



ISLAMIC COLLEGE OF MELBOURNE

Code of Conduct

1) Rationale

This code of conduct outlines expected standards for appropriate behaviour with and in the company of children, including online conduct.

The purpose of a child safety code of conduct:

- is intended to promote child safety in the school environment.
- spells out professional boundaries and acceptable and unacceptable adult/child relationships and behaviour. It should be unambiguous, widely disseminated and supported by supervision, professional development and training.
- helps schools, staff and volunteers to raise behavioural issues. It provides a reference point for discussion when there may otherwise be confusion, uncertainty, or a lack of confidence about boundaries for appropriate behaviour with children.

This code of conduct is consistent with the college's child safety strategies, policies and procedures. It is developed in consideration of the diversity of the students enrolled at the college, including children with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and vulnerable children. In considering this diversity, children must always be protected from harm.

The college uses this code of conduct:

- as part of induction training for new staff and volunteers
- as part of refresher training for existing staff and volunteers
- to inform parents/carers and other persons associated with the college what behaviour they can expect from the college's staff and volunteers
- to support and inform college protocols and reporting procedures should breaches of the code be suspected or identified

Employment advertisements and contracts should include reference to this code of conduct.

2) Acceptable Behaviours:

All staff, volunteers and board members of the Islamic College of Melbourne are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children, as noted below.

All personnel of the Islamic College of Melbourne are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to the Islamic College of Melbourne child safe policy at all times / upholding the Islamic College of Melbourne's statement of commitment to child safety at all time
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another

- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to the Islamic College of Melbourne's Child Safety Officers and ensure any allegation to be reported to the police or child protection
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the *Crimes Act 1958*
- reporting any child safety concerns to the Islamic College of Melbourne's Child Safety Officers
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant college activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

3) Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff and volunteers must not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometime, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- have contact with a child or their family outside of our college without our child safety officer's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate)
- have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters or communicating with students through the college emailing system to assist students with their work)
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse
- use any personal communication channels/device such as a personal email account
- exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking sites or email addresses
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians
- work with children whilst under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs at the college or at college events in the presence of children.

4) Reporting or Raising Concerns about Staff or Volunteer Conduct:

Any student or staff member who has concerns regarding staff or volunteer conduct must report this concern to the Child Safety Officers using the report template for this purpose. The issue will be investigated and if the findings indicate any grounds or doubt in respect of the conduct of the staff member or volunteer, this will be immediately reported. Below is the process for investigation any reported concerns and how the college handles them:

a) Response to Allegations

When responding to allegations about a staff member or volunteer, the Child Safety Officers should immediately look into the matter. However, any allegation of reportable conduct to be made against the Principal needs to be made to the Chairman of the School Board.

b) Steps in the investigative process

Please refer to the flow chart located in Policy 14.3.5. Responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse.

c) Risk Assessment

When an incident is reported or observed the Child Safety Officers will:-

- conduct an initial and subsequent risk assessment, including an assessment of the safety of the child/ren concerned;
- decide what action, if any, e.g. suspension, is to be taken regarding the employee who has had an allegation made against them, and
- assess and monitor the risk of continued access of the employee (who has had an allegation made or conviction recorded against them), to children attending the School.

d) Documentation and Record Keeping

All documents held by the college and relating to an allegation or conviction of reportable conduct or details of behaviour that does not constitute reportable conduct will be kept on a strictly confidential basis.

Should the Department of Human Services or Victorian Police had been notified in accordance with the college's obligations, the related documents will be kept indefinitely and stored in a secure location separate to the employee's file.

The Human Resource Manager in consultation with the Child Safety Officers will be responsible for keeping and storing all records relating to all matters addressed by this code of conduct and only those persons whom the college is obliged to advise of this information or need to be aware of the contents of such documents will have access to them.

5) Further information

Further information on child safe standards can be found on the [Department of Health and Human Services website](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/projects-and-initiatives/children,-youth-and-family-services/creating-child-safe-colleges): <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/plans,-programs-and-projects/projects-and-initiatives/children,-youth-and-family-services/creating-child-safe-colleges>

Additional resources for colleges in the child safe standards toolkit can be found on the [Department of Health and Human Services website](http://www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards): <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/about-the-department/documents-and-resources/policies,-guidelines-and-legislation/child-safe-standards>. In particular, [**An Overview to the Victorian child safe standards**](#), has information to help colleges understand the requirements of each of the child safe standards, including examples of measures colleges can put in place, a self-audit tool and a glossary of key terms: <www.dhs.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/word_doc/0005/955598/Child-safe-standards_overview.doc>

Registered schools can contact the Department of Education and Training: child.safe.schools@edumail.vic.gov.au

Early childhood services operating under the *National Quality Framework* or *Children's Services Act 1996* should contact: licensed.childrens.services@edumail.vic.gov.au

Licensed children's services enquiry line: 1300 307 415

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the Islamic College of Melbourne Child Safety Officers .

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Supersedes:	New Code of Conduct	
Authorised by:	Board Chair	Date of Authorisation: 6 August 2016
Review Date:	Three Year Cycle	
Policy Owner:	Islamic College of Melbourne	