

# CODE OF CONDUCT & DUTY OF CARE FOR EMPLOYEES

<b>Relevant to:</b>	<b>All Staff</b>
<b>Developed by:</b>	<b>Management Team</b>
<b>Date of Introduction:</b>	<b>October 2016</b>
<b>Date of Most Recent Review:</b>	<b>Aug 2025</b>
<b>Date for Review:</b>	<b>Aug 2027</b>
<b>Approved:</b>	<b>School Board Aug 2025</b>
<b>Related Documents:</b>	<b>Feedback and Complaints Policy, Mandatory reporting and Child Protection Policy</b>

## PURPOSE

1. To provide guidance to all employees on the acceptable standards of conduct that the school requires as a condition of employment. The school aims for high standards of conduct that are based on two guiding principles:
  - a. **The anthroposophical understanding of the human being in managing and fostering healthy relationships, and**
  - b. **Professionalism in the workplace.**
2. To comply with the Schools Registration Standard 5 – student welfare

## PROCEDURES

The Code of Conduct and all relevant policies will be made available to all employees. It is the responsibility of all employees to be familiar with the content.

Education staff who need clarification or advice on any policy or procedure should seek advice from the Principal. Non-teaching administration staff should seek advice from the Business Manager. If necessary, the Principal or Business Manager will seek advice from the School Board.

## SCHOOL CULTURAL CONTEXT

Tamar Valley Steiner School seeks to provide, through the professional attitude and behaviour of all staff, a secure and supportive environment that:

- Promotes the safety, care and education of students through the philosophical framework of Steiner education,
- Develops good relationships among staff of warmth and respect,
- Develops the confidence of parents fostered by professional conduct.

While holding staff to account for the basic, legal minimum standards of conduct, Tamar Valley Steiner School holds higher expectations of the conduct of staff based on the anthroposophical focus of our staff professional development.

### **Explanation of Guiding principle b: Professionalism in the workplace**

The basic minimum legal standards of conduct:

The school expects that all staff behave professionally, with respect and consideration towards colleagues, parents, students and general community members. Employees must

undertake to support the ethos of the school and the school’s statements of principles and practices. The ethics articulated in this Code are governed by the principles of service, impartiality, and continuous improvement.

The school seeks to provide a workplace that is free from discrimination and harassment, where employees act with due care and due diligence in the fulfilment of the requirements of their employment contracts, whilst always complying with the Australian Law.

**Explanation of guiding principle a) Anthroposophical understanding of the human being**

Self-Responsibility in Managing and Fostering Healthy Relationships within the School and Community:

As employees at a Steiner School, we make a commitment to respect and work with an Anthroposophical understanding of the human being. Part of that is taking self-responsibility for our own well-being and emotional and spiritual development and how we interpret and respond to the world.

At Tamar Valley Steiner School we hold high expectations of our employees to take on this responsibility and either through their own path or through following the guidance of the 7 requirements of the Inner Journey in Anthroposophy make a commitment to self-development (see table below).

<b>The Seven Requirements for the Inner Journey</b>	
1	A continual striving to develop and maintain a health; an awareness of, and striving for, the improvement of one’s physical, mental and spiritual health.
2	A feeling of connection with all of existence; to recognise oneself in everything, and everything in oneself; feeling to be a part of the whole of life, and that all belongs as part of the whole. Not to judge others without standing in their shoes.
3	Recognising that one's thoughts and feelings have as significant an influence on the world as one's deeds; an awareness that work on one's inner life is as important as work on one's outer life. Aggressive thoughts are “striking” them – what is not revealed is also there, purify thoughts and feelings.
4	Recognising that the true essence of a human being does not lie in one’s outer appearance, but rather in their inner nature; the soul and spiritual existence of human being, see and respond to ‘the light’ in the other.
5	The ability to be true to a decision once made; steadfastness and endurance in following a resolution once it has been made, even in the face of daunting adversity.
6	Developing gratitude for everything that we receive; thankfulness for everything that meets us, so that universal love allows the world to reveal itself fully to oneself.
7	A striving to bring all the conditions together; an awareness that the conditions in harmony will allow for oneself to find genuine balance between having an open heart for the demands of the outer world, whilst also maintaining inner strength.

Staff conduct at Tamar Valley Steiner School should aim to embody these principles, particularly in how staff manage and foster relationships with others including other staff, students and families.

## **CONDUCT PART A:**

### **1. Managing and Fostering Healthy Relationships within the School and Community**

#### **1. Expected staff Conduct with other Employees or Volunteers at TVSS**

- 1.1 Staff are to actively respect, preserve and build a circle of safety within the organisation. The aim is for each staff member to trust that they will be supported, encouraged and their reputation upheld by their colleagues at Tamar Valley Steiner School. It is important for each staff member to know that their psychological and physical safety is actively maintained by the positive relationships they have in the school with their colleagues, and to make a commitment to conduct themselves in a manner that maintains the safety of others also.
- 1.2 The foundation of this is to come with the intention of holding each other in a state of unconditional positive regard; to “touch” the other through actions, words, eye contact, body language and thoughts with gentleness and care. When others feel this care, it builds their trust.

#### **2. Expected staff Conduct with Parents**

- 2.1 Staff are to maintain respectful and warm conduct with all parents in the community. Parents often feel vulnerable and may feel judged for their parenting approaches. Staff are to always foster a non-judgmental attitude and positive regard for parents. Staff are encouraged to use their discernment and knowledge of child development to try and more deeply understand behaviours in students or parents. An attitude of feeling that you know better than the parent, or criticizing parents’ choices in respect to the student is unacceptable.
- 2.2 The aim is to work collaboratively with the parent/s to share perspective whilst maintaining a warm and healthy relationship with the parent so that the student is supported in the best way possible.
- 2.3 Staff are to proactively reach out to parents to rebuild rapport where moments of disrepair may have occurred. If this is not possible then staff are required to escalate the issue to the principal. Staying in a state of disrepair with a parent is not healthy for any person or child and requires action towards resolution and healing.

#### **3. Expected Staff Conduct with Students**

- 3.1 Unconditional positive regard (a sense of ‘touch’ in an Anthroposophical sense, that is caring in voice, deed and thought) should be maintained wherever possible. When not possible and a staff member is triggered emotionally or escalated, the staff member should seek support and step out of the situation and regain composure to reduce unhelpful impulsive responses.
- 3.2 Failing to always maintain composure is not in itself a breach of the code of conduct, however, it is an expectation that staff acknowledge their actions when not in alignment with expectations and engage in repair of the relationship/s if they do act out of an escalated or impulsive state.

#### **4. Expected Conduct in Relation to Multiple Roles and/or Conflict of Interest.**

As an employee you are responsible for contributing to the effective functioning of the school. Responsible people need to be able to function effectively as a group, and this can be undermined if conflicts of interest are not managed. Responsible people must be able to have impartial and open discussions and be able to rely on each other to always act in the best interests of the school. If you have a conflict of interest whether it is actual, potential or

perceived, you must familiarise yourself with the school's conflict of interest policy for the proper management of conflict of interest in the organisation. In addition, specific guidance on how to manage an Employee/Parent conflict of interest is outlined below.

#### **4.1 Staff who are parents – while on duty working at the school**

During work hours, staff are required to always operate from their role as a staff member and not as parent. If a significant issue arises with their child/ren while they are working that requires their urgent attention as a parent, staff are required to alert the Principal and request to be taken off their work duties. If on a scheduled break it is permissible for any staff member to address personal matters including parenting duties during the workday. If the issue is not quickly resolved and time off duties is required, you are required to request leave without pay and a replacement staff member will be found to step into your duty of care and professional responsibilities during that time. Holding duty of care whilst acting as a parent for your child is not permitted unless you have been rostered on to have the direct educational responsibility for your child. The school will ensure that this direct responsibility for your own child's education and care is minimised to manage the conflict of interest whether actual or perceived.

#### **4.2 Staff who are parents – during staff meetings and interactions**

Staff who are parents are required to be mindful of the impact of any conflicts of interest on conversations that they are part of or overhear and act to minimise the impact that their personal interest may have. This may involve, verbally declaring the conflict of interest, requesting it be noted in meeting minutes, withholding from a discussion, removing yourself from a discussion, and actively working to internally balance the pressure of your personal longing versus your professional opinion so that, if it is decided you will be involved in decision making on an issue, your opinion is as free as possible from your personal bias.

#### **4.3 Staff who are parents – conversations with other parents outside of school**

Staff who are parents are required to withhold sharing any information with other parents that they are privy to by virtue of being a staff member. This includes observations of class dynamics, students, other staff members characteristics and performance, and general school happenings. Staff may discuss information that is already widely known in the community but must be especially careful to withhold personal opinions that may risk putting them in breach of the requirement to be supportive of other staff, and the school, in their speech, thoughts and actions.

### **5. Building and maintaining healthy relationships in the school**

#### **5.1 Being Proactive**

- Maintain your own health and wellbeing so it is possible for you to see the best in others including staff and parents (the light in you, the Christ in you).
- Maintain a healthy parent-teacher relationship that is essential to promote a positive school experience for your students.
- Hold others in unconditional positive regard.
- Use accurate and kind words especially when speaking of another's challenges.
- Welcome, foster and develop connections to all new staff, students and parents regardless of background.
- Support belonging in our diverse community with inclusive language and actions.

#### **5.2 Being Responsive and Supportive**

- Seek understanding of situations with others through brave self-reflection on your contribution to the outcome or health in the relationship.
- When receiving or providing feedback follow the feedback and complaints policy.

- Keep an open mind to difference.
- Acknowledge that there are other valid points of view.
- When debriefing your work day, only discuss any concerns sensitively and confidentially with a person somewhat independent of the school context, or in a confidential context such as counselling or psychology sessions.
- Hold an attitude of awareness that with conflict and problems, there are always different viewpoints, so this means you may never have a resolution that's fully in your favour, but you should be comfortable enough that your concerns have been recognised and a process of resolution has been followed.
- Adopt a restorative approach to disrepair in relationships.

### **5.3 Managed response to hold boundaries of Protection.**

- Hold boundaries around unsafe behaviours through appropriate mechanisms. For example:
  - If approached by someone with feedback about another person or school action/activity, direct them to the feedback process.
  - If approached by someone to share feedback about you, support the conversation in line with the appropriate responses outlined in the Feedback and Complaints Policy.
  - If you don't have the capacity to take feedback at that point, clearly let the other person know and arrange a different time or direct them to the next step in the feedback process.
  - If the other person appears to have heightened emotions at any point, end the conversation by explaining that you need to end the interaction and direct them to the feedback process for alternate pathways.

### **5.4 Managing/providing Feedback or making Complaints**

Follow our Feedback and Complaints Process including:

- Lodge feedback to assist improvements.
  - Lodge clear complaint and request for preferred resolution.
  - Engage consistently and in a timely way with the school to resolve the complaint.
- \*Maintain confidentiality throughout the process

## **2. CONDUCT PART B**

### **Professionalism in the workplace (basic, minimum legal standards of conduct)**

#### **6. Professional and Ethical Conduct**

- 6.1** In the course of their employment, employees must act in a professional and respectful manner that enhances their reputation, the reputation of the school and the standing of Steiner education. If you have multiple roles or personal interests in the school please refer to the schools Conflict of Interest policy to ensure your conflict of interest is managed in a way as to preserve and enhance the reputation of the school and you in your professional role.
- 6.2** Employees must treat fellow employees, students and others within their work environment in a fair and just manner, assisting the school to promote a supportive environment that is free from harassment, victimisation and discrimination.
- 6.3** Employees are expected to behave in a manner which promotes the safety, welfare and well-being of students, colleagues and others in their workplace environment.
- 6.4** Employees whose work involves interaction with students have an additional responsibility to comply with Duty of Care statements and provide appropriate role models for students.

- 6.5 Employees must perform their work duties competently and responsibly, with a focus on delivering or supporting high quality educational services to students based on the philosophical framework of Steiner Education for child development and education.
- 6.6 Employees need to maintain professional competence through appropriate professional development or learning experiences with a particular focus on the principles of Rudolf Steiner education.
- 6.7 Employees need to maintain accuracy and integrity and comply with the schools Privacy Policy in relation to students, parents, staff and visitors.
- 6.8 Employees must act promptly in reporting breaches of the law and this Code of Conduct to the Principal or an appropriate member of the School Council.
- 6.9 Employees must comply effectively with all lawful and reasonable decisions and directions given by the school management or a person having authority to give such directions.
- 6.10 Dress, personal appearance and hygiene are important elements of professional presentation. Employees must ensure that their personal appearance and presentation are appropriate for the workplace and are in accordance with the expectations of the school.

## 7. **Maintain Professional Boundaries with Educator-Student Relations.**

The teacher-student relationship is not equal. Educators are in a unique position of trust, care, authority and influence with their students, which means that there is always an inherent power imbalance between teachers and students. Professional boundaries are breached when a teacher misuses the power imbalance in the teacher-student relationship such that the student's welfare is compromised.

Staff must always act professionally in their relationships with students and recent former students. The absence of a direct TVSS-student relationship does not negate the requirement for a staff member to maintain professional boundaries.

For explanation on the types of professional boundaries to be considered refer to the appendix at the end of this document which contains an extract from the Teachers Registration Board of Tasmania's, Professional Boundaries - Guidelines for Tasmanian Teachers document.

The following suggestions are considered acceptable forms of behaviour between a staff member and a student.

- Use only appropriate authority and power in dealings with students.
- Keep dealings with students open and available to scrutiny from appropriate authorities.
- Treat students fairly, without treating any students as 'favourites'.
- Actively avoid situations which could be regarded as private or personal between the teacher and student.
- Use only employer-sanctioned means of communicating with students, including authorised IT systems, not personal email or private messages on websites.
- Where practical, ensure that there is written consent in advance of one-to-one meetings with a student.
- When meeting with students, meet in an appropriate environment (e.g., open classroom or office that has clear vision into it through windows or glass doors, or an open door).
- When appropriate, keep accurate/comprehensive records of meetings with students, including the reasons for the meeting and records of which senior staff members authorised the meeting or were made aware of it.
- Keep the content of meetings with students professional.
- If in more informal surrounds (e.g., sports coaching, school camps) be mindful that you are still in a professional relationship.

## **8. Duty of care**

- 8.1** Duty of Care is a duty to do everything reasonably practicable to protect others from foreseeable harm.
- 8.2** Teachers have a Duty of Care towards students due to their unique working relationship, based on trust.
- 8.3** Employees have a responsibility to assist in the provision of a physical and emotional environment that is free from harm. Harm includes any significant detrimental effect to a staff member's or students physical, psychological or emotional well-being and includes minor harm that is cumulative in nature and which would result in a detrimental effect of a significant nature to an employee or student if allowed to continue. Amongst other things, harm can be caused by:
- Physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
  - Sexual abuse or exploitation, or
  - Domestic or family violence, or
  - Bullying, or
  - Self-harm
- 8.4** Employees are referred to the schools' Child Protection Policy which contains the reporting procedures required of employees based on their obligations under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997

## **9. Physical intervention**

- 9.1** Employees must not use any form of discipline that involves corporal punishment, or engage in contact that could physically harm a student or another adult.
- 9.2** There are occasions where physical intervention is appropriate such as when it is employed to prevent physical harm to students, staff or other individuals in the School environment. Any physical intervention needs to be reasonable and proportionate to the circumstances.

## **10. Discrimination**

- 10.1** The school will endeavour to provide a workplace free of discrimination, bullying and harassment. Employees must not discriminate against a student or an adult on the basis of age, disability, family responsibilities (including breast feeding), gender, sexual orientation, irrelevant medical or criminal record, marital relationship or parental status, political or industrial belief or activity, pregnancy, race or ethnicity or religious belief or activity in accordance with relevant school policies and legislation include the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998.
- 10.2** Employees must not discriminate based on how aligned with 'Steiner' the family may be at any point in time. Judgement on background is not acceptable. Intent to embrace Steiner education, values and principles by families is required.

## **11. Sexual Misconduct**

- 11.1** The school seeks to provide an environment that is free from harassment, including sexual harassment.
- 11.2** Acceptable behaviour is outlined under section 13 on breaches.
- 11.3** Employees have a particular responsibility towards students. Employees must not attempt to sexualise a relationship with a student. To do so is a breach of trust, an abuse of authority, professional misconduct and criminal.
- 11.4** The following actions constitutes unacceptable behaviour:
- Unwarranted and inappropriate touching;
  - Inappropriate communication or actions of a sexual nature;

- Obscene behaviour including gestures, language and jokes;
- Inappropriate and deliberate exposure of students or other employees to the sexual behaviour of others;
- Dating a student;
- Expressing romantic feelings towards a student;
- Inappropriately responding to advances of a sexual nature initiated by a student.

## **12. Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, Other Drugs and Medication**

- 12.1** Upon the written request of parents, employees are authorized to administer prescribed medication in accordance with the School Policy on The Administration of Medication.
- 12.2** Employees have an obligation to ensure that any use of alcohol or drugs, whether illicit, over-the counter, or prescribed as medication, does not adversely affect their work performance or endanger the health and safety of others.
- 12.3** Employees must not provide students with alcohol, tobacco or drugs and must not encourage or condone the illegal use or the excessive use of such substances.
- 12.4** Smoking is not permitted in school facilities or at any School endorsed activity where staff members have contact with students.
- 12.5** Use of illegal substances is not permitted in school facilities or on any School endorsed activity where staff members have contact with students.
- 12.6** Employee consumption of alcohol is generally not permitted at any school activity or event where students may be present such as fairs, barbecues and graduations. However, in special circumstances where the College Executive has authorised the selling or serving of alcohol, the limited consumption of alcohol by adults may be permitted.

## **13. Use of School Resources**

- 13.1** School equipment and resources must generally only be used for the work and business of the school.
- 13.2** Limited and occasional private use of school equipment and resources may be authorised on occasions where it does not adversely affect the employee's performance, the performance of others, or the business or reputation of the school. Employees must have approval to use school equipment and resources for private purposes, and must ensure that it is safely stored and secure at all times.
- 13.3** Employees must not use any school resource, 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, sexual explicit or violent.

## 14. Breaches of the Code of Conduct

### 14.1 Breaches in Conduct with Students - Checking whether there has been a breach

Employees' interactions with students and other employees must be, and be seen to be, professional at all times. The following questions may be considered in determining whether behaviour is professional (copied from TRB professional boundaries) or whether it constitutes a breach of the code of conduct:

- Am I dealing with a particular student differently from the way I deal with other students under the same circumstances?
- Am I behaving in a way that puts my own emotional needs above the student's needs or welfare?
- Am I providing career/professional counselling or personal counselling, and is this part of my professional responsibility?
- Am I sharing information with a student because I think it will help the student or because I need to be liked?
- Am I interacting with the student in an 'online environment' consistently with how I would act with that student in class or at school?
- Am I engaging in behaviours and discussions either personally or 'online' that are unsuitable for this particular group of students?
- Is my dress, availability, language or demeanour different from the normal with a particular student?
- Would I modify my behaviour with a student if a colleague were present?
- Would I judge my conduct negatively if I observed it in another teacher?
- Is it possible that my actions will have negative outcomes for the student?
- Is it possible that the consequences of my actions will negatively affect people's confidence in my good character and/or fitness to teach, and my suitability to work with children?
- Would my actions bring the teaching profession into disrepute?
- How would I feel explaining my actions to the Teachers Registration Board?

## Examples of breach/unacceptable conduct with other staff, parents and students

The following outlines what would be considered a breach of this Code of Conduct. Because of the school's high standards of expectations of conduct which are required to support our unique culture (as outlined in the School Cultural context), it is possible to have a 'minor' breach if these high expectations are not fully adhered to. Any breach of the basic expectations of respect and minimum standards of conduct (Part B), and any significant breach will not be considered minor.

### 14.2 Minor

- Withdraw from communication with a student's parent for an extended period of time (more than a month as a guide)
- Allow a situation of relationship disrepair to go on unaddressed.
- Continue to engage in situations with parents or students where you may reach a state where you find it difficult or impossible to meet expectations of the code of conduct.
- Cause some minor or moderate harm to a parent or student by becoming heightened during an interaction and using words, action, or tone of voice that are received as being harmful.
- Choose not to provide feedback or a complaint directly to the school, and instead:
  - Share negative stories about others' with either staff or parents.
  - Pass on negative stories you've heard about others without having personal knowledge of the full circumstances.
- Lose unconditional positive regard for another and maintain this attitude.
- Use assumptions that take a negative stance of other people to inform your approach to them.
- Exaggerate or use inflammatory language about others.
- Vent by sharing raw, emotional, or unprocessed thoughts in an unfiltered way in a less than private space, or with others in the school community who may be affected by the way you share your story.
- Express negative statements about others.
- Directly or indirectly use harmful words about another community member.
- Perpetuate negative thoughts and stories about people and situations that do not help progress a situation to a better outcome.
- Agitate to ensure that your needs will be met despite negative impacts on others.
- When receiving feedback, taking a defensive stance, invalidating the feedback.
- Refuse to acknowledge responsibility for minor or moderate harm suffered connection with your actions even if unintended.
- Contribute directly or indirectly to a culture of preferential treatment or cliques.
- Actively establish an 'in group' while noticeably excluding others.
- Being cold or dismissive with some members of the community, e.g. intentionally avoiding greeting, meeting someone's gaze, or avoiding speaking to others such as other staff, or parents in your class, while maintaining an obvious sense of warmth with others.

### 14.3 Chronic or Serious

- Hold the belief that only certain types of people belong in our community.
- Demonstrate an inability to move forward with a situation to a positive space despite investigation and a process towards resolution with professional support to progress through a situation.
- Taking an overtly negative attitude towards another community member that they are directly aware of.

- Cause significant harm to a parent, staff member or student by becoming heightened during an interaction and using words, action, or tone of voice that are received as being extremely harmful.
- Continue to share negative stories without using complaints procedure.
- Breach confidentiality of the complaint process while engaged with complaints procedure.
- Consistent or significant (one-off) failure to follow appropriate procedures to manage boundaries around unsafe behaviours.
- Refuse to compromise or accept a resolution that is reasonable and fair in objective terms.
- Hold grudges against others without actively seeking resolution or working towards forgiveness of past actions.

## **15. Procedure for Dealing with breaches of the Code of Conduct**

15.1 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 school Feedback and Complaints Policy of Staff Issues Resolution Process depending on the breach.

15.2 Employees have an obligation to report breaches of the Code of Conduct to the Principal or a member of the College Executive. For staff who witness or receive the unacceptable conduct of other staff members, they are to speak to the staff member about this if appropriate to do so and if their relationship with their fellow staff member is well established and feels safe. If not, they are to report it to the Principal, and this can be done in an anonymous manner if needed.

**15.3** Once notified, the Principal will follow the following procedure:

- 15.3.1 Ensure safety of all involved: actions will be taken to mitigate the risk of potential further harm from ongoing concerns with conduct. This may include:
- conducting initial conversations to establish what is required to secure safety.
  - Move the student to another class or,
  - temporarily standing down a staff member with pay, and
  - if the student's safety might be compromised by staying at school, arranging for the student's education to be temporarily supported at home.
- 15.3.2 Investigation to determine facts and whether they are disputed or undisputed. The Principal will take the necessary steps to determine as far as is possible, what has taken place.
- 15.3.3 Reporting: if it is deemed necessary as per the reportable conduct scheme and/or mandatory reporting policy and procedure, reporting to external agencies may take place
- 15.3.4 Inform: for staff and others involved in the breach, the Principal will inform all parties of the outcomes of the investigation and proposed pathway forwards.
- 15.3.5 Resolution: Actions may be taken towards restoration and/or sanctions against an employee where there has been a breach.

## **16.1 Actions to be taken to address unacceptable conduct:**

### **16.1.1 Actions - Minor breaches:**

- Feedback form, or minor breach record sheet – this will be logged and the Principal will follow up with feedback to the parent/staff member who was in breach of expectations.

- The breach of expectations on conduct will be brought to the attention of the staff member through a verbal reminder. The staff member will then actively work to repair any harm or disrepair that may have occurred because of their conduct.
- For repeated minor breaches of the same behaviour the Principal will put in writing the pattern of unhelpful conduct and discuss with the staff member some strategies for shifting the response.
- If minor breaches are consistently impacting on the professionalism and quality of a staff members performance in their role these matters will be raised and addressed as part of staff annual reviews.

#### 16.1.2 Sanctions:

- Employees should be aware that the Principal may apply sanctions if the Code of Conduct is breached. Depending on the nature of the breach, various sanctions such as the following may be applied:
  1. Appropriate warnings or discussion,
  2. Counselling
  3. Enforced leave,
  4. Dismissal,
  5. Reporting criminal behaviour
  6. Initiation of civil action.
  7. For breaches involving unacceptable behaviour of a staff member to a student as per 11.4, could be termination of employment.

### 17.1 Reportable Conduct Scheme

In the event of staff who have engaged in unacceptable conduct, the Reportable Conduct Scheme under the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 requires leaders of specific organisations to:

- notify the Independent Regulator upon becoming aware of conduct related to child abuse involving an adult worker (this is called reportable conduct), and
- conduct investigations (they may engage an investigator).

The definition of worker under the Act includes paid workers, volunteers and contractors.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme is about ensuring reportable conduct is investigated properly in a child-centred way. This is done through oversight by the Independent Regulator, who must receive:

- Within three business days: Leaders must report reportable conduct to the Independent Regulator in writing and provide basic details such as the worker's name. As soon as possible, leaders must start an investigation.
- Within 30 days: Leaders must provide an update including information about the allegation or conviction, whether any actions have been taken (for example, placing a limit on a worker's contact with children) and any written submissions.
- At the end of the investigation: Leaders must provide findings of the investigation, reasons for the findings and details of any actions that have been taken as a result.

The Reportable Conduct Scheme does not replace other reporting obligations which may include the police (if the alleged conduct is criminal) or the Registration to Work with Vulnerable People scheme

## EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Please read the Code of Conduct for Employees policy carefully to ensure that you understand the policy before signing this document.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have read and been informed about the content, requirements, and expectations of the Code of Conduct and duty of care for Employees at Tamar Valley Steiner School.

I have received a copy of the policy and agree to abide by the policy guidelines as a condition of my employment and my continuing employment at Tamar Valley Steiner School.

I understand that if I have questions, at any time, regarding the Code of Conduct for Employees policy, I will consult with my immediate supervisor (being the Principal or Business Manager).

I understand that this signed acknowledgement will be kept on my personnel file.

Employee Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Employee Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix- Extract from the Teachers Registration Professional Boundaries Policy

“Professional boundaries may be categorised into specific types of boundaries, although these categories cannot be considered mutually exclusive.

They include:

- a) **Emotional boundaries** – Teachers engage in emotional self-regulation to use appropriate levels of emotion in interactions with students and to cope with the emotions of others in teaching settings.
- b) **Relationship boundaries** – Relationships between teachers and students are generally strictly professional relationships, with a recognition that the teacher is not a ‘friend’ to students, in the way students are friends with other students.
- c) **Power boundaries** – Teachers are in a position of power and authority over students and must ensure they do not abuse their position.
- d) **Communication boundaries** – Teachers’ communication with students should focus on student educational needs. Problems in maintaining boundaries often relate to issues of self-disclosure by teachers to students.
- e) **Physical boundaries** – Teachers must understand appropriate physical contact and ensure they do not engage in inappropriate physical contact.

Teachers may touch and be touched by students in certain circumstances only.”