

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT



BRISBANE GIRLS
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

1 Purpose

The purpose of this Code of Conduct (**Code**) is to provide information to Brisbane Girls Grammar School's (the **School**) staff (as defined in Section 7 of this Code) to understand their responsibilities and obligations in relation to the expected standard of conduct and behaviour, including obligations relating to child safety and wellbeing.

2 Scope

This Code applies to all employees, professional service providers, volunteers (including parent volunteers), contractors and other paid and/or unpaid education and care participants of Brisbane Girls Grammar School. The School requires that all staff read and comply with this Code and with all relevant School policies and procedures.

This Code applies in all circumstances where School-related duties or interactions occur, including but not limited to:

- (a) on the School campus
- (b) during School activities, programs, excursions, camps and events
- (c) in online environments used by students and staff, and
- (d) outside of School hours when acting in a capacity connected to the School or when responsible for students.

3 Policy

The School is committed to ensuring a safe, supportive, and positive environment for students, staff, volunteers, contractors and professional services providers. This includes maintaining a child-safe culture and ensuring that all members of the School community understand their shared responsibility for promoting the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of children and young people.

This Code should be read in conjunction with relevant legislation such as the *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)*, *including the Reportable Conduct Scheme*, *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024*, and relevant School policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Brisbane Girls Grammar School Enterprise Agreement 2025, the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Protection Policy and Child Risk Management Strategy.

This Code establishes the School's expectations regarding conduct and behaviour. It does not form part of any contract of employment or engagement and may be amended by the School from time to time. Nothing in this Code creates contractual rights or obligations.

4 Principles

All persons engaged with the School hold positions of trust and must act in ways that protect and promote the safety, wellbeing, dignity and rights of students and contribute to a culture where concerns about child safety are raised and addressed promptly.

They are expected to act with integrity, respect, accountability and professionalism in all aspects of their engagement with the School.

Professional conduct extends beyond compliance with policies and procedures. It requires behaviour that reflects the School's values supports a culture of trust, safety, inclusion and excellence, and maintains confidence in the School's reputation and operations.

5 Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Staff members

By accepting employment with the School, staff members agree to comply with this Code and uphold the highest standards of professional, ethical, and child-safe conduct.

5.2 Volunteers, contractors, professional services providers

Volunteers, contractors and professional services providers engaged by the School must be aware of, and comply with, this Code.

6 Breach of the Code

All staff members, volunteers, contractors and professional service providers hold a position of trust and are accountable for their actions.

For staff, where there has been a breach of the Code, the School may take disciplinary or other action up to and including termination of employment.

For volunteers, contractors, and professional service providers, where there has been a breach of the Code, the School may determine whether termination of engagement is required, at the discretion of the Principal.

The School reserves the right to determine, in its entirety, the response to any breach of this Code.

Any staff member who becomes aware that another staff member, volunteer, contractor or professional service provider has breached, or intends to breach, this Code, must report the matter to the Principal, or a Deputy Principal immediately.

7 Definitions

- (a) **Child or Young Person:** Refers to children from birth to 18 years of age but also includes young adults over the age of 18 who are students at a Secondary School or young adults with developmental disabilities.
- (b) **Harm** is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on physical, psychological, or emotional wellbeing, irrespective of cause. Causes of harm may include, but are not limited to, physical, psychological or emotional abuse, harm or neglect, or sexual abuse or exploitation. Harm may be caused by a single act, omission, or circumstance, or by a series or combination of acts, omissions or circumstances.
- (c) **Professional Relationship:** The interactions between staff of Brisbane Girls Grammar School and students in the context of the staff member's role in the School. This may include but not limited to:
 - teaching or instruction
 - supervision or coaching
 - administration or organisation
 - student (pastoral) care or counselling
 - operational or support services
 - other tasks as delegated by the Principal or her delegate.
- (d) **Reportable Conduct:** includes any conduct engaged in by a staff member, volunteer, contractor or professional service provider towards a child that is reportable to the Queensland Family and Child Commission under the Reportable Conduct Scheme. Reportable conduct may arise from a single incident or a pattern of behaviour and may occur in person, online, or through the use of technology. Reportable conduct relates to all children, not just Brisbane Girls Grammar School students, and are acts committed against, with, or in the presence of a child under the following categories:
- (e) **Child sexual offence**, including but not limited to sexual acts or touching, child grooming, production, dissemination or possession of child abuse material, rape or sexual assault

- (f) **Sexual misconduct**, including but not limited to inappropriate touching, sexual comments, jokes or conversations, use of sexual language, discussing personal sexual experiences or desires
- (g) **Ill-treatment**, including but not limited to excessive, hostile or degrading demands or comments, inappropriate forms of behaviour management, humiliation, verbal abuse
- (h) **Significant neglect**, including but not limited to serious failure in care or protection from risk of harm, not providing adequate food, clothing, shelter, supervision or medical care
- (i) **Physical violence**, including but not limited to physical harm or force, anticipation of violence, physical intimidation
- (j) **Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm**, including but not limited to bullying, taunting or ridiculing, intimidation or threats, repeated rejection, ignoring, or emotionally withholding support, racist or discriminatory behaviour
- (k) **Staff**: Refers to employees, contractors, professional service providers, volunteers and other paid and/or unpaid education and care participants of Brisbane Girls Grammar School.
- (l) **Student**: Any person, regardless of age, who is enrolled at the School.

8 Expected Standard of Conduct

By accepting employment or engagement with the School, staff, volunteers, contractors and professional service providers agree honestly and faithfully to serve the School diligently, maintain ethical, and professional standards at all times, and uphold the safety, dignity and rights of students.

You are expected to:

- (a) at all times, act in the best interests of the students and the School
- (b) demonstrate the highest standards of professional behaviour, and exercise sound judgement
- (c) perform your duties or activities competently and be accountable for your performance and behaviour
- (d) follow reasonable instructions given by your line manager, their delegate or the person in charge of the activity
- (e) actively refrain from, and discourage, any form of bullying, harassment, or discrimination
- (f) avoid language and behaviour that might be reasonably perceived as offensive, abusive, intimidating, or derogatory
- (g) act honestly, ethically and with integrity and in good faith in fulfilling your duties
- (h) be courteous, respectful and responsive in dealing with colleagues, students, parents, volunteers, contractors and members of the public
- (i) promote dignity, courtesy and respect and avoid behaviour that is, or could reasonably be perceived as workplace bullying, sexual harassment abuse, discrimination or other unlawful behaviour
- (j) take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of oneself, colleagues, students, parents, volunteers, contractors and members of the public
- (k) familiarise yourself with, and follow, relevant policies and procedures, including when raising concerns about behaviour or conduct
- (l) maintain professional boundaries with students at all times
- (m) uphold the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of:
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
 - students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
 - students with a disability

- students unable to live at home
 - LGBTQ+ students
 - students who may be otherwise vulnerable
- (n) ensure your conduct, at all times, is consistent with the ethos of the School and does not bring the School into disrepute
- (o) at all times hold a Positive Working With Children Check (Blue Card) or relevant professional body registration that allows you to work and/or interact with children according to the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*
- (p) (staff only) continuously seek opportunities to improve your knowledge and skills, including participating in relevant professional development
- (q) raise concerns respectfully and through the appropriate channels
- (r) dress in a professional manner that is appropriate for your role and/or activity
- (s) disclose actual, perceived or potential conflicts.

9 Professional Behaviour with Students

9.1 Acceptable Behaviours

To promote and protect the safety of children and young people, staff, volunteers, contractors, and any adult involved in School activities are expected to:

- (a) uphold the School's commitment to child safety and comply with the School's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Protection Policy and Child Risk Management Strategy
- (b) refrain from engaging in any action that may be deemed Reportable Conduct (as defined in Section 7 of this Code)
- (c) treat all students and families with respect, within and outside the School environment
- (d) use positive, respectful and age-appropriate language and treat students fairly and consistently
- (e) listen to and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of students, particularly when they disclose concerns about their safety or the safety of another person
- (f) ensure, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student; one-to-one interactions must occur in open, observable spaces or be visible to another adult
- (g) maintain clear, appropriate and transparent professional boundaries at all times, including in online environments
- (h) ensure all communication with students occurs through authorised school channels and is appropriate to the professional context
- (i) report any concerns or allegations of child abuse, harm, or inappropriate behaviour to the Principal or a Deputy Principal immediately, regardless of perceived severity
- (j) understand and comply with all mandatory reporting obligations and internal reporting procedures
- (k) act promptly to ensure the immediate safety of a student if abuse, harm or inappropriate behaviour is suspected
- (l) encourage students to express their views, participate in decisions affecting them and raise concerns about their safety
- (m) reporting of conduct that may not constitute misconduct or Reportable Conduct, but which may indicate a breach of professional boundaries or create concerns regarding student safety.

9.2 Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff, volunteers, contractors and service providers must not engage in conduct that breaches professional boundaries, creates an actual or perceived inappropriate relationship with a student, constitutes grooming behaviour, causes emotional harm, or may reasonably be regarded as sexual misconduct.

This includes behaviour that is secretive, exclusive, exploitative, intimidating, overly familiar, discriminatory, or otherwise inconsistent with maintaining a safe and professional relationship with students.

The following behaviours are prohibited and may result in disciplinary action, reportable conduct allegations and investigations or referral to external authorities:

- (a) ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions, observations or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- (b) develop relationships with students that may be perceived as exclusive, favouritism or amount to grooming behaviour
- (c) engage with students in a way that is not justified by an educational or professional context
- (d) initiating or agreeing to a sexual relationship with a student
- (e) overlook or ignore overly familiar or inappropriate behaviour by another adult towards a student
- (f) discuss intimate or sexual topics, or use sexualised language, except where required for teaching the curriculum or providing professional guidance
- (g) treat a student unfavourably based on disability, age, gender, race, culture, identity, sexuality, or vulnerability
- (h) communicate with students through personal or private channels, including private social media accounts, personal email, private messaging apps, or text messages (except in the case of urgent safety matters)
- (i) provide support, advice or engagement to a student that is outside the professional role
- (j) use personal devices, accounts or platforms in a way that compromises professional boundaries or exposes personal information
- (k) photograph or video students except in accordance with School policy and with appropriate consent
- (l) consume alcohol or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs when responsible for students or when working with students
- (m) have contact with students outside of School activities unless necessary for curriculum, professional duties, pastoral responsibilities and with appropriate permissions. If a parent of a student, refer to the Staff Protective Practices Policy for further guidelines.

10 Professional Responsibilities

10.1 Appropriate use of electronic communication and social networking sites

The School provides electronic communication facilities and resources for staff and students for educational and administrative purposes. Staff must comply with the School's Acceptable Use of the Network (Employee) Policy when accessing these resources.

During class time, teaching staff may only use mobile phones or other electronic devices for the purpose of child safety, student learning and related work tasks. Personal use of such devices during class time is not permitted.

The School recognises that staff, volunteers, contractors and professional service providers may engage in social media, online forums and other public communications in a personal capacity.

While the School respects the right of individuals to participate in public discussion and express personal views, such participation must not compromise professional obligations, the safety and wellbeing of students, or the reputation of the School.

10.2 Fitness for Duty

Maintaining a safe workplace and environment is the responsibility of every person who is engaged with the School. Therefore, every person engaged with the School must ensure their capacity to perform their duties is not impaired by tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs, vapes or medication. This includes:

- (a) not being under the influence, or in possession of, alcohol or illegal drugs during work hours, or at any other time while they have responsibility for students. This includes periods outside of School hours, such as on field trips, excursions, or camps
- (b) ensuring personal use of any medication (prescribed or over the counter) does not adversely affect their work performance or put at risk their, or any other person's, health and safety
- (c) not smoking or vaping on the School campus or nearby areas, or at any other time when being responsible for, or in contact with students
- (d) not consuming alcohol on the School campus unless at an approved School function.
- (e) reasonable consumption of alcohol at an approved School event (on or off campus) is permitted, but only if the staff member is not responsible for the care and/or supervision of students during or after the function.

10.3 Confidentiality and Privacy

The School has a legal responsibility and is committed to protecting the sensitive and personal information of current and former students, staff, and parents/guardians.

Staff are expected to:

- (a) respect the privacy and confidentiality of others at all times
- (b) exercise caution and sound judgement in discussing or recording the personal information of students, parents, and staff with another person
- (c) only access, use, or disclose student and/or family information where it is necessary to perform your duties and responsibilities as per your engagement with the School
- (d) treat all personal information relating to students, families, or staff members and/or information about the School confidentially. This information must not be disclosed except:
 - where the person concerned consents to the disclosure
 - the disclosure of information about a student is to another staff member who has a professional role in relation to the student and the information is relevant to the role
 - the information has been requested by a court order or other legal request
- (e) respect the confidentiality of commercial information of the School
- (f) read and comply with the School's Privacy Policy, which is available publicly on the School's website.

10.4 Responsibilities Relating to Reporting

Staff, volunteers, contractors and professional service providers must comply with their reporting obligations under legislative requirements and the School's Child Protection Policy and Child Risk Management Strategy.

Under the Child Safe Organisations Act 2024, it is mandatory for all staff, volunteers, contractors or professional service providers who become aware of reportable conduct or a reportable conviction to report the matter as soon as possible to the Principal.

Reportable conduct allegations must be reported whether it occurs during the course of a staff member, volunteer, contractor or professional service provider performing work for the School or whether it occurs when they are off-duty or out of hours.

Concerns must be reported regardless of whether they involve a colleague, manager, volunteer, contractor, professional service provider, parent or member of the School community. A person making a report is not required to investigate, prove or substantiate a concern before reporting.

Allegations of reportable conduct or reportable convictions can also be reported directly to the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

Staff, volunteers and contractors must inform the Principal or Deputy Principal if they:

- (a) have concerns regarding the safety, welfare, and wellbeing of a child or young person
- (b) have concerns regarding the inappropriate behaviour of another staff member, volunteer, contractor, or professional service provider
- (c) are charged with, or convicted of, a serious offence, an offence that involves reportable conduct or become subject to a Domestic Violence Order
- (d) become aware that another adult engaged with the School has been charged with, or convicted of, an offence (including a finding of guilt without the court proceeding to a conviction) involving a 'reportable conduct'.

Where a report relates to the Principal, the Chair of the Board of Trustees should be informed.

11 Related documents

11.1 Relevant legislation

Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)

Child Safe Organisations Act 2024

Criminal Code Act 1899

11.2 Relevant Policies

- (a) Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- (b) [Child Protection Policy and Child Risk Management Strategy](#)
- (c) [Brisbane Girls Grammar School Enterprise Agreement 2025](#)
- (d) [Code of Ethics for Teachers](#) (QCT)
- (e) [Code of Conduct for Psychologists](#) (AHPRA)
- (f) [Code of Conduct for Nurses](#) (AHPRA)
- (g) [Complaints Policy](#)
- (h) Protective Practices Policy for Staff
- (i) [Privacy Policy](#)

12 Review and monitoring

This Code shall be reviewed every year or in the event of any information, incident, legislative changes or organisational practice that would demonstrate the need for a review.

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