



**AL-AMEEN COLLEGE**  
**STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT**  
**Part 1**

## CONTENTS

<b>PREFACE</b>	
<b>MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL</b> .....	1
<b>SCOPE</b> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<b>SECTION 1: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT</b> .....	2
<b>Relationships with Students</b> .....	3
<b>Principle 1.1: Teachers provide opportunities for all students to learn</b> .....	3
<b>Principle 1.2: Teachers will treat their students with courtesy and dignity</b> .....	4
<b>Principle 1.3: Teachers work within the limits of their professional expertise</b> .....	4
<b>Principle 1.4: Teachers maintain objectivity in their relationships with students. In their professional role, teachers do not behave as a friend or a parent.</b> .....	5
<b>Principle 1.5: Teachers are always in a professional relationship with the students at Al-Ameen College whether at College or not</b> .....	5
<b>Principle 1.6: Teachers maintain a professional relationship with parents (guardians and caregivers)</b> .....	6
<b>Principle 1.7: Teachers work in collaborative relationships with students' families and communities</b> .....	7
<b>Principle 1.8: Collegiality is an integral part of the work of teachers (Relationships with Colleagues)</b> .....	7
<b>SECTION 2: PERSONAL CONDUCT</b> .....	7
<b>Principle 2.1: The personal conduct of a teacher will have an impact on the professional standing of that teacher and on the profession as a whole.</b> .....	7
<b>SECTION 3: PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE</b> .....	8
<b>Principle 3.1: Teachers value their professionalism, and set and maintain high standards of competence</b> .....	8
<b>Principle 3.2: Teachers are aware of the legal requirements that pertain to their profession.</b> .....	8
<b>SECTION 4: COLLEGE GOVERNANCE</b> .....	9
<b>Principle 4.1: Occupational health and safety &amp; duty of care</b> .....	9
<b>Principle 4.2: Reporting critical incidents</b> .....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
<b>Principle 4.3: Supervision of students</b> .....	10
<b>Principle 4.4: Respect for people and property</b> .....	10
<b>Principle 4.5: Appropriate use of electronic communication and social networking sites</b> .....	17
<b>Principle 4.6 Use of alcohol drugs or tobacco</b> .....	
<b>Principle 4.7: Identifying and managing conflicts of interest</b> .....	
<b>Principle 4.8: Communication and protecting confidential information</b> .....	
<b>Principle 4.9: Record keeping</b> .....	
<b>Principle 4.10: Copyright and intellectual property</b> .....	

Principle 4.11: Financial accountability and safeguarding college assets.....	
Principle 4.12: Declaring Gifts, Benefits or Bribes.....	
<b>SECTION 5: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT .....</b>	<b>13</b>
Principle 5.1: Compliance with the Law .....	13
Principle 5.2: Reporting Unethical Behaviour .....	13
Principle 5.3: Breach of Code of Conduct .....	13
<b>SECTION 6: APPENDIX TO THIS CODE OF CONDUCT .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>SECTION 7: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....</b>	<b>16</b>

## **PREFACE**

Al-Ameen College is committed to providing a child-safe environment which safeguards all students and is committed to promoting practices which provides for the safety, wellbeing and welfare of our children and young people. Al-Ameen College expects all College community members including staff, volunteers, and contractors to share this commitment.

Staff are in a unique position of responsibility and authority and must make every effort to ensure that our College provides a child safe environment. Teachers in particular are of primary importance when it comes to detecting abuse and preventing abuse from occurring.

The current Guide to the Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Colleges in Western Australia 2020, requires Colleges to implement a Code of Conduct for all staff, College Board members, practicum students and volunteers, which:

- (a) is consistent with the (Child Safe Organisations) Example Code of Conduct, published by the Australian Human Rights Commission, and with the National Child Safe Organisation Principles;
- (b) requires them to report objectively observable behaviour which breaches or is suspected of breaching the Code, other than those subject to mandatory reporting obligations, to the Principal, a designated senior staff member or the Chair of the College Board; and
- (c) assures their protection from victimisation or other adverse consequences if they make such reports in good faith.

The aim of this Code is to outline the standards of behaviour required of all employees, volunteers and contractors of Al-Ameen College. It provides guidance about behaviour, relationships, attitudes and responsibilities expected of employees, volunteers and contractors. This 'Code of Conduct' aims to ensure the highest possible professional standards and ensure that employees, volunteers and contractors know the legal and ethical obligations that arise from working within a College. As a College, we are in a unique position of responsibility and authority and therefore, must make every effort to ensure that our College does provide a child safe environment. Teachers in particular are of primary importance when it comes to detecting abuse and preventing abuse from occurring. The College expects all College community members including staff, volunteers, and contractors to share this commitment.

## **MESSAGE FROM PRINCIPAL**

Al-Ameen College will only succeed in achieving its objectives when we have the respect of our stakeholders (including our students, parents, and colleagues) and the communities in which we operate. Our reputation is dependent on an Islamic culture where everyone acts with the highest level of integrity and honesty, and takes responsibility for their actions. Our Governing Body is committed to ensuring our College operates with the highest level of integrity and expects all employees to do the same. Al-Ameen College's Code of Conduct sets out the ethical behaviour expected of us all in line with Islamic principles. It will assist every employee in solving ethical dilemmas they may face in their working environment.

Commitment to an Islamic and globally ethical culture within our College involves us capturing opportunities to increase the awareness of Al-Ameen College's Code of Conduct and making it part of our daily business decisions and actions. It is up to all of us to ensure the Code of Conduct becomes part of the operational fabric of our College. Successfully implemented, this Code of Conduct will result in:

- a better understanding of our place within the College’s Islamic ethos and to conduct ourselves accordingly;
- more effective compliance with relevant laws;
- more effective management; and
- maintenance of the integrity and reputation of Al-Ameen College.

This Code of Conduct requires reporting of objectively observable behaviour which breaches or is suspected of breaching the Code (other than those subject to mandatory reporting obligations), to the Principal, a designated senior staff member, or the Chair of the Governing Body. If reports are made in good faith, protection from victimisation or other adverse consequences is assured.

### **SCOPE**

This Code of Conduct applies to all Employees, Volunteers, Contractors and Governing Body members. By accepting employment or volunteering with the College, everyone is required to comply with this Code.

Therefore, staff, volunteers and contractors must:

- conduct themselves, both personally and professionally in a manner that upholds the ethos and reputation of the College;
- comply with the College’s policies and procedures;
- act ethically and responsibly; and
- be accountable for their actions and decisions.

### **SECTION 1: PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

Teachers’ professional conduct is characterised by the quality of the relationships they have with their students, their students’ parents (guardians and caregivers), families and communities and their colleagues. Employees are expected always to behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people. Staff must actively seek to prevent harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed. While not all employees are required to manage and supervise students, it is important for all employees to understand and observe the College’s child protection policy. Employees are expected to behave in ways that promote the safety and wellbeing of students.

Al-Ameen College is committed to providing a safe and satisfying work environment in which everyone is treated fairly and with respect, and where employment decisions are based on merit. Al-Ameen College has established various workplace standards so that it can meet these commitments.

Al-Ameen College’s key commitments to employees are to:

- provide clear and fair terms of employment;
- provide clean, healthy and safe working conditions;
- remunerate fairly;
- abide by the equal opportunity which aims to ensure equality and diversity for all present and potential employees and to not discriminate on the grounds of disability, colour, ethnic origin,

gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, political or other opinions. It is however incumbent that staff adhere to the Islamic principles that guide our College;

- encourage employees to develop skills and progress in their careers.
- abide by the College's zero tolerance of any sexual, physical or mental harassment or any other bullying of employees.

Al-Ameen College expects all employees to:

- act with care and diligence in fulfilling the requirements of their job;
- act in a professional and respectful manner;
- act in accordance with the College's values and Islamic ethos;
- not engage in any behaviour which involves harassing, bullying or discriminating against another person;
- be a role model for students;
- promote the safety, welfare and well-being of students, their families and other employees;
- deliver high quality service to students;
- take responsibility for and support official decisions;
- maintain standards in personal appearance and hygiene;
- comply with the requirements of the law;
- maintain strict observances of College policies, rules and procedures including the reporting of improper or unethical behaviours (including any breach of this Code);
- declare conflict of interest and not let business dealings on behalf of the College be influenced, or appear to be influenced, by personal or family interests;
- respect College ownership of all College equipment, supplies, books, records and proprietary information, including manuals and any other material;
- not accept outside employment unless approved by the College;
- not use information or authority derived from employment with the College for personal gain;
- preserve confidential College information including personal information of students, parents and other key stakeholders, plans and decisions, information about employees and any other information that is not public knowledge – confidential information must not be used for personal benefit and must only be used in the ordinary course of business;
- report to management any possible violation of any law or regulations.

## **Relationships with Students**

### **Principle 1.1: Teachers provide opportunities for all students to learn**

The main focus of teaching is student learning. Teachers demonstrate their commitment to student learning by:

- a) knowing their students well, respecting their individual differences and catering for their individual abilities;
- b) maintaining a safe and challenging learning environment;
- c) accepting professional responsibility for the provision of high quality education for all students;

- d) having high expectations of every student, recognising and developing each student's abilities, skills and talents;
- e) considering all viewpoints fairly, being fair to all students and following procedural fairness at all times when dealing with students;
- f) communicating well and appropriately with their students.

**Principle 1.2: Teachers will treat their students with courtesy and dignity**

Teachers are to:

- a) work to create an environment which promotes mutual respect;
- b) model and engage in respectful and impartial language;
- c) protect students from intimidation, harassment, embarrassment, humiliation or harm;
- d) enhance student autonomy and sense of self-worth and encourage students to develop and reflect on their own values;
- e) respect a student's privacy in sensitive matters, such as health or family problems, and only reveal confidential matters when appropriate. That is:
  - if the student has consented to the information being used in a certain way;
  - to prevent or lessen a serious threat to life, health, safety or welfare of a person (including the student);
  - as part of an investigation into unlawful activity;
  - if the disclosure is required or mandated by law;
  - to prevent a crime or enforce the law.
- f) refrain from discussing students' personal problems in situations where the information will not be treated confidentially;
- g) use consequences commensurate with the offence when disciplining students in accordance with College policy;
- h) respect students' race, culture and/or religion;
- i) modelling respectful behaviour and language;
- j) not play practical jokes on students, humiliating or belittling them, not speaking in a sarcastic tone to them.

**Principle 1.3: Teachers work within the limits of their professional expertise**

In fulfilling their role, teachers carry out a wide range of responsibilities. They support students by knowing their strengths and the limits of their professional expertise.

Teachers are to:

- a) seek to ensure that they have the physical, mental and emotional capacity to carry out their professional responsibilities;
- b) are aware of the role of other professionals and agencies and when students should be referred to them for assistance;
- c) are truthful when making statements about their qualifications and competencies.

**Principle 1.4: Teachers maintain objectivity in their relationships with students. In their professional role, teachers do not behave as a friend or a parent.**

Teachers are to:

- a) interact with students without displaying bias or preference;
- b) make decisions in students' best interests;
- c) do not draw students into their personal agendas;
- d) do not seek recognition at the expense of professional objectivity and goals.

**Principle 1.5: Teachers are always in a professional relationship with the students at Al-Ameen College whether at College or not**

Teachers hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students. The following examples outline some of those limits. A professional relationship will be violated if a teacher:

- a) has a sexual relationship with a student;
- b) uses sexual innuendo or inappropriate language and/or material with students or expose a student to pornographic material;
- c) touches a student in unwarranted or inappropriate ways;
- d) holds conversations of a personal nature or has contact with a student via written or electronic means including email, Facebook, letters, telephone, text messages, chat lines or other social media without a valid reason;
- e) accepts expensive gifts, which could be reasonably perceived as being used to influence, or be influenced by students or their parents;
- f) displays sexual exhibitionism;
- g) uses flirty behaviour directed to a student;
- h) expresses romantic feelings toward a student in any way;

- i) engages in tutoring or coaching students from the College without the express permission of the Principal;
- j) is aware of and sensitive to children with culturally diverse or indigenous backgrounds and cultural practices that may influence the interpretation of their behaviour.

A professional relationship may also be compromised if a teacher:

- a) attends parties or socialises with students;
- b) invites a student or students back to their home, particularly if no-one else is present.

### ***Grooming***

Sexual misconduct can also include grooming behaviour. Grooming behaviour is a process whereby 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:

- a) 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 the accepted College rules;
- b) breaking of accepted College standards of behaviour, for example undressing in front of students, allowing students to sit on their lap, talking about sex, accidental touching;
- c) engaging in inappropriate, personalised forms of communication.

### ***Physical Contact with Children***

- a) Staff must not engage in contact that could physically harm a student and this should be noted especially in cases involving disciplinary action.
- b) Corporal punishment is prohibited at Al-Ameen College.
- c) When physical contact with a student is a necessary as part of the teaching/learning experience, caution must be exercised to ensure that the contact is appropriate and acceptable. Seek reassurance from the student by asking for a volunteer if necessary to demonstrate a particular activity.

### **Principle 1.6: Teachers maintain a professional relationship with parents (guardians and caregivers)**

Teachers are to be respectful of and courteous to parents. Teachers are to:

- a. consider parents' perspectives when making decisions which have an impact on the education or wellbeing of a student;
- b. communicate and consult with parents in a timely, understandable and sensitive manner;
- c. take appropriate action when responding to parental concerns.

**Principle 1.7: Teachers work in collaborative relationships with students' families and communities**

Teachers are to recognise that their students come from a diverse range of cultural contexts and accordingly, seek to work collaboratively with students' families and communities within these contexts.

**Principle 1.8: Collegiality is an integral part of the work of teachers (Relationships with Colleagues)**

Teachers are to demonstrate collegiality by:

- a) treating each other with courtesy and respect;
- b) valuing the input of their colleagues;
- c) using appropriate forums for constructive debate on professional matters;
- d) sharing expertise and knowledge in a variety of collaborative contexts;
- e) respecting different approaches to teaching;
- f) providing support for each other, particularly those new to the College or profession;
- g) sharing information relating to the wellbeing of students;
- h) actively managing workplace conflicts to create positive and constructive outcomes;
- i) working cooperatively and collaboratively with others to achieve common goals and a harmonious work environment;
- j) not criticising colleagues in their absence or indulge in 'back-biting'.

**SECTION 2: PERSONAL CONDUCT**

**Principle 2.1: The personal conduct of a teacher will have an impact on the professional standing of that teacher and on the profession as a whole**

Although there is no definitive boundary between the personal and professional conduct of a teacher, it is expected that teachers will:

- a) be positive role models at the College and in the community

- b) respect the rule of law and provide a positive example in the performance of civil obligations
- c) not exploit their position for personal or financial gain for themselves or others
- d) ensure that their personal or financial interests do not interfere with the performance of their duties at College
- e) act with discretion and maintain confidentiality when discussing workplace issues.

### **SECTION 3: PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE**

#### **Principle 3.1: Teachers value their professionalism, and set and maintain high standards of competence**

Teachers:

- a) are knowledgeable in their areas of expertise
- b) are committed to pursuing their own professional learning and keeping up to date with advances and changes in the body of knowledge and the professional and ethical standards relevant to their areas of expertise
- c) complete their duties in a responsible, thorough and timely way
- d) need to ensure their attire is Islamically appropriate and they behave in a manner that demonstrates professionalism, shows respect for others and models appropriate standards for students.

#### **Principle 3.2: Teachers are aware of the legal requirements that pertain to their profession.**

In particular, they are cognisant of their legal responsibilities in relation to:

- a) discrimination, harassment and vilification
- b) negligence
- c) mandatory reporting
- d) privacy
- e) occupational health and safety
- f) teacher registration

## **SECTION 4: COLLEGE GOVERNANCE**

### **Principle 4.1: Occupational health and safety and duty of care**

Staff members have a responsibility under Occupational Health and Safety legislation to take care of their own health and safety at work. It is also a staff member's responsibility to ensure that their own activities do not place at risk their own health and safety, safety of co-workers, students or other persons that they may come into contact with at work.

All staff have a duty of care to students in their charge. That duty is to take all reasonable steps to protect students from risks of harm that can be reasonably predicted. For example, risks from known hazards and from foreseeable risk situations against which preventative measures can be taken. The standard of care that is required or the degree of supervision needed has to be commensurate with the students' maturity and ability. Duty of care to students applies during all activities and functions conducted or arranged by the College. The risks associated with any activity need to be assessed and managed before the activity is undertaken.

All staff have a responsibility under occupational health and safety legislation to take care of your own health and safety at work in the workplace. It is also your responsibility to ensure that your activities do not place your own safety at risk or that of your co-workers, students or other persons that you may come into contact with at work.

Considerations of safety relate to both physical and psychological well-being of individuals. Staff must ensure that they are aware of and comply with the College's Occupational Safety & Health Policy. It is your responsibility to know the College's policies and procedures, as this is a condition of your employment at the College. Staff are provided with regular updates of policy changes and reviews the College's policies and procedures.

Staff must take all reasonable steps to ensure that no student is exposed to any unnecessary risk of injury. All staff must know, and comply with, the College's evacuation and lock-in procedures. Students must not be left unsupervised either within or outside of class unless there is an emergency. Staff must be punctual to class and to allocated supervision and remain with students at after-school activities.

Playground supervision is an integral part of the responsibility of teaching staff. It must take precedence over other activities. It is unacceptable to be late. Staff must actively supervise their designated area, being vigilant and constantly moving around.

Staff must be alert to bullying or any other form of discriminatory behaviour and report incidents to the appropriate Management Team member. Injured or unwell students must be attended to by the supervising staff member. Should additional assistance be required, staff must contact the Admin. Office. Staff must ensure that they understand and comply with the College's policy in regard to the storage and administration of prescribed medication to students.

### **4.2: Reporting a Critical and Emergency Incident**

Al-Ameen College requires that all critical and emergency incidents be reported as follows:

- the Principal must notify the College Board of all critical and emergency incidents as soon as practicable, and within 24 hours of the incident if the it is a 'reportable incident'.
- the College's Board must ensure the Director General is notified of every 'reportable incident' as soon as practicable and within 48 hours of the incident using the Reportable Incident Notification Form available on the DoE website.

Reportable incidents include death, serious injuries requiring ambulance or the police, incidences requiring lock down or evacuation, complaints about child abuse or dismissal of staff.

### **Principle 4.3: Supervision of students**

When supervising students, staff must:

- a) take all reasonable steps to ensure that no student is exposed to any unnecessary risk or injury
- b) be familiar with and comply with the College evacuation and lock down procedures
- c) not leave students unsupervised or outside of class
- d) be punctual to class and allocated supervision
- e) remain with students at after-College activities until all students have been collected. In the event that a student is not collected, a staff member must remain with the student until collected, or seek advice from the appropriate Head of College
- f) playground and out-of-class duty or supervision are an integral part of the responsibility of staff – these must take precedence over other activities and it is unacceptable to be late
- g) be alert to bullying or other forms of discriminatory behaviour and report incidents to the appropriate management staff member
- h) attend to ill or injured students and contact the Medical Centre should additional assistance be required.

### **Principle 4.4: Respect for people and property**

Employees are to treat members of the public, their colleagues and students with respect, fairness and consistency. Employees are to be courteous and sensitive to the needs of others and provide all necessary and appropriate assistance.

Employees are to conduct themselves in a manner that will promote co-operation and harmonious relationships among colleagues. A co-operative, collaborative atmosphere is conducive to the promotion of integrity in the workplace and will assist employees in the implementation of the Code of Conduct. Employees are to respect and care for the property of the College. Theft, misuse or fraudulent misappropriation of resources will be acted upon.

#### **Principle 4.5: Appropriate use of electronic communication and social networking sites**

The College provides electronic communication facilities for its students and employees for educational or administrative purposes. It may monitor and view data stored or transmitted using the College's facilities. The fast and permanent nature of electronic communication requires staff to be particularly vigilant with their own communications and that of their students. Staff must comply with the College's ICT policy.

#### **4.6 Use of alcohol, drugs or tobacco**

Occupational Safety and Health is of fundamental importance to the College. Maintaining a safe work environment requires everyone's continuous cooperation.

All staff are responsible for ensuring their capacity to perform their duties is not impaired by the use of alcohol or drugs and that the use of such substances does not put at risk their or any other person's health and safety. The use of tobacco and illegal substances on the College property is strictly forbidden.

#### **Principle 4.7: Identifying and managing conflicts of interest**

Personal interests can, or have the potential to, influence a person's capacity to perform their duties impartially and in turn compromise their integrity and that of the College.

Staff must not act in conflict with the College's best interests. A conflict of interests can involve:

- a) pecuniary interests i.e. financial gain or loss or other material benefits;
- b) non-pecuniary interests i.e. favours, personal relationships and associations.

It may not only be about staff personal interests. It may include:

- a) the interests of members of immediate family or relatives (where these interests are known);
- b) the interests of staff member's business partners or associates, or at the College; or
- c) the interests of friends.

#### **Principle 4.8: Communication and protecting confidential information**

All staff should be aware that there are strong legal requirements around the collection, release and protection of privacy of information.

All staff must maintain the confidentiality of College information. Staff should be mindful of confidentiality when in discussions with parents, staff, family members and others. Staff cannot always give a guarantee of confidentiality especially if the matter under discussion is related to mandatory

reporting. Before asking for information or disclosing information, staff need to assure themselves that they are acting in a legal manner. If unsure, staff should discuss the matter with Management.

#### **Principle 4.9: Record keeping**

All employees have a responsibility:

- a) to create and securely maintain full, accurate and honest records of their activities, decisions, appropriate school-based interactions and other relevant transactions;
- b) to upload or store records in the College's record systems as required; and
- c) to not deliberately access school information to which they are not authorised to do so, or for an unauthorised purpose.

Staff must not create, destroy or remove records without appropriate authority. Management staff have a responsibility to ensure that the employees reporting to them comply with their records management obligations.

#### **Principle 4.10: Copyright and intellectual property**

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

If you develop material that relates to your employment with the College, the copyright of that material will belong to the College. This will apply even if the material was developed in your own time or at home but whilst in the employ of Al-Ameen College. Advice may be sought from the Principal. The College cannot give away or assign its intellectual property without the approval of the Principal.

Staff must not use the College's intellectual property (including copyright) for private purposes without obtaining written permission from the Principal.

#### **Principle 4.11: Financial accountability and safeguarding college assets**

Staff are required to follow the process detailed in the Purchasing Policy and Procedures when making purchases against their departmental or capital budgets. This requires responsible expenditure within the guidelines of the budget, creation and approval of purchase orders prior to purchase, receipt of items on the purchase orders. All staff are required to provide tax invoices/tax receipts for any reimbursements incurred as part of professional development or other authorised expenditure.

All staff have access to College assets, whether it be as part of their day-to-day duties or extension of their duties out of school hours. Examples of these of assets include computers, printers/copiers, vehicles and machinery, furniture and fittings, College network, laptops, mobile phones and keys. All staff are required to treat these assets with care and ensure their security. In cases of misuse or negligence, the College may request reimbursement of the replacement cost of lost or damaged items.

#### **Principle 4.12: Declaring Gifts, Benefits or Bribes**

As an employee, you 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. You are expected to exercise sound judgment when deciding whether to accept a gift or benefit. Accepting gifts and other benefits has the potential to compromise your position by creating a sense of obligation and undermining your impartiality. It may also affect the reputation of the College and its staff. You must not create the impression that any person or organisation is influencing the College or the decisions or actions of any of its employees.

### **SECTION 5: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT**

The Principal, Assistant Principals and Governors of Al-Ameen College are responsible for promoting, compliance with this Code of Conduct and monitoring its implementation and effectiveness.

#### **Principle 5.1: Compliance with the law**

All employees must be familiar with the basic legal requirements that apply to their duties and responsibilities. The College will provide resources to assist employees to become familiar with their legal obligations.

#### **Principle 5.2: Reporting unethical behaviour**

It is important that we all take responsibility for ensuring that the standards contained in this Code of Conduct are translated into action. If a violation is observed, staff are required to take some action, as turning a blind eye is a way of contributing to an unethical situation. Therefore, everyone has a responsibility to report unethical behaviour.

Employees must bring the matter to the attention of the appropriate Management staff. There may be occasions where it may be inappropriate to make a report to a Management staff or there may be concerns about reprisals if an allegation is made. In these circumstances the matter should be reported to the Principal or any other member of Management.

#### **Principle 5.3: Breach of code of conduct**

Where a staff member breaches this Code of Conduct the College may take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal. All College employees hold a position of trust and are accountable for their actions. All alleged breaches of the Staff Code of Conduct will be subject to scrutiny and if substantiated, staff may be warned, suspended or have employment terminated. If the breach is considered to be grooming, the College is obliged to report this to the Teachers' Registration Board (where a teacher is involved) and the Department of Education Services as a critical incident. Any potentially illegal activity will be reported to the police and appropriate actions will be taken by the Senior Management.

### **SECTION 6: APPENDIX TO THIS CODE OF CONDUCT**

#### ***Understanding Grooming Behaviour***

Grooming in a child protection context refers to deliberate actions undertaken to engage in sexual activity with a child. It differs from sexual abuse in that it is primarily a preparatory activity occurring before abuse occurs, but is continued during and after the abuse to ensure the safety of the groomer.

Grooming is a subtle, gradual, and escalating process of building trust with a child and those around the child, both children and adults, with the express purpose of the sexual gratification of the perpetrator, this generally involves engaging in sexual activity with the child. It is deliberate and purposeful and occurs both before and after the abuse. Abusers may groom children and supporting adults for weeks, months, or even years before any sexual abuse actually takes place. The grooming may occur in person, via cyber media and/or other forms of communication.

A committed offender will employ grooming behaviour from an early stage and because it is so subtle and gradual the child may not even be aware that the actual abuse when it occurs, is wrong or harmful. The grooming occurs with the child but also with those supporting networks around the child which might normally act as a deterrent or protective element. The perpetrator will invest significant energy and patience to minimise the risk of detection and exposure.

The groomer will employ manipulation, guilt, shame, bribery, coercion or exploit low self-esteem to psychologically manipulate the child. As a result the child becomes increasingly dependent on the groomer and increasingly alienated from protective elements including possible sources to disclose to. This is a deliberate strategy employed to maintain the secrecy of the abuse and to ensure the silence of the child.

The groomer will exploit any vulnerabilities of the protective elements around the child, including parent and family circumstances and College systemic weaknesses. Groomers are very adept at identifying anomalies, boundary ambiguities and any lack of systemic awareness, and then using them to deflect attention from their own actions and intentions.

While distinguishing between appropriate intent and inappropriate intent is often difficult, particularly for a child, it is essential that Colleges have very clear expectations and boundaries around employee behaviours so that there can be rigorous accountability when dealing with staff.

Colleges must work to improve their knowledge and understanding in this area so they are able to challenge existing practice, recognise unprofessional behaviour and build a shared understanding of what a safe College is.

***Grooming behaviour with children may include, but is not limited to:***

- Selecting and befriending a child and gaining his or her trust and then exploiting the child's vulnerabilities.
- Testing a child's boundaries through telling inappropriate jokes, roughhousing, backrubs, tickling, or sexual games.

- Moving from non-sexual touching to “accidental” sexual touching. This typically happens during play so the child may not even identify it as purposeful, inappropriate touching. It is often done slowly so the child is gradually desensitised to the touch.
- Manipulating the child to not tell anyone about what is happening. The abuser may use a child’s fear, embarrassment, or guilt about what has happened. Sometimes, the abuser uses bribery, threats, or coercion.
- Causing the child to feel responsible for the abuse. Children may not notice or may become confused as the contact becomes increasingly intimate and sexual.

***Grooming behaviour with adolescents may include additional strategies, such as:***

- Identifying with the adolescent. The abuser may appear to be the only one who understands him/her.
- Displaying common interests in sports, music, movies, video games, television shows, etc.
- Recognising and filling the adolescent’s need for affection and attention.
- Giving gifts or special privileges to the adolescent.
- Allowing or encouraging the adolescent to break rules (e.g., smoking, drinking, using drugs, viewing pornography).
- Communicating with the adolescent outside of the person’s role (e.g., teacher, or coach). This could include, for example, texting or emailing the teen without the parents’ knowledge.

In addition to grooming the child, the groomer will use deflection strategies to remain unchallenged. Some of these strategies may include where the perpetrator:

- promotes self and creates a reputation as caring, child-loving, competent, available, trustworthy, truthful
- raises doubts about the motives, mental health, reliability of the child or anyone else who might approach support services with allegations
- fosters dependency as someone the family can rely on
- positively represents child to others so as to be perceived as someone who would never harm the child

***Preventing or interrupting the grooming process:***

Colleges unfortunately provide a vast array of opportunities for groomers to enact the grooming process. Some abusers have a particular preference for children within particular age bands and some studies have shown that groomers will take child focussed employment primarily to get access to a particular cohort of children.

Within a College context, holding all staff members accountable to the College Code of Conduct and challenging boundary crossings and violations is one of the most effective strategies to combating grooming behaviour.

## SECTION 7: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

By signing this Acknowledgement you are agreeing to abide by this Code of Conduct (Part 1) to the best of your ability and acknowledge that you understand that breaches of this Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and could result in termination of your employment.

I \_\_\_\_\_ have read, understood and agree to comply with the terms of this Code of Conduct.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dated

## REVIEW

Version	Date Published	Changes Made	Author of Changes
1	2011	Created	YI
2	2014	Revision	PR
3	10/02/17	Comprehensive review and update in line with new legislation and regulatory requirements	NM
4	2021	Revised – Sections on protecting those who report non-mandatory issues and review in line with National Principles for Child Safe Organisations	PR/ME