



CODE OF CONDUCT POLICY

Approved by Management Committee 28 March 2022

Policy Aim

The Peregrine School Code of Conduct Policy applies to all people who work at Peregrine, including paid teaching staff, non-teaching staff, contractors and volunteers. The Code of Conduct Policy prescribes the standards of behaviour that personnel will be expected to follow in their interactions with students, other staff and the community.

Mission

Peregrine aims to be a community that empowers and enriches the lives of our students every day. In order to empower all our learners to reach their highest potential, we aim to provide excellence in teaching and in our leadership of students. With strong, positive relationships being at the heart of our philosophical practice, it is imperative that all workers are familiar with and adhering to our Code of Conduct Policy.

Statutory Obligations

The school has a statutory responsibility to protect students against foreseeable risks of personal injury or harm, in all school activities whether in school grounds or on excursions.

In a small school that promotes positive relationships between staff and students it is imperative that staff have a clear protocol for their behaviour around students. Staff are obliged to comply with Child Safe Principles and Practices and staff must establish themselves as leaders in all interactions with individuals and groups of students. Each Staff member must read and understand the Code and abide by it in their professional practice.

Responsibilities

The Co-Principals are responsible for the implementation of this Policy as an integral part of the Employee and Volunteer induction process.

All employees and parent/carer volunteers are to observe the Code of Conduct and are expected to uphold appropriate standards of behaviour at all times.

Procedures

The Code of Conduct will be made available to all new employees and volunteers at the commencement of employment and volunteering.

Queries or clarification regarding the Code of Conduct should be referred to the Co-Principals.

General responsibilities, encompassing Professionalism and Ethical Conduct.

Employees and parent/carer volunteers must:

- act in accordance with Peregrine's values and principles.
- regularly familiarise themselves with Peregrine's Code of Conduct Policy and be aware of the school's expectations for their behaviour.
- act in a professional and respectful way that enhances their own and the school's reputation;
- treat colleagues, members of the school community and students with respect, free from harassment, victimisation and discrimination.
- perform their work duties in ways which promote the safety, welfare and wellbeing of all students at the school, their families and other employees. This includes adherence to the Workplace Health & Safety Policy.
- provide a high quality of education service to students which reflects the philosophy and curriculum goals of the school.
- maintain accuracy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality of all information in relation to the school, in dealings with information involving parents/carers, students, staff and visitors.
- report any breaches or possible breaches of the law and/or the school's Code of Conduct to the Co-Principals as soon as possible.
- arrive at work on time, when possible, give advance notice of absence, call in unplanned absences
- be in sufficient mental and physical health to be able to comply with their duty of care
- be unimpaired in the carrying out of their duties by reason of alcohol, medication or illegal drug use
- have a current Working With Vulnerable Children's check
- make decisions fairly, impartially and promptly, considering all available information, legislation, policies and procedures
- act in a timely response to a complaint and have opportunity to provide feedback

Teaching Code of Conduct

All teachers at Peregrine are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

Maintaining Professional Boundaries

First and foremost in protecting students is the establishment and the maintenance of professional boundaries. Teachers must act professionally at all times in their interactions with students. Teachers need to take responsibility for both establishing and maintaining appropriate professional boundaries with their students and define themselves as a 'leader' rather than 'friend' or 'confidant'. When interacting with students, teachers must use good judgement and ensure that all interactions/actions are openly available to scrutiny.

Duty of Care

Duty of care is a duty to do everything reasonably practicable to protect others from foreseeable harm. (This includes adhering to the [WHS Policy](#)). Teachers have a duty of care towards students, and it arises from a relationship based on trust.

Being Responsible to students

Teachers at Peregrine have a responsibility to treat all students with respect and dignity and to show integrity by acting in ways that are fair, honest, ethical and just.

Each teacher must:

- Promote the intellectual and academic learning and development of students;
- Assist students to develop their talents to the fullest extent possible;
- Listen to students, consider their views, and involve them in decisions that affect them;
- Have high expectations of all students and identify activities that will challenge and support their intellectual learning and development.
- Undertake professional learning in order to continue to develop professional skills
- Take responsibility for keeping records and plans that document student progress.
- Undertake to be a good role model for students at all times, regarding behaviour, respectful relationships, language use, appropriate hygiene and standards of dress.
- Interact with students in a positive, calm, encouraging, respectful and compassionate manner at all times.
- Behave in ways that enhance a student's psychological well being this includes focussing on the behaviour not the person, constructive comments about the student's work and behaviour, encouraging and supporting students in being positive in their interactions with each other.
- Not consume or be affected by alcohol and/or drugs in any circumstances whilst they are on the school premises or at off-site activities where they have contact with students.

Adhere to the Guidelines on Physical Contact

Teachers at Peregrine have a legal and ethical mandate to protect children in their care and are also expected to have an understanding of the benefits of appropriate, respectful touch and its critical role in healthy child development and in the development of trusting, respectful relations.

Teachers should have physical contact with a child only in ways which are appropriate to their professional or agreed role. In the case of children with special needs, touch guidelines need to be negotiated with parents.

In the role of a teacher and teacher aide, touch is appropriate when it:

- Provides reassurance
- Ensures the safety and wellbeing of the child
- Is reported and explained and in some cases documented in the Pastoral Care record of the student
- Is sensitive to cultural or religious views
- Is giving guidance to children, such as how to hold a pencil or use sporting equipment
- Is giving physical care, such as changing clothes
- Is providing first aid
- Is comforting a distressed child

In the event that a teacher needs to use physical touch when they are alone with a child or children, the incident needs to be documented immediately and a conversation needs to take place between the Co-Principals and staff involved. A full report needs to be provided to parents.

Recording needs to outline:

- a. who was involved
- b. the reason physical touch was considered appropriate
- c. the date and time of the event

Be aware of their obligations of Mandatory Reporting

Staff must adhere to Peregrine's Mandatory Reporting Policy which presents the reporting procedures required of employees based on their obligations under the Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997.

Act Responsibility in Interactions with parents/guardians

Staff must recognise and respect the right of a parent/guardian to be consulted about any matter which concerns their child's education. Staff must communicate in an open, honest and professional manner with parents/guardians, including reporting on a student's achievements and learning options in a way that promotes successful educational outcomes. Staff must respond to parent enquiries about their children's circumstances within a reasonable time frame.

Staff must recognise the importance of an informed and positive relationship between teachers and parents/guardians in order to communicate and clarify a range of issues (for example, school ethos, assessment, curriculum and extracurricular activities), and put this into practice.

Maintain professional interactions with colleagues

Each Staff member must:

- Communicate in an open, honest and non-judgmental manner with one another;
- Develop productive and supportive relationships with each other and work together to maintain a safe and positive learning and working environment

Maintain professional interactions with the school and local community

When interacting within the school and local community, staff members must conduct themselves in a respectful and responsible manner that enhances the reputation of the School.

At all times, the teaching staff must ensure that professional boundaries are maintained.

Staff interactions with the school and local community must be open to scrutiny, and documented in Pastoral Care Records when:

- A personal relationship exists with a student's family
- A member of the teaching staff has engaged in social activities outside of school in which students have been in attendance.
- Staff have been invited to the home of a student
- Staff have transported students in their private vehicles.

Workplace harassment and sexual harassment

All Staff members have the right to work in an environment that is free from workplace harassment and sexual harassment. Incidents of workplace harassment or sexual harassment will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter which may include termination of employment. Workplace harassment and sexual harassment are unacceptable and will never be tolerated by the School.

Discrimination.

The Management Committee is committed to providing a school environment that is free of:

Discrimination on the grounds of staff age, disability, family responsibilities (including breastfeeding), gender/sex/sexual orientation, irrelevant medical/criminal record, marital/relationship or parental status, political/industrial belief or activity, pregnancy, race/ethnicity, or religious belief/activity

- harassment, including conduct that is likely to create a hostile, intimidating or offensive work environment, and can include sexual harassment, insults, offensive jokes, racial slurs
- bullying, victimising and gossiping

Employees will adhere to relevant legislation including the Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Act 1998, Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1987, and the Workplace Relations Act 1996.

Use of Alcohol, Tobacco, Other Drugs and Medication.

Staff and parent/carer volunteers must:

- not smoke in the buildings, bus, facilities or grounds or at any off-site activity.
- must not consume or be affected by alcohol and/or drugs in any circumstances whilst they are on the school premises or at off-site activities where they have contact with students.
- act responsibly during Peregrine school activities, social and recreational events
- Staff must ensure that their use of alcohol, drugs or medication does not adversely affect their work performance or endanger the health and safety of others. (Refer WHS legislation)
- Employees suffering from drug or alcohol problems which adversely affect their work performance must actively seek professional assistance to correct the problem.
- Employees must not provide students with alcohol, tobacco or illicit drugs or encourage/condone the illegal use of alcohol or drugs.

Use of School Resources.

- All school equipment and resources are to be used appropriately for the work and business of the school. Limited and occasional private use of school equipment and resources may occur, with permission from the Co-Principals, providing it does not adversely affect the performance of the employee's work duties, or the work duties of others, or the business or reputation of the school.
- Approval must be in place to use school equipment and resources off site for work purposes, and must be safely stored and secured.
- School resources, including mobile phones, the internet, electronic mail systems or other means of electronic communication for accessing, storing or transmitting words, images or other material that are illegal, sexually explicit or violent must not be used. (Refer to Peregrine IT Policy, regarding appropriate use of IT and the Curriculum, for specific details of use of IT with students)
- Resources including financial, material and intellectual copyright, branding, logos, information, system and knowledge resources must be used only in relation to the school's activities.

Procedure for Dealing with breaches of the Code of Conduct.

- Potential breaches of the Code of Conduct, including apparent breaches and allegations, will be dealt with in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. Potential breaches will be addressed in the context of the Peregrine Grievance Policy or Staff Issues Resolution Process depending on the breach.
- Breaches of the Code of Conduct must be reported to the Co-Principals and/ or the Management Committee.
- The Co-Principals and/or Management Committee may apply sanctions if this Code of Conduct is breached. Depending on the nature of the breach, various sanctions such as the following may be applied:
 - appropriate warnings or discussion,
 - counselling,
 - enforced leave,

- dismissal,
- laying of criminal charges or civil action.

Privacy

Personal information collected by Peregrine is recorded, stored, accessed and used only for legitimate business purposes and in compliance with the Privacy Act and Australian Privacy Principles. Information collected will be managed with the utmost confidentiality, security, care and respect.

Staff and parent/carer volunteers will treat each other and the public with respect, courtesy and sensitivity to their right to privacy.

Our Environment & Sustainability

Peregrine aims to continuously improve our environmental performance by finding effective ways to reduce any adverse impacts of our school. We aim to do this by recycling, waste reduction, biodiversity, sustainable building design and minimising our use of resources such as energy, water and paper.

Staff and parent/carer volunteers will aim to minimise Peregrine's environmental impact and use resources efficiently, effectively and sustainably.

Peregrine will aim to source products which are fair trade and/or have a low environmental impact, for example, products which are locally sourced, have low embodied energy/carbon emissions and which are not excessively packaged. We will aim to

- re-use resources when we can
- use recycled and recyclable materials where possible
- minimise energy and water use (eg by keeping external doors and windows closed and turning off lights when not in use)
- minimise the waste sent to landfill by recycling waste products where possible

Staff and parent/carer volunteers will be mindful of sustainability issues in our operational decision-making, including purchasing decisions.

Communication

All Staff are expected to:

- communicate with one another, and with others, in a manner which is respectful, honest and courteous at all times;
- refrain from negativity, gossip, spreading rumours or making inappropriate comments through any form of communication, including electronic communication;
- observe confidentiality in relation to confidential information which they encounter or
- receive in the course of their employment and disclose such information only to authorised Staff, authorised Others, or as required by law;
- refrain from improperly using information gained in the course of their employment for personal or commercial gain for themselves or others.

Peregrine aims to facilitate 'open door' lines of communication so staff can approach easily for feedback, ask questions, express complaints or concern, raise awareness, seek resolution, make suggestions.

Health & Safety

Peregrine is committed to maintaining a healthy and safe workplace and will take every reasonable precaution to minimise risk or work-related injuries, illnesses and accidents. We have an emphasis on prevention, removing unsafe conditions and eliminating unsafe behaviour. Staff and parent/carer volunteers should make every effort to:

- take all reasonable precautions to ensure safety on the job
- promote safety awareness and a safety-first mindset
- follow safe work practices and procedures
- advise of all unsafe work practices promptly

Conflict of Interest

The potential for a conflict of interest arises when a professional decision made whilst doing their duties is influenced by a staff members' private interests or beliefs. Conflicts of interest can arise under many circumstances, such as:

- being influenced in your judgment when acting on behalf of Peregrine
- competing against Peregrine in any school related activity
- diverting business away from Peregrine
- misusing Peregrine's resources

Staff are asked to avoid actual, perceived or potential conflicts of interest and go about their work with Peregrine's best interests in mind. As the individual themselves will be aware of the potential for conflict, the onus is on them to notify the Co-Principal or Management Committee in the event a Conflict of Interest applies.

Complying with the Code of Conduct

Staff are responsible for seeking guidance and reporting violations of the code so they can be addressed. If any part of this Code is unclear or if you have any questions about how to deal with something not covered by the Code, talk to Management.

Related Policy

Staff induction

Duty of Care

Child Protection

Work Health & Safety

IT Policy

Child Health & Safety

Complaints / Grievance

Grievance

Bullying

Privacy

Social Media

Conflict of Interest

Ethics

Relevant Legislation and Resources

The Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997.

The Tasmanian Anti-Discrimination Act 1998, Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1987

Workplace Relations Act 1996.