

Child Safety Code of Conduct – Higher Education

Holmes Institute is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Our community recognises the importance of, and responsibility for, ensuring the Institute is a safe, supportive and enriching environment, which respects and fosters the safety, wellbeing and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. It is intended to complement child protection legislation, Institute policies and procedures and professional standards, code and ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel.

The CEO and the Governing Council will support implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe and orderly learning environments. The CEO and the Governing Council of Holmes Institute will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

Staff, contractors, third parties and any other member of the college community involved in child related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct. The Code of Conduct applies in all Institute situations, including Student Support and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Acceptable Behaviours

Staff, contractors, third parties and any other member of the community involved in child-related work individually are responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of child by:

1. Upholding the Institute's statement of commitment to child safety at all times adhering to the Holmes Institute Child Safety Policy – Higher Education.
2. Treating students and families in the community with respect both within the college environment and outside as part of normal social and community activities.
3. Listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child.
4. Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
5. Promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of students with a disability.

6. Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Campus Director, who will refer the report to the CEO.
7. Understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
8. If child abuse is suspected, ensuring as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm.

Unacceptable Behaviours

Staff, student support services, contractors, third parties and any other member of the community involved in child-related activities must not:

1. Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
2. Develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour.
3. Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context.
4. Ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate.
5. Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting.
6. Treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality or ethnicity.
7. Communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, text etc.) except where that communication is reasonable in all circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter.
8. Photograph or video a child except in accordance with Holmes' policy or where required for duty of care purposes.
9. In the Institute environment or at other Institute events where students are present, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances.

Version Control and Accountable Officers

It is the joint responsibility of the Implementation Officer and Responsible Officer to ensure compliance with this policy.

Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Implementation Officers	All academic staff and non-teaching staff
Review Date	September 2024
Approved by	
Governing Council	
Associated Documents	

Child Safe (U18) Risk Management Strategy Higher Education
Child Safety Policy – Higher Education

Version	Brief Description of the Changes	Date Approved	Effective Date
1	New policy to comply with Victorian Government requirements	17/2/2023	17/2/2023