Juniper College Child Safety Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct outlines the expected standards of behaviour for all adults in the Juniper College community to ensure the safety, wellbeing, inclusion, and empowerment of every child. It supports the implementation of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and the Child Safety Reporting Procedure and supports Juniper College's compliance with Ministerial Order 1359. This Code should be read in conjunction with the Juniper College Online Safety and Digital Technologies Policy. This Code operates alongside, and does not replace, any professional or occupational code applying to an individual, including the Victorian Teaching Profession Code of Conduct.

Scope

This Code applies to all adults engaged with Juniper College, including employees, volunteers, contractors, external providers, School Council members, Foundation Learning Centre Board members and students on placement, as well as any adult involved in school-endorsed off-site activities. It applies in all environments where students are present or engaged in learning, whether on-site, online, or off-site, including school campuses, digital platforms, excursions, VET and SWL programs, camps, transport arrangements, community-based learning settings, and any other location connected to Juniper College activities.

Statement of Purpose

All adults at Juniper College must uphold a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse, neglect, discrimination and racism, and are expected to act in ways that promote the safety, empowerment, participation and inclusion of all children. They must respect each child's rights and dignity, respond immediately to any concerns by following all reporting obligations, and foster culturally safe, trauma-informed and developmentally appropriate interactions at all times.

Expected Behaviours

All adults engaged with the College must:

Uphold professional boundaries

- Treat all children with respect, courtesy, and fairness.
- Use language that is age-appropriate, inclusive, and non-discriminatory.
- Use physical contact with a student only when it is necessary, reasonable, appropriate to the student's needs and circumstances, and consistent with College policy.
- Set clear, consistent behavioural expectations.

Create safe environments

- Promote culturally safe and inclusive practices that recognise the individual needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, LGBTIQA+ students, students with disability, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and other students who may experience vulnerability or disadvantage.

- Provide safe, well-supervised physical and online environments.
- Follow risk management and supervision procedures in high-risk activities, excursions, VET and off-site programs.
- Listen to children and young people, take their views and concerns seriously, and support them to participate in decisions that affect their safety and wellbeing.

Act on concerns immediately

- Follow the Child Safety Reporting Procedure.
- Act on any concern, disclosure, allegation, or suspicion.
- Prioritise child safety over confidentiality: share information lawfully when needed to protect a child.
- Record all concerns and actions accurately and promptly.

Follow all legal and ethical obligations

- Comply with mandatory reporting, Reportable Conduct Scheme obligations, and other statutory requirements.
- Comply with Working with Children Check / VIT requirements.
- Participate in child safety training and refresher sessions.

Maintain professional communication

- Use only school-approved platforms when communicating with students.
- Not connect with current students on any personal social media platform.
- Not connect with former students on any personal social media platform for a minimum period of two years after the student has ceased enrolment at Juniper College.
- Keep communication observable and transparent.
- Report any concerning online interactions immediately.

Unacceptable Behaviours

Professional boundaries

Adults must not:

- Develop ‘special relationships’ with a child that could be seen as favouritism or grooming.
- Engage in private or secretive communication with a student, including online messaging.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact or engage in overly personal conversations.

Discrimination and harm

Adults must not:

- Use discriminatory, shaming, abusive, intimidating, or sexualised language.
- Ignore or trivialise indicators of harm, neglect, grooming, or family violence.
- Photograph or video students except in accordance with school policy.

Handling allegations and investigations

Adults must not:

- Attempt to investigate concerns themselves.
- Promise confidentiality to a child when they disclose.
- Discuss allegations with anyone other than authorised personnel.

Online safety

Adults must not:

- Maintain personal social media connections with current students or recent graduates (within two years of ceasing enrolment) in breach of the professional boundary requirements outlined in this Code.
- Communicate with students from personal accounts.
- Allow students unsupervised access to unsafe online environments.

Reporting Obligations

All adults covered by this Code must act immediately on any child safety concern, disclosure, allegation, observation or reasonable suspicion and follow Juniper College's Child Safety Reporting Procedure.

This includes following the Victorian Government's PROTECT Four Critical Actions:

- Identify
- Report
- Support
- Refer

Adults must make reports to Victoria Police, DFFH Child Protection or other relevant authorities when required.

Concerns must also be reported promptly to the Deputy Principal (Child Safety Officer). If the Deputy Principal is unavailable, the concern must be reported to the Principal or relevant Head of Campus. If a concern or allegation involves the Principal or nominated Head of Organisation, it must be reported directly to the Chair of the Foundation Learning Centre Board. If the Chair of the Foundation Learning Centre Board is implicated, unavailable or affected by an actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest, the matter must be referred to another appropriately authorised and non-conflicted Board member. Advice must be sought promptly from the Social Services Regulator regarding the appropriate reporting and management arrangements.

Internal reporting does not replace an individual's legal reporting obligations, and external reports must not be delayed while seeking internal advice or approval. Failure to comply with reporting obligations is a breach of this Code and may result in disciplinary action or termination of employment or engagement.

Breaches of the Code

Breaches may result in:

- disciplinary action;
- termination of employment or engagement;
- termination of a volunteer, contractor, placement or other arrangement;
- notification to the Victorian Institute of Teaching or Working with Children Check Unit, where required;
- Reportable Conduct Scheme notification to the Social Services Regulator, where required; and
- reports or referrals to Victoria Police, DFFH Child Protection or other relevant authorities, where required.

Acknowledgement and Record Keeping

All employees, contractors, volunteers, students on placement, Foundation Learning Centre Board members and School Council members to whom this Code applies must, on commencement, annually thereafter or whenever substantive amendments are made:

- read the Child Safe Code of Conduct;
- sign an acknowledgement form;
- agree to comply with this Code and all related child safety policies; and
- complete any associated induction or training requirements.

Signed acknowledgements will be retained in Employment Hero or another approved College record-keeping system.

Communication

The Child Safety Code of Conduct will be:

- introduced to all relevant employees, volunteers, contractors, external providers, members of the Foundation Learning Centre Board, School Council members and students on placement during induction or commencement of their engagement;
- reinforced through annual child safety training and whenever substantive changes are made;
- included in the Juniper College Staff Handbook;
- made publicly available on the Juniper College website;
- communicated to students, families and the broader College community in accessible and age-appropriate ways;
- referenced in relevant recruitment, procurement, contracting and volunteer engagement processes; and
- supported by signed acknowledgements, which will be retained through Employment Hero or another approved College record-keeping system.

Governance and Review

The Foundation Learning Centre Board is the overall custodian and approval authority for this Code.

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that the Code is implemented, communicated, acknowledged and reviewed at least annually, and earlier where required following a significant child safety incident, legislative or regulatory change, identified control failure or emerging risk.

Substantive amendments to this Code require approval by the Foundation Learning Centre Board.

Signature

I have read this Code of Conduct, and I agree to abide by it and its terms:

Name: _____liz Keep _____



Signature: _____

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Date: ___13/9/26_____

Document History

Version	Date approved	Changes made	Approved by	Next review date
1.8	14/05/24	Julie Young	FLC Board	14/03/25
1.9	15/12/25	Julie Young/Micah Jones	Juniper College School Council	This Code will be reviewed annually, or sooner in response to changes in child safety legislation, Ministerial Orders, or Child Safe Standards.
2.0	17/08/2026	Micah Jones - Established the Foundation Learning Centre Board as the overall custodian and approval authority for the Child Safe Code of Conduct; clarified Board, School Council and escalation responsibilities.	Juniper College School Council	This Code will be reviewed annually, or sooner in response to changes in child safety legislation, Ministerial Orders, or Child Safe Standards.