STRIVE FOR A SAFE WORKING ENVIRONMENT**

- 8.1 Treat all people with dignity, respect, courtesy and sensitivity to their rights.
- 8.2 Do not unlawfully harass, bully, victimise or discriminate against any person (adult or student) on the basis of personal attributes including aboriginality, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, race, religion, political affiliation, marital status or sexual preference.
- 8.3 Never tolerate behaviour that a reasonable person would consider offensive, intimidating, humiliating, aggressive, threatening or abusive.
- 8.4 Promote a safe working environment by taking responsibility for health and safety and reporting any issues, incidents, injury or property damage as soon as possible.
- 8.5 Never treat anyone unfavourably because they have brought a genuine complaint of improper behaviour.
- 8.6 Acknowledge and respect the authority of the School's Council and Principal.

## **9. WE AVOID AND MANAGE CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- 9.1 The potential for a conflict of interest to arise when an individual has private interests that could influence or appear to influence judgements made during the course of their professional duty. All individuals must ensure that there are no real or apparent conflicts of interest.
- 9.2 Be aware of potential, perceived or actual conflicts of interest and disclose them immediately to the Principal or Business Manager.
- 9.3 Never accept any gift, reward or entertainment if it could create an obligation or expectation, or could be perceived to create an obligation or expectation, that would be in conflict with your role at Mentone Girls'.
- 9.4 Maintain an arm's length relationship when dealing with suppliers and appropriate professional distance when dealing with students and parents.

- 9.5 Do not promote personal interests or agendas amongst members of the School Community, or use the School's resources for personal purposes, without first seeking the permission of the Principal.

## **10. WE RESPECT AND MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY**

- 10.1 Individuals are entitled to confidentiality and privacy with respect to information relating to them.
- 10.2 Do not share private or confidential information held by the School, either online or otherwise, to other staff or members of the School community unless it is legitimately required for them to undertake their role.
- 10.3 Collect, use, maintain and destroy information, particularly personal or sensitive information, in accordance with legislation and applicable School policies.
- 10.4 Never disclose any information about Mentone Girls' that is not already public knowledge without the appropriate authority to do so.

## **11. WE COMPLY WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE LAW, THIS CODE AND THE SCHOOL'S POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- 11.1 Comply with this Code and all relevant laws, regulations, policies and procedures.
- 11.2 Honestly report any actual or suspected breach of this Code, or any law, regulation, policy or procedure.

## **12. RELATED POLICIES**

1. Child Protection and Safety Policy
2. Professional Boundaries Policy
3. Child Safe Behaviour List – Do's and Don'ts



EST. 1899  
MENTONE GIRLS'  
GRAMMAR

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **AGREEMENT TO ABIDE BY THIS CODE OF CONDUCT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have read, understand and accept the  
Mentone Girls' Grammar School Code of Conduct and agree to abide by these requirements.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_