



*Atlantis Beach Baptist College*

## **Teacher and Staff Code of Conduct and Ethics**

Title of Policy/Procedure	<b>Teacher and Staff Code of Conduct and Ethics</b>
Endorsed by	<b>Principal</b>
Creation date	<b>September 2015</b>
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To whom issued	<b>Staff</b>

## **Teacher and Staff Code of Conduct and Ethics**

The aim of this Code of Conduct is to support college staff. The Code of Conduct has been developed for Atlantis Beach Baptist College staff and to demonstrate their professional status. In all our dealings we must conduct ourselves in a manner that reflects Christian Principles of compassion, sensitivity, honesty and grace which describe the professional conduct, personal conduct and professional competence expected of a member of staff by their colleagues and the college community.

It is based on the values set out in the accompanying Code of Ethics, namely

**Integrity**

**Respect**

**Responsibility**

and relates but is not limited to the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, and Codes of Conduct for teachers.

### **Purpose**

The Code of Conduct codifies what is already common practice within the teaching profession and the support staff. Its purpose is to:

- promote adherence to the values teachers and staff see as underpinning their profession
- provide a set of Christian principles which will guide teachers and staff in their everyday conduct and assist them to solve ethical dilemmas
- affirm accountability of the teaching and various staff professions
- promote parental confidence in the ABBC teachers and staff.

The Code of Conduct is not a disciplinary tool.

The Code of Conduct will not cover every situation. There may be policies or procedures set down by the College, or there may be specific issues that are covered by an industrial agreement or award.

## **Section 1: Professional conduct**

Teachers' and staffs' professional conduct is characterised by the quality of the relationships they have with their students, their students' parents (legal guardians and caregivers), families and communities and their colleagues.

### **Relationships with students**

#### **1.1 Teachers and staff provide opportunities for all students to learn**

The main focus of a member of staff is student learning. Staff demonstrate their commitment to student learning by:

- a. knowing their students well, respecting their individual differences and catering for their individual abilities
- b. maintaining a safe and challenging learning environment
- c. accepting professional responsibility for the provision of quality teaching
- d. having high expectations of every student, recognising and developing each student's abilities, skills and talents
- e. considering all viewpoints fairly
- f. communicating well and appropriately with their students
- g. supporting and facilitating the above to further student education and well-being.

#### **1.2 Teachers and staff treat their students with courtesy and dignity**

Teachers and Staff:

- a. work to create an environment which promotes mutual respect
- b. model and engage in respectful and impartial language and practices
- c. protect students from intimidation, embarrassment, humiliation or harm
- d. enhance student autonomy and sense of self-worth and encourage students to develop and reflect on their own values
- e. respect a student's privacy in sensitive matters, such as health or family problems, and only reveal confidential matters when appropriate. That is: if the student has consented to the information being used in a certain way to prevent or lessen a serious threat to life, health, safety or welfare of a person (including the student) as part of an investigation into unlawful activity if the disclosure is required or mandated by law to prevent a crime or enforce the law
- f. refrain from discussing students' personal problems in situations where the information will not be treated confidentially
- g. use consequences commensurate with the offence when disciplining or supporting students.

#### **1.3 Teachers and staff work within the limits of their professional expertise**

In fulfilling their role, teachers and staff carry out a wide range of responsibilities. They support students by knowing their strengths and the limits of their professional expertise.

Teachers and staff:

- a. seek to ensure that they have the physical, mental and emotional capacity to carry out their professional responsibilities

- b. are aware of the role of other professionals and agencies and when students should be referred to them for assistance
- c. are truthful when making statements about their qualifications and competencies.

#### **1.4 Teachers and staff maintain objectivity in their relationships with students**

In their professional role, teachers and staff do not behave as a friend or a parent. They:

- a. interact with students without displaying bias or preference
- b. make decisions in students' best interests
- c. do not draw students into their personal agendas
- d. do not seek recognition at the expense of professional objectivity and goals.

#### **1.5 Teachers and staff are always in a professional relationship with the students in their school, whether at school or not**

Teachers and staff hold a unique position of influence and trust that should not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with students. The following examples outline some of those limits. A professional relationship **will** be violated if a teacher or member of staff:

- a. has a sexual relationship with a student
- b. uses sexual innuendo or inappropriate language and/or material with students
- c. touches a student without a valid reason
- d. holds conversations of a personal nature or has contact with a student via written or electronic means including email, letters, telephone, text messages, or chat lines, without a valid context. This includes befriending students using social media.
- e. accepts or offers gifts, which could be reasonably perceived as being used to influence them, from students or their parents.

#### **A professional relationship may be compromised if a teacher or member of staff:**

- a. attends parties or socialises with students
- b. invites a student or students back to their classroom or home, particularly if no one else is present.

### **Relationships with parents (legal guardians, caregivers), families and communities**

#### **1.6 Teachers and staff maintain a professional relationship with parents (legal guardians and caregivers)**

Teachers and staff should be respectful of and courteous to parents. Teachers and Staff:

- a. consider parents' perspectives when making decisions which have an impact on the education or wellbeing of a student
- b. communicate and consult with parents in a timely, understandable and sensitive manner
- c. take appropriate action when responding to parental concerns.

## **1.7 Teachers and staff work in collaborative relationships with students' families and communities**

Teachers and staff recognise that their students come from a diverse range of cultural contexts and seek to work collaboratively with students' families and communities within those contexts.

### **Relationships with colleagues**

## **1.8 Collegiality is an integral part of the work of teachers and members of staff**

Teachers and staff demonstrate collegiality by:

- a. treating each other with courtesy and respect
- b. valuing the input of their colleagues
- c. using appropriate forums for constructive debate on professional matters
- d. sharing expertise and knowledge in a variety of collaborative contexts
- e. respecting different approaches to teaching
- f. providing support for each other, particularly those new to the profession and College
- g. sharing information relating to the wellbeing of students.

## **Section 2: Staff personal conduct**

**The personal conduct of a teacher and member of staff will have an impact on the professional standing of that member of staff and on the various professions as a whole.**

Although there is no definitive boundary between the personal and professional conduct of a teacher and member of staff, it is expected that staff will:

- a. be positive role models at school and in the community
- b. respect the rule of law and provide a positive example in the performance of civil obligations
- c. not exploit their position for personal or financial gain
- d. ensure that their personal or financial interests do not interfere with the performance of their duties
- e. act with discretion and maintain confidentiality when discussing workplace issues
- f. Disclosure of Trade Secret, Confidential or Proprietary Information
- g. As staff of the college are representative of the college both within the walls of the college and the wider community. As such the following should be kept in mind

Political activity

Dating and extramarital affairs

Homosexuality

Socialising with students

Inappropriate posts on social media by self or friends

Criminal, financial and litigation history

Use of drugs and alcohol  
Activities related to sexual orientation  
Physical appearance and conduct  
Pornography  
Other lifestyle choices in conflict with the college ethos and Christian values

### **Section 3: Professional competence**

#### **3.1 Teachers and staff value their professionalism, and set and maintain high standards of competence**

Teachers and staff:

- a. are knowledgeable in their areas of expertise
- b. are committed to pursuing their own professional development
- c. complete their duties in a responsible, thorough and timely manner.

#### **3.2 Teachers and staff are aware of the legal requirements that pertain to their profession in particular, they are cognisant of their legal responsibilities in relation to:**

- discrimination, harassment and vilification  
duty of care
- negligence
- mandatory reporting privacy
- occupational health and safety teacher  
registration

#### **Related policies**

- Child Protection Policy
- Duty of Care to Students Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Equal Opportunity, Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy
- Interstate and Overseas Tours Policy
- College Staff Handbook