



CODE OF CONDUCT

Effective March 2023

Preamble

All members of staff at Newstead Christian School work and minister in the name of Christ. As employees they formally undertake to support the Christian ethos of the school as a requirement of their employment agreement and are expected to demonstrate their support for the Vision and Mission of Christian education through the exercise of their employment responsibilities and conduct.

Newstead Christian School expects that all employees, as confessing Christians, will maintain a practice of their expressed faith in their everyday life. This will be evidenced by regular worship both privately and through involvement with a Christian church.

This CODE OF CONDUCT of Newstead Christian School finds its roots and its ethics as set out in the principles in the following documents:

- Newstead Christian School Vision, Mission Statement and Core Values
- Newstead Christian School Statement of Faith
- [Code of Professional Ethics for the Teaching Profession](#) in Tasmania (Tasmanian Teachers Registration Board) 2015
- Newstead Christian School Child Protection Policies
- Newstead Christian School Strategic Plan
- Newstead Christian School Grievance Policy
- Newstead Christian School Dress Code
- Newstead Christian School Duty of Care

Each of these are integral to the operation of the Code of Conduct and it is expected that Employees will behave in accordance with the expectations of the Board, Leadership Team and these documents.

The Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this document is to provide all members of the Newstead Christian School community with clear expectations regarding their personal and professional conduct, consistent with the School's core values and Christian ethos. This code should be read in conjunction with relevant Newstead Christian School policies and procedures.

As employees, you formally undertake to support the ethos of Newstead Christian School as a requirement of your employment agreement. You are expected to demonstrate your support for the Vision, Mission and Core Values of the School and of Christian Education through the exercise of your employment responsibilities and conduct.

It is the role of the Board, through the Principal, to ensure appropriate dissemination of the Code of Conduct to all employees.

The following sets out in practical terms the active implications of this employee undertaking to support the Christian ethos of the school and should be read in conjunction with the School's other policies and procedures.

SCOPE

This Code applies to all employees, including:

- At the School premises, during and after normal working hours;
- During School activities and School-related events (whether or not they are on School premises);
- At other functions where employees are representing the School (for example, at social events organised by the School); and
- In any other situation where an employee's behaviour may reflect on the School (for example, at a professional development conference or seminar).
- The Code applies irrespective of whether an employee is engaged on a full or part-time, temporary or casual basis.

Code of Conduct

1. LAWFUL AND REASONABLE DIRECTIONS

- 1.1. Employees must comply promptly, conscientiously and effectively with all lawful and reasonable decisions and directions given by a person having authority to give such directions. For example, a Teacher Aide must follow the directions of a Class Teacher in respect to dealing with a student.
- 1.2. Employees must not knowingly or deliberately impede compliance with, or implementation of, a lawful and reasonable decision or direction.
- 1.3. When making decisions or giving directions, employees must act within their legal and organisational responsibilities and delegations. Employees must make what they believe to be competent decisions and give fair and reasonable guidance and directions.

2. PROFESSIONALISM AND ETHICAL CONDUCT

- 2.1. In the course of their employment, employees must act in a professional and respectful way that enhances their professional reputation and the reputation of the School and Christian education.
- 2.2. Employees should be aware that personal conduct and lifestyle outside of normal working hours can reflect either positively or adversely on their employment at the School. Employees should therefore act appropriately in the presence of students at all times, both within and outside school hours. At all times employees should conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring the School or Christian education into disrepute.
- 2.3. Employees must treat fellow employees, students and others within their work environment with the respect and dignity that all deserve. This applies both within and outside of normal working hours.
- 2.4. Employees whose work involves interacting with students have a special responsibility to comply with duty of care requirements and not to be engaged in inappropriate behaviour such as illegal, anti-social, scandalous or disreputable activities which may negatively impact on them being seen as appropriate Christian role models for those students.
- 2.5. Examples of behaviour in a private capacity that would warrant disciplinary action:
 - 2.5.1. A staff member attends a non-School social event on the weekend where a student is also present and the Staff member offers the student an alcoholic beverage.
 - 2.5.2. Criminal offences of any kind, including those that involve violence, or possession or misuse of drugs, or sexual misconduct.
 - 2.5.3. Making demeaning comments about students, parents/guardians or colleagues to members of the general public.
 - 2.5.4. Making unauthorised public comments on behalf of the school or in the capacity as a staff member of the school.
 - 2.5.5. Making public comments that adversely affect the School's reputation
- 2.6. Disclosing information about confidential matters concerning a student, staff member or the School.
- 2.7. Employees must be cognisant of the policies, procedures and delegations that are applicable to their role. The Principal and Leadership Team must make relevant information available to staff. Employees are required to read and make every effort to ensure that they understand policy documents and instructions (either verbal or written) that have been given or circulated to them. Employees who are uncertain about any aspect of policies, procedures or delegations which apply to them should examine the relevant information and seek advice from supervisors. This includes information contained on [Policy Connect](#), the School Dropbox and the School Website.

3. Employees must uphold and comply with:

- 3.1. applicable Commonwealth, State and local laws, regulations, industrial awards and agreements;

- 3.2. applicable professional standards and codes of practice that do not conflict with government or Newstead Christian School policy;
- 3.3. Government and Newstead Christian School directives, policies and procedures.
- 3.4. Employees must act promptly in reporting breaches of the law, Newstead Christian School policies, government policies and directives, as well as misconduct and maladministration under Newstead Christian School's Code of Conduct, to the Principal or an appropriate senior staff member as soon as possible.
- 3.5. Employees are expected to behave always in ways that promote the safety, welfare and well-being of students, fellow employees and others in their workplace environment in accordance with relevant Workplace, health and safety legislation.
- 3.6. Employees must perform their work duties competently and responsibly, with a focus on delivering or supporting high quality educational services to students.
- 3.7. Employees must maintain currency of their professional competence through appropriate professional development or learning experiences.
- 3.8. Employees must maintain currency of their professional registrations required for their employment. In the case of Teaching staff, this includes keeping up-to-date registration with the Tasmanian Teachers Registration Board. All employees must hold an up to date Working With Vulnerable People Employment Card. Employees who allow their registration to lapse will be immediately removed from paid employment with the School.
- 3.9. Employees must maintain the accuracy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality of all information used in their professional dealings at Newstead Christian School.
- 3.10. Employees must only take leave of absence from their work duties when authorised to do so. The appropriate leave forms must be completed, by the staff member themselves, in accordance with the Leave provisions allowed.

4. 4. PSYCHOLOGICAL HARM

- 4.1. Employees must not behave in ways that a reasonable person would consider to be offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening. Such conduct might include, but not be restricted to:
 - 4.1.1. targeting students or colleagues with unfair and continued criticism;
 - 4.1.2. making excessive or unreasonable demands of others; and
 - 4.1.3. making any form, either oral or written (including electronic communication), of derogatory comments to students, parents, work colleagues or the general public.
- 4.2. Should such unacceptable behaviour occur, then all recipients of such behaviour have recourse to the processes contained within the school's Grievance Policy.
- 4.3. An example of inappropriate interactions with others:
 - 4.3.1. a staff member engages in false, malicious or otherwise inappropriate statements about a colleague via a private chat group on Facebook.

5. 5. PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH CHILDREN

- 5.1. Employees must not engage in conduct that could physically harm a student and this should be noted especially in cases involving disciplinary action.
- 5.2. Corporal punishment is prohibited at Newstead Christian School.
- 5.3. There may be occasions, however, where physical intervention is appropriate in order to protect students, self and others. In these circumstances this would be deemed reasonable action providing that the physical intervention is to prevent harm or further harm to students and that the employee seeks to avoid inflicting physical harm where possible. The physical intervention would need to be proportionate to the circumstances.
- 5.4. Some examples in relation to appropriate physical contact with students include:
 - 5.4.1. assessing a student who is injured or ill may necessitate touching. An employee should advise the student of what they intend to do and, where possible, seek the student's consent;

- 5.4.2. teaching sport, music and other activities may require the physical handling of a student to demonstrate a particular action or skill;
 - 5.4.3. comforting a distressed student in public;
 - 5.4.4. guiding a student in a non-threatening manner;
 - 5.4.5. gently tapping a student on the shoulder to gain his attention after verbal requests were unsuccessful; and
 - 5.4.6. protecting a student from imminent danger to themselves or to others.
- 5.5. Any appropriate physical contact should be in a public setting where reasonably practicable.

6. SEXUAL MISCONDUCT (INCLUDING GROOMING)

- 6.1. A staff member must not, under any circumstances, have an intimate and/or sexual relationship with a student or engage in any other conduct of a sexual nature with or in relation to a student. To do so is a breach of trust, an abuse of authority, professional misconduct, immoral and criminal. The age of the student or the staff member involved is irrelevant. It is also irrelevant if the relationship is consensual, non-consensual or condoned by parents/carers. Failure by the other person to reject such conduct does not necessarily imply meaningful consent for in law a minor cannot consent.
- 6.2. All staff must take necessary precautions to ensure that their relationships with students cannot be misinterpreted as having a romantic or sexual, rather than professional basis.
- 6.3. Such relationships have a negative impact on the teaching and learning of students and colleagues and may carry a serious reputational risk for the School.
- 6.4. The professional relationship of staff and students would be breached by:
 - 6.4.1. Flirtatious behaviour or dating;
 - 6.4.2. Development of intimate personal relationship;
 - 6.4.3. Sexual relations;
 - 6.4.4. The use of sexual innuendo, inappropriate language and/or material with students;
 - 6.4.5. Unwarranted or inappropriate touching;
 - 6.4.6. Inappropriate filming or photography;
 - 6.4.7. Deliberate exposure to sexual behaviour of others (e.g. pornography);
 - 6.4.8. Having private or intimate contact without a valid context via written or electronic means (e.g. email, letters, telephone, text messages, social media sites or chatrooms);
 - 6.4.9. Going out, whether alone or in company, to intimate social events such as the movies or dinner; and
 - 6.4.10. Exchanging gifts of a personal nature that encourages the formation of an intimate relationship.
- 6.5. professional relationship of staff and students may be compromised by:
 - 6.5.1. Sending invites to join personal social networking sites or accepting invitations to join;
 - 6.5.2. Attending parties or socialising with each other;
 - 6.5.3. Working alone with a student after hours; and
 - 6.5.4. Visiting each others' houses without professional reasons and without the consent of the school or a student's parents/carers, particularly if no one else is present.
- 6.6. Employees must not provide or exchange personal contact details such as telephone numbers, email addresses or social media contact details with students unless there are specific and authorised work-related reasons. Similarly, employees must not enter into unauthorised electronic communication with students such as text messaging, pod-casting and chat rooms.
- 6.7. Where personal relationships with students such as family relationships and close friendship networks exist, questions of conflicts of interest may arise.
- 6.8. Where a staff member feels that a conflict of interest may exist, they should notify the Principal/Head of School and arrangements should be implemented to make every effort to avoid the conflict situation.

7. GROOMING

- 7.1. Sexual misconduct can also include grooming behaviour.
- 7.2. Grooming is not a single act of unprofessional or inappropriate conduct, but rather a pattern of behaviour where the trust of a child or young person is gained and a 'special relationship' is developed between the adult and the child in order to reduce their resistance to, and increase compliance with, sexual abuse.
- 7.3. Grooming involves making the child feel important and special, often by giving the child extra attention, privileges and gifts. In many cases, the child's family is engaged by the adult to gain access to the child outside of school hours and the child is encouraged to see the adult as a friend.
- 7.4. of grooming behaviours include an adult:
 - 7.4.1. attempting to keep a special relationship with a student a secret;
 - 7.4.2. manoeuvring to get or insisting on uninterrupted time alone with a student;
 - 7.4.3. buying a student gifts;
 - 7.4.4. on physical affection such as hugging, wrestling or tickling even when the student does not want it;
 - 7.4.5. being overly interested in the sexual development of a student;
 - 7.4.6. a lot of photos of a student;
 - 7.4.7. engaging in inappropriate or excessive physical contact with a student;
 - 7.4.8. sharing alcohol or drugs with a student;
 - 7.4.9. making inappropriate comments about a student's appearance or excessive flattery;
 - 7.4.10. using inappropriate pet names;
 - 7.4.11. making jokes or innuendo of a sexual nature;
 - 7.4.12. making obscene gestures or using obscene language;
 - 7.4.13. sending correspondence of a personal nature via any medium;
 - 7.4.14. allowing, or encouraging students to attend a staff member's home;
 - 7.4.15. entering change rooms or toilets occupied by students when supervision is not required or appropriate;
or
 - 7.4.16. photographing, audio recording, or filming students via any medium without authorisation or having parental consent to do so.
- 7.5. A staff member must not, under any circumstances, engage in grooming behaviours
- 7.6. must discourage and reject any advances of a sexual nature initiated by a student. Should such a situation arise then employees must report such instances immediately to their Principal / Head of School to assist in preventing repetition and avoiding subsequent allegations. Allegations will be investigated thoroughly and may involve the Police and reporting to the Teachers' Registration Board.

8. DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Employees must not discriminate against, victimise or harass any colleague, student or parent. All employees at Newstead Christian School have the responsibility to act fairly and evenly towards other employees, students and the general public in accordance with Newstead's Christian School's policies and relevant legislation including the Tasmanian Anti- Discrimination Act 1998, and the Federal Government's Equal Employment Opportunity Act 1987, Sex Discrimination Act 1994 and Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (as replaced or amended from time to time).

- 8.1. Newstead Christian School is committed to providing employees with a workplace free of all forms of discrimination, victimisation and harassment. Common types of harassment include:
 - 8.1.1. harassment
 - 8.1.2. bullying
 - 8.1.3. sexual harassment

- 8.2. Incidents of workplace harassment or sexual harassment will be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter which may result in termination of employment.
- 8.3. An example of workplace harassment:
 - 8.3.1. A staff member is repeatedly excluded from workplace activities and denied access to information and other resources that are required by the staff member to perform their role, by the staff member's supervisor.
 - 8.3.2. A manager requesting a staff member to work significantly extra duties than is reasonable
 - 8.3.3. A staff member persisting in inappropriate behaviour towards other staff/students after being requested to stop.
- 8.4. An example of behaviour that would be viewed as unlawful discrimination:
 - 8.4.1. A staff member treats a student less favourably than other students because of the student's religious beliefs.
- 8.5. Discrimination, victimisation or harassment will not be tolerated and will be dealt with in accordance with existing policies.

9. FITNESS FOR WORK - USE OF TOBACCO, ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND MEDICATION

- 9.1. Employees must not be under the influence, or in possession, of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours, or at any other time while they have responsibility for students including outside School hours, for example on field trips, excursions or camps.
- 9.2. Alcohol is not permitted to be consumed on the School campus.
- 9.3. Employee consumption of alcohol is generally not permitted at any activity or event where students may be present such as fairs, barbecues, graduations and similar.
- 9.4. Employees are permitted to responsibly consume alcohol that is provided or available for purchase at School organised functions off campus such as end of year celebrations where students are not present. Failure to behave appropriately at a school function, even if held outside of normal working hours, may result in disciplinary action or termination of employment.
- 9.5. Employees must not provide students with alcohol or drugs (whether legal or illegal) or encourage or condone the illegal use of alcohol or drugs (including underage drinking) or the excessive consumption of alcohol.
- 9.6. Employees should reasonably endeavour to avoid direct social contact with students where student consumption of alcohol or the illicit use of drugs occurs. Should a student request an employee to purchase alcohol or drugs for them, the employee must report such instances immediately to their Principal / Head of School to assist in preventing repetition and avoiding subsequent allegations. Allegations will be investigated thoroughly and may involve the Police.
- 9.7. Employees must not misuse over-the-counter or prescribed medication and must ensure that their use of such medication does not adversely affect their work performance or endanger the health and safety of others.
- 9.8. Employees must not smoke or vape on School premises or nearby areas (for example, the School bus stop), or at any other time when they have responsibility for, or contact with, students.
- 9.9. Employees suffering from a drug or alcohol problem that adversely affects their work performance must actively seek professional assistance to correct the problem.

10. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 10.1. A conflict of interest may exist when an employee's private interests have the potential to interfere with the proper performance of their work duties. A potential or actual conflict of interest must be identified, declared and avoided or resolved in favour of the public interest and any such activity should not be undertaken without the express permission of the Principal.

- 10.2. It is understood that situations may occur where employees are working with family members or with persons with whom they develop close personal relationships. Where such relationships exist between employees or with prospective employees, then the potential for conflict of interest should be noted.
- 10.3. As a general principle, all employees who participate in procedures for selection, granting of tenure, performance appraisal, termination or transfer of any person who is a family member or with whom they have, or have had, a close personal relationship should declare any potential conflict of interest. However, the existence of a close personal or family relationship should not constitute a bar to the employment, promotion, granting of tenure or transfer of any individual.
- 10.4. Employees should be aware that private part-time employment including tutoring which conflicts with, or compromises, employment with the School, may give rise to a conflict of interest. Employees should seek prior approval from the school authorities for any such employment.
- 10.5. Employees should be aware that receipt of gifts from students, families or colleagues may present the potential for a conflict of interest.
- 10.6. In many cases only individual employees themselves will be aware of the potential for conflict. The onus therefore is on the individual in these cases to notify the appropriate manager of this potential.
- 10.7. An example of a conflict of interest that should be reported:
 - 10.7.1. A teacher has been allocated a student in their class who is a close relative, or the child of a close friend;
 - 10.7.2. A manager receives a job application from a family member or close friend

11. PRIVACY AND CONFIDENTIALITY

- 11.1. Newstead Christian School has a legal responsibility and is committed to protecting the privacy of certain personal information about current and former students, families, parents/guardians and staff members.
- 11.2. Employees may have access to personal information concerning students, families, or staff members, and/or information about the School which is not public knowledge. Such information must be treated confidentially and must not be disclosed except where:
 - 11.2.1. The parents/guardians, employee or the School (as applicable) consent to the disclosure; or
 - 11.2.2. The disclosure of information about a student is to another employee who has a professional role in relation to the student and the disclosure is relevant to that role.
- 11.3. An employee must not, after leaving employment with Newstead Christian School, use confidential information obtained during the course of their employment for other work or non-work related purposes.
- 11.4. Each employee must comply with the School's Privacy Policy.
- 11.5. Examples of actions that would breach privacy and confidentiality:
 - 11.5.1. A parent provides a teacher with confidential medical information pertaining to the health of their child. The teacher subsequently discloses the information to other employees who do not have a professional role in relation to the student.
 - 11.5.2. A supervisor or manager discussing the details of job applications with employees who are not directly involved in the recruitment process.

12. SOCIAL MEDIA

- 12.1. Each Staff member must ensure that any use of social media, whether using the School's computer systems or otherwise, does not adversely impact upon the School or involve unacceptable use in breach of this Code or any other School policy or procedure.
- 12.2. Each Staff member must take care to ensure that their conduct in accessing or using social media does not bring the School into disrepute or have the potential to damage the School's reputation or business and is compatible with their duties at the School.
- 12.3. In particular, when using social media, each Staff member must:

- 12.3.1. Not use online social networks to contact or interact with students, unless the contact or interaction is sanctioned by the School as part of a School activity;
 - 12.3.2. Ensure all content is private and cannot be seen by any students;
 - 12.3.3. Not make any reference to the School, its operations, other Staff members, students or parents/guardians, whether directly or indirectly;
 - 12.3.4. Be aware of and comply with all laws and the School's policies for the appropriate protection of the School's intellectual property and confidential information and pertaining to matters such as copyright, privacy, libel, defamation, discrimination, harassment and health and safety;
 - 12.3.5. Not make any comments or disclose, distribute or publish any material which is disparaging of the School, its current and former Staff members, students or parents/guardians, or may constitute discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying or victimisation of any of these persons;
 - 12.3.6. Protect the personal information of current and former Staff members, students and parents/guardians, in accordance with privacy laws; and
 - 12.3.7. Not post any images of the School, its events, current and former Staff members, students or parents/guardians, without prior consent of all relevant parties.
 - 12.3.8. Staff members must be aware that this policy applies even when a Staff member is accessing social media using their personal equipment and/or outside of work hours.
 - 12.3.9. If a Staff member wants to use social media for educational purposes, the Staff member must first obtain the written approval of a member of the Leadership Team and once that approval is obtained, should work with the School's administrative and technology Staff to identify and use restricted, school-endorsed networking platforms.
- 12.4. An example of inappropriate use of social networking media:
- 12.4.1. A Staff member has a Facebook account with minimal privacy settings, so that students are able to see private comments and photos of the Staff member.

13. USE OF NEWSTEAD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL RESOURCES

- 13.1. Employees must ensure that all Newstead Christian School equipment, resources, and consumable items are used appropriately for the work and business of Newstead Christian School. Limited and occasional private use of Newstead Christian School equipment and resources may occur 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 Newstead Christian School. Examples of where this might occur include:
 - 13.1.1. limited, occasional and brief private telephone calls
 - 13.1.2. limited and occasional use of a photocopier
 - 13.1.3. limited and occasional use of computers, email and internet subject to Newstead
- 13.2. Christian School policy on acceptable use by employees of ICT resources
- 13.3. Employees must ensure that Newstead Christian School equipment is maintained and used in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements, and that all use is both safe and legal
- 13.4. Employees must have approval to use Newstead Christian School equipment and resources off site for work purposes and must ensure that they are safely stored and secured.
- 13.5. All electrical items used on school premises must be checked and tagged.
- 13.6. Employees must ensure that they do not breach copyright law or licensing arrangements when copying any Newstead Christian School property such as software, library and reference materials, or copying other property for Newstead Christian School use.
- 13.7. Employees must not seek financial gain from work produced for the employer without the authorisation of the Principal/Business Manager.

13.8. Employees whose work duties involve purchasing or managing resources on behalf of Newstead Christian School must act within their delegated authority and comply with legislative requirements, policies and procedures for the purchase, use and disposal of any Newstead Christian School resource.

14. USING NEWSTEAD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL INTERNET, INTRANET, ELECTRONIC MAIL, MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER MEANS OF ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

14.1. Except for official purposes or in accordance with Newstead Christian School policy, employees must not use Newstead Christian School resources, including mobile phones, the internet, electronic mail systems, or other means of electronic communication for:

- 14.1.1. accessing, storing, or transmitting words, images or other material that are illegal, sexually explicit, violent or that a reasonable person would find offensive. (This does not include material that is part of a complaint, report or notification about alleged improper conduct of a person made in accordance with an authorised procedure.)
- 14.1.2. gambling
- 14.1.3. accessing chat lines not associated with work
- 14.1.4. transmitting inappropriate jokes
- 14.1.5. sending of inappropriate programs or mail
- 14.1.6. what a reasonable person would see as excessive use of the internet
- 14.1.7. unauthorised use of the Newstead Christian School's email distribution lists

15. PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH ALLEGATIONS AND APPARENT BREACHES OF THE CODE OF CONDUCT

15.1. 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 may be addressed in the context of established grievance policies as detailed in the Newstead Christian School Grievance Policy.

- 15.1.1. should be aware that the relevant governing body 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 in accordance with the Newstead Christian School Grievance Policy:
- 15.1.2. appropriate warnings
- 15.1.3. counselling actions as prescribed under the various Award provisions
- 15.1.4. demotion
- 15.1.5. suspension
- 15.1.6. dismissal
- 15.1.7. laying of criminal charges or civil action

15.2. As appropriate, and according to the word, intent and spirit of the Newstead Christian School Grievance Policy, employees may, when in breach of the Code of Conduct, seek access to dispute resolution processes at any stage of an investigation.

EFFECTIVENESS OF POLICY

The Principal will monitor compliance with this Policy.