



## ISLAMIC SCHOOL OF CANBERRA

### Code of Conduct

#### **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 school, staff and volunteers to raise behaviour 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 school's child safety strategies, policies and procedures. It is developed in consideration of the diversity of the students enrolled at the school, 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 school 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 school of what behaviour they can expect from the school's staff and volunteers
- to support and inform school 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.

#### **1) Acceptable Behaviours:**

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

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

- adhering to the Islamic School of Canberra's child safety policy at all times / upholding the Islamic School of Canberra's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- 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
- 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 / concerns of child abuse to the principal and ensure any allegation to be reported to the police and or authorities
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Section 356 of the *Children and Young People Act 2008*
- 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 school activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them
- reporting to ACT TQI 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.

## 2) 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)
- 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's culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- 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 school 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 school or at school events in the presence of children.

## 3) 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 principal 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 to the concerned authorities. Below is the process for investigating of any reported concerns and how the school handles them:

**a) Response to Allegations**

When responding to allegations about a staff member or volunteer, the principal should immediately look into the matter.

**b) Steps in the investigative process**

Please refer to the steps mentioned in the ISC's policy on "responding to and reporting allegations of child abuse" and the process highlighted in "Child Protection and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Policy" of the ACT Education Department ([https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications\\_and\\_policies/corporate-policies/wellbeing/child-protection/child-protection-and-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect-policy](https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/corporate-policies/wellbeing/child-protection/child-protection-and-reporting-child-abuse-and-neglect-policy)).

**c) Risk Assessment**

When an incident is reported or observed the principal 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 school 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. The 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 principal 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 school is obliged to advise of this information or need to be aware of the contents of such documents will have access to them.

**4) Related Legislations and further information**

1. ACT Education Act 2004
2. Children and Young People Act 2008
3. ACT Education (Child Safety in Schools) Legislation Amendment Act 2019
4. National Safe Schools Framework
5. TQI Code of Professional Practice and Conduct available at <https://www.tqi.act.edu.au/professional-standards/code-of-conduct>
6. Further information on child safety can be found from ACT Safe and Supportive Schools Policy available on [https://www.education.act.gov.au/support-for-our-students/safe\\_supportive\\_schools](https://www.education.act.gov.au/support-for-our-students/safe_supportive_schools) and also on <https://www.education.act.gov.au/schooling/non-government-schools>
7. Child Protection and Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect Policy of the ACT Education Department
8. Contact ACT Education Directorate [https://www.education.act.gov.au/about-us/contact\\_us](https://www.education.act.gov.au/about-us/contact_us)
9. Ombudsman Act 1989
10. The Ombudsman Amendment Act, July 2018 contact Office on (02) 5117 3650 or at [act@ombudsman.gov.au](mailto:act@ombudsman.gov.au).
11. Reportable Conduct Act 2017

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to the principal.

**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: .....

<b>Supersedes:</b>	New Code of Conduct	
<b>Authorised by:</b>	Board Chair	<b>Date of Authorisation:</b>
<b>Review Date:</b>	Two Year Cycle	
<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Islamic School of Canberra	

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Signature	
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