

 <p>CREST EDUCATION POLICY</p>	TITLE	CREST CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT		
	VERSION	1		
	LOCATION	STAFF		
	ISSUE DATE	MARCH 2026		
	REVIEW DATE	MARCH 2028		
	REVIEWED BY	Deputy Principal: Staff & Students, Deputy Principal: Campus Operations	RATIFIED BY	EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL
PURPOSE	To provide policy and procedure direction to all staff, students, parents, and volunteers of the CREST Educational Precinct.			
BACKGROUND	CREST Education seeks to establish and maintain high level professional standards in relation to all activities within the Educational Precinct. This policy is in accord with the CREST Education 'Vision', 'Mission', 'Philosophy' and 'Key Commitments' documents published and in line with CREST Board Policy.			
RELATED DOCUMENTS	CREST Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy CREST Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy CREST Staff Code of Conduct CREST Parent Code of Conduct CREST Behaviour Management Policy CREST Restrictive Interventions and Seclusion Policy CREST Volunteers and Contractors Code of Conduct CREST Volunteers Policy VIT Code of Conduct Reportable Conduct Scheme			

1. Purpose

This Code of Conduct outlines the expected standards of behaviour for all adults engaged in child-connected work at CREST Education.

Its purpose is to:

- Protect children from harm
- Reduce opportunities for abuse and misconduct
- Promote a consistent, transparent, and child-safe culture
- Support compliance with the CREST Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy and relevant legislation

At CREST Education, we have zero tolerance for child abuse. Every adult has a responsibility to act in the best interests of children at all times.

2. Scope

This Code applies to:

- Staff
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Board members
- Any adult engaged in child-connected work

It applies across all environments:

- On campus
- Online and digital environments
- Camps, excursions, and international tours
- Co-curricular and community activities

The expectations in this Code apply at all times, including outside school hours where an individual is acting in connection with CREST.

3. Statement of Commitment to Child Safety

CREST Education is committed to creating an environment where children:

- Feel safe
- Are safe
- Are heard and respected

Child safety is a shared responsibility. All members of the CREST community must actively contribute to a culture that prioritises safety, inclusion, and wellbeing.

We are committed to:

- Respecting the dignity and rights of all children
- Promoting cultural safety and inclusion
- Empowering children to speak up
- Responding to concerns promptly and effectively

4. Expected Standards of Behaviour (Acceptable Conduct)

All adults must actively support and promote the safety, wellbeing, and empowerment of children.

4.1 Acting in the Best Interests of the Child

You must always act in the best interests of the child. This includes recognising the power imbalance between adults and children and ensuring that your behaviour does not exploit or misuse that position.

Decisions must prioritise child safety over convenience, preference, or operational efficiency.

4.2 Safety, Supervision and Duty of Care

You are expected to take all reasonable steps to protect children from harm.

This includes maintaining active supervision, being aware of environmental risks, and responding immediately where a concern arises. Supervision should be intentional and appropriate to the level of risk, particularly in less structured settings.

Where there is a risk to a child's safety, action must be taken without delay.

4.3 Listening and Responding to Children

You must listen to children and take their concerns seriously. If a child discloses information or expresses discomfort, your response must be calm, supportive, and respectful.

Children should feel confident that they will be heard and supported. Their voices should be valued in matters that affect them.

4.4 Maintaining Professional Boundaries

You must maintain clear and appropriate professional boundaries at all times.

Interactions with students must be transparent, appropriate, and connected to your professional role. Where one-to-one interactions are necessary, they should occur in visible or open settings, or be otherwise justifiable and appropriately documented.

4.5 Respect, Inclusion and Cultural Safety

You must treat all children fairly, with respect and dignity.

This includes actively promoting inclusion and ensuring that all students—regardless of background, identity, or ability—feel safe and valued. Cultural safety must be upheld, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

4.6 Communication

All communication with students must be professional, transparent, and related to school or wellbeing matters.

You must use approved CREST communication platforms and ensure that communication can be reviewed if required. Communication should not become overly personal or blur professional boundaries.

4.7 Online Conduct

Professional standards apply equally in digital environments.

You must ensure that all online interactions are appropriate, traceable, and aligned with school expectations. Online engagement should never compromise professional boundaries.

4.8 Physical Contact & Restrictive Interventions

Any physical contact with students must be appropriate, necessary, and in the best interests of the child.

Where a restrictive intervention is required for the safety of students or staff, all use of restrictive interventions must:

- Be consistent with the College's duty of care
- Be used only as a last resort
- Be reasonable, necessary, and proportionate
- Be applied for the shortest possible duration. Every incident of restraint must be discontinued as soon as possible.
- Preserve the student's dignity, safety, and wellbeing
- Be non-discriminatory
- Occur within the context of:
 - behaviour support strategies
 - de-escalation practices

Restrictive interventions must never:

- Be used as punishment or discipline
- Be used for convenience, compliance, or control
- Replace appropriate behaviour support strategies

Staff must be mindful of context, age, and cultural considerations, and ensure that physical contact is respectful and observable where possible, in accordance with the CREST Restrictive Interventions and Seclusion Policy and CREST Physical Contact Policy.

5. Unacceptable Conduct

The following behaviours are not permitted under any circumstances.

5.1 Failure to Act

You must not:

- Ignore or dismiss concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse
- Delay reporting or assume someone else will act

Failure to act is a serious breach of this Code.

5.2 Grooming or Boundary Violations

You must not:

- Develop "special" relationships with students
- Show favouritism or provide gifts or special treatment
- Create situations of secrecy or exclusivity

These behaviours may be indicators of grooming and are strictly prohibited.

5.3 Inappropriate Interactions

You must not:

- Use sexualised or inappropriate language
- Engage in overly familiar or intrusive behaviour
- Discuss personal or adult matters unrelated to your role

All interactions must be justified by a professional or educational purpose.

5.4 Unsafe Environments

You must not:

- Be alone with a student in a closed or isolated space without justification
- Place yourself or a student in situations where behaviour cannot be observed

Maintaining visibility and accountability is essential.

5.5 Contact Outside School Context

You must not:

- Have contact with students outside of school without a clear professional purpose
- Engage in activities such as babysitting or private tutoring without appropriate approval and transparency

Any out-of-school contact must be carefully considered and approved.

5.6 Digital Misconduct

You must not:

- Communicate with students via personal email, messaging apps, or social media
- Add or follow students on personal social media accounts

All digital communication must remain within approved platforms.

5.7 Harmful or Discriminatory Behaviour

You must not:

- Shame, humiliate, intimidate, or degrade a child
- Discriminate based on race, gender, disability, or identity
- Use alcohol or drugs while supervising students

Such behaviours are inconsistent with CREST values and child safety obligations.

6. Reporting and Legal Obligations

All staff and volunteers have a legal and moral obligation to act on child safety concerns.

You must:

- Report concerns immediately in line with CREST procedures
- Follow the PROTECT Four Critical Actions
- Ensure the immediate safety of the child

Staff must also understand their obligations under Victorian law, including mandatory reporting and offences relating to failure to disclose or protect a child.

7. Risk Awareness

Staff must remain aware of situations that increase risk, including:

- One-to-one interactions
- Overnight supervision
- Online environments
- Students with additional vulnerabilities

Risk awareness requires proactive thinking and adjustment of behaviour to ensure safety at all times.

8. Alignment with CREST Pillars

This Code reflects the values of CREST Education:

- **Instil Faith** – Acting with integrity and care as per our Christian values
- **Pursue Excellence** – Maintaining professional standards of excellence in all interactions
- **Nurture Wellbeing** – Prioritising safety and support of students and the community
- **Serve Community** – Building respectful and positive relationships

9. Breaches of the Code

Breaches of this Code may result in:

- Disciplinary action
- Termination of employment or engagement
- Referral to external authorities

All breaches or suspected breaches must be reported.

DIRECTION

That all staff follow this Policy

EXECUTIVE PRINCIPAL
CREST Education

REVISION STATUS

Date of Revision	Issue Number	Revision Detail	Authorised By
2026	1	Policy developed as distinct from broader Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy	Executive Principal