

Staff Code of Conduct

1. Introduction

Djerriwarrh Community College (the College) is an independent specialist senior secondary school based in Melton. We deliver the Victorian Pathway Certificate (VPC) and VCE Vocational Major Certificate (VM) for students aged 15-19 years. We provide a safe and inclusive learning environment for young people who may have been disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from education. The College is committed to supporting students to reach their individual personal, social and educational potential.

The College is a role model for others in the community. All interactions of College employees, both internally and externally, determine the ability of the College to achieve its purpose, vision and strategic goals. It is through our behaviour that we communicate our expectations of each other to the wider community.

To ensure the College's continued success, it is important that all staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors conduct themselves with integrity and professionalism as defined in this Staff Code of Conduct.

2. Purpose

The Staff Code of Conduct sets out the expectations for personal and professional behaviour of staff whilst at work or at work functions. It aims to clarify for all staff the conduct expected in the performance of duties, and the consequences of not behaving in an appropriate manner, thereby ensuring an environment that all staff feel proud and comfortable to be a part of.

3. Scope

The code sets out the standards of conduct that all College employees, volunteers, contractors and consultants must meet.

The College's Staff Code of Conduct should be strictly adhered to at all times when any College employee or volunteer is engaged in any work- or work-related activity. The College expects all contractors and consultants to behave in a manner that reflects the Staff Code of Conduct.

4. Definitions

College	Djerriwarrh Community College, 235 Station Road, Melton, 3337
Community members	Refers to other students, parents, guardians, carers and family members of College students and visitors to the College
Cultural competence	Means understanding, respecting, and valuing diverse backgrounds.

Digital citizenship	Involves using technology safely, ethically, and responsibly.
Mental health	Emotional, psychological, and social well-being.
Principal	The Principal of the College, or the Principal's authorised representative

5. About the Code of Conduct

The College is committed to work with staff and volunteers to meet the highest possible professional standards of a registered school. This includes treating others in a courteous, respectful, professional, and friendly manner at all times.

The Code of Conduct is not intended to provide a detailed and exhaustive list of what to do in every aspect of work. Instead, it represents a broad framework that will help guide conduct and behaviour in the performance of duties and interactions with others.

The Code of Conduct does not replace legislation and if any part of it is in conflict, then legislation takes precedence.

5.1 Guiding principles

All staff, contractors, consultants, and volunteers are expected to uphold and embody the College's Core Values while representing and working at Djerriwarrh Community College.

- **Caring:** Providing a safe and welcoming environment
- **Inclusive:** Treating others fairly and with respect, without discrimination
- **Adaptable:** Responding to individual and community needs professionally
- **Respectful:** Treating all people fairly and equally
- **Accountable:** Being responsible and accountable for decisions and actions

5.2 Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to ensure that they understand the College's expectations regarding personal and professional behaviour. Failure to meet these responsibilities may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Staff and volunteers should also understand their responsibilities and obligations to ensuring that the College provides a safe environment for our students as detailed in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct.

6. Code of Conduct

6.1 Personal and professional behaviour

All College staff, contractors, consultants and volunteers are expected to:

- Perform their duties with skill, honesty, care and diligence.
- Always conduct and present themselves in a professional and responsible manner.
- Act with integrity, honesty, transparency and impartiality in their dealings with colleagues, students, parents/guardians/carers, visitors and members of the wider community.
- Dress in a manner that is appropriate for the role and activities being undertaken. Clothing should be clean, neat, and professional.
- Read and follow college policies and procedures and comply with lawful and reasonable directions relevant to their position.
- Use the College's equipment, funds, facilities and other resources effectively, economically and carefully and for the benefit of the College.
- Promptly disclose interest which may constitute a conflict of interest in accordance with the Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Report behaviour that may be contrary to the Code of Conduct and required standards of behaviour.

Breaches of the Code may include but are not limited to:

- Unprofessional conduct such as arriving late to work or meetings without a valid reason, disrupting the schedule and setting a poor example for students.
- Using inappropriate language or making derogatory comments in the presence of students or colleagues.
- Falsifying records, such as attendance or grades, to mislead or deceive.
- Plagiarising work or taking credit for someone else's ideas or contributions.
- Using school property, such as computers or supplies, for personal gain or unauthorised purposes.
- Participating in or assisting others in illegal and/or criminal activities.

6.2 Equity, diversity and social inclusion

College staff and volunteers are instrumental in creating an environment where all staff, contractors, consultants and volunteers, students, parents/guardians and visitors can participate fully, find a sense of belonging and have opportunity to engage meaningfully with the broader community.

All College staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors are expected to:

- Treat all students, parents/guardians, and colleagues with respect, regardless of their background, ethnicity, gender, or beliefs.
- Demonstrate cultural competence and sensitivity in all interactions with students and colleagues.
- Actively listen to students' concerns and provide support without judgment.
- Use positive and constructive language when providing feedback to students and colleagues.
- Keep parents/guardians informed about their child's progress and any concerns in a timely and respectful manner.

Breaches of the Code may include but are not limited to:

- Treating students, parents/guardians, and colleagues with disrespect based on their background, ethnicity, gender, or beliefs.
- Using negative and destructive language when providing feedback.
- Making jokes or comments that are offensive or discriminatory towards any individual or group based on their race, gender, religion, or other protected characteristics.
- Engaging in any form of harassment, including unwelcome physical contact, verbal abuse, or intimidation.

6.3 Child safety and protection

All College staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors must:

- Uphold the College's commitment to child safety and adhere to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Treat students and families with respect in all school environments and during school-related activities.
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they disclose abuse or safety concerns.
- Promote the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of all students.
- Ensure, as far as practicable, that adults are not alone with a student. One-to-one interactions should occur in open spaces or within the line of sight of another adult.
- Report any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Principal and/or Child Safety Champion.
- Maintain confidentiality when dealing with child safety issues.
- Understand and comply with all reporting and disclosure obligations, including mandatory reporting, in line with the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Procedure.

Breaches of the Code may include but are not limited to:

- Failing to uphold the College's commitment to child safety and not adhering to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- Ignoring or dismissing students' concerns or complaints without proper investigation.
- Not reporting allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns.

6.4 Safety in online environments

College staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors are expected to demonstrate and promote digital citizenship and responsible use of technology. Digital citizenship involves using technology safely, ethically, and responsibly. The consequences of failing to demonstrate digital citizenship can include misuse of technology, cyberbullying, and negative impacts on students' digital literacy.

All forms of cyber bullying and cyber abuse by staff, contractors, consultants, volunteers, students and parents/guardians are unacceptable. This behaviour will not be tolerated and is unlawful.

Cyber bullying: Using the internet to be mean to a child or young person so they feel bad or upset.

Cyber abuse using the internet to send seriously harmful content to a person who is 18 or older, or posts or shares harmful content about them, using an online or electronic service or platform. It can include posts, comments, emails, messages, chats, livestreams, memes, images and videos.

6.5 Safety and Wellbeing

College staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors are entitled to be treated with respect and work in a safe environment free from discrimination, harassment, bullying, violence (or threats of violence) or vilification.

All College staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors are required to:

- Promote and maintain good mental health to enhance performance, prevent burnout, and create a positive learning environment for students.
- Perform their duties in a safe and competent manner in accordance with relevant occupational health and safety legislation and the College's Health and Safety Policy.

Breaches of the Code may include but are not limited to:

- Engaging in behaviours that may be unwelcome, victimising, offensive, or humiliating to others regardless of whether this occurs face-to-face, in writing, via email or via social networking media. Such behaviour may amount to harassment and may be unlawful under anti-discrimination legislation
- Putting themselves or others at risk or reduce their ability to carry out their duties through unsafe practices, inappropriate behaviours or the misuse of alcohol or drugs.

6.6 Confidentiality, information security and privacy

Staff, contractors, consultants, volunteers, students and parents/guardians are entitled to confidentiality and privacy with respect to information relating to them.

All College staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors should:

- Collect, use and disclose confidential information only in accordance with the College's Privacy Policy and applicable privacy laws,
- Use information technology, including internet and email, in a professional and appropriate manner, in accordance with the College's Information Technology Usage Policy, and

Breaches of the Code may include but are not limited to:

- Allowing unauthorized access to the College's information systems.
- Collecting, using, and disclosing confidential information inappropriately.

7. Non-compliance

7.1 Breaches of the Code

Any College staff member, volunteer, contractor or consultant behaving contrary to the standards outlined in this Code of Conduct may be subject to disciplinary action including dismissal of service.

Djerriwarrh may take legal action in cases of corruption, theft, embezzlement or other unlawful behaviour.

7.2 Reporting non-compliance

Any person, including staff, volunteers, consultants, contractors, students, parents/guardians, members of the school community or members of the public, who on reasonable grounds believes that the College or a person or persons employed or engaged by the College has breached this Policy may complain in writing in accordance with the College's Staff Grievance Policy (for staff and volunteers) or Complaints Policy.

Any staff member, who in good faith, raises a complaint or discloses an alleged breach of the Code, whilst following correct reporting procedures, will not be disadvantaged or prejudiced.

A Whistleblower Policy and Procedure has been developed so that staff and others can raise concerns regarding situations where they believe that any person connected with the College has acted in a way that constitutes serious wrongdoing, including unethical, illegal, corrupt or other inappropriate conduct. The Whistleblower Policy and Procedure provides protections and measures to staff, volunteers, consultants and contractors who make a disclosure in relation to such conduct without fear of victimisation or reprisal.

8. Associated documents

Associated policies and procedures	Diversity and Equal Opportunity Policy Health and Safety Policy Workplace Anti Bullying Policy Staff Grievance Policy Complaints Policy Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Disciplinary Action Policy Whistleblower Policy
Other associated documents Internal	Staff Declaration Form Child Safe Code of Conduct
Relevant legislation: Commonwealth	<i>Age Discrimination Act 2004</i> <i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986</i> <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i> <i>Fair Work Act 2009</i> <i>Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986</i> <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975</i> <i>The Racial Hatred Act 1995</i> <i>The Sex Discrimination Act 1984</i>
Relevant legislation: Victorian	<i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i> <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005</i> <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005</i> <i>Disability Act 2006</i> <i>Education and Training Reform Act 2006</i> <i>Equal Opportunity Act 2010</i> <i>Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004</i> <i>Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014</i> <i>Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001</i> <i>Worker Screening Act 2020</i>
Other associated documents External	The Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct VRQA Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration

9. Issuance and approval

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