



## Volunteer Policies Combined

### Alcohol/Drugs and Other Harmful Substances

Sacred Heart College is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy environment for students, staff, and the community. This policy refers to alcohol, illegal drugs, mind-altering substances, psychoactive substances (such as legal highs, party pills, synthetic cannabis, etc), solvents, and other harmful substances. Anyone supervising students taking part in any activity organised by, or on behalf of, the school is also bound by this policy.

Prescription and non-prescription medicine required at school by students is managed under the school's **Medicines** and **Health Conditions** procedures.

- Students or staff using medication that may impair their ability to function normally should not be at school.
- Staff members or students who are taking prescription drugs to treat a medical condition (eg. depression or anxiety), and have a doctor's assurance that is safe to come to school, may possess and/or consume the required prescription drugs at school.

#### Students

The following conditions apply while on school grounds, while travelling to and from school, while wearing school uniform, or while taking part in any activity organised by the school or on behalf of the school, including EOTC activities.

- Students must not be in possession of, supply, consume, or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, mind-altering substances, legal highs, solvents, and other harmful substances.
- Students must not be in possession of drug paraphernalia.

#### Staff and other adults

Staff and other adults, including volunteers, must not be in possession of, consume, or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs, mind-altering substances, legal highs, solvents, and other harmful substances on all school grounds, or at any time when they have responsibility for students, including EOTC activities. Staff and other adults must not be in possession of drug paraphernalia.

#### Alcohol and Drugs

Staff will not consume or be impaired by:

- **alcohol** when the school is open for instruction or at any time when they have responsibility for students, including EOTC activities.
- **drugs** at any time on school grounds or when they have responsibility for students, including EOTC activities.

Staff should also maintain proper standards of **integrity and conduct** when representing the school and when on school business.

It is illegal to offer liquor as a prize for certain gambling activities, such as raffles.

#### Smoking

Sacred Heart College is a smokefree school. Smoking, including vaping and e-cigarettes, is not allowed anywhere on the school grounds at any time. School activities away from school, such as EOTC or sports trips, are also smokefree.

## Child Protection

Sacred Heart College aims to ensure the safety, wellbeing, and security of all children by practicing open and accountable child-centred decision-making. We recognise the importance of involving family/whanau in decision-making about their children, and will involve children in decision-making about themselves, in age-appropriate ways. We acknowledge that child protection is everyone's responsibility, and we promote our child protection policies to our school community.

Our school follows the Catholic Church in Aotearoa NZ's Safeguarding Policy which "promotes an environment that respects and acknowledges the dignity of all and where people feel valued and safe"

"Child", in the context of our school's child protection policies means a child or young person aged under 18 years (who is not married or in a civil union) – Children's Act 2014.

## Sharing Information

We share information with appropriate agencies if sharing that information will protect or improve the safety, health, or wellbeing of a child. In all circumstances, Sacred Heart College is carefully guided by **privacy** considerations in the sharing of information. By law, we can share information with the police and Oranga Tamariki- Ministry for Children.

## Student and Staff Safety

We take concerns about the safety of students seriously and respond to them quickly. Prevention and early intervention are important, and we use the least intrusive intervention possible to protect vulnerable children.

We promote a culture where staff feel confident that they can challenge poor practice or raise issues of concern without fear of reprisal.

## Protected Disclosure

We make employees, board members, and volunteers aware of our internal protected disclosure procedures and how to use them. We provide reminders annually and have information available at our school office.

A protected disclosure is a disclosure of information made by a discloser (also known as a whistleblower) who complies with all of the below steps:

- believes on reasonable grounds that there is, or has been, serious wrongdoing in or by the discloser's organisation.
- discloses information about that in accordance with these procedures and the Protected Disclosure (Protection of Whistleblowers) Act 2022
- does not disclose it in bad faith

Sacred Heart College is committed to handling protected disclosures properly as required under the Act. We encourage employees, contractors, board members, and volunteers to make a protected disclosure if they believe on reasonable grounds there is or has been serious wrongdoing. We treat protected disclosures seriously.

## Confidentiality

All protected disclosures are dealt with fairly and we try to keep confidential any information that might identify a discloser. We may reveal a discloser's identity if the discloser consents, or we have reasonable grounds to believe releasing identifying information is essential to:

- the effective investigation of the disclosure
- the prevention of serious risk to public health, safety, or the environment
- compliance with the principles of natural justice.

If we propose to release identifying information, we consult with the discloser unless this is not practicable in relation to preventing a serious risk to public health, safety, or the environment. We notify the discloser if we release identifying information. We encourage anyone in our school community to seek information and guidance from the Ombudsman in relation to confidentiality and making a protected disclosure.

## Protection

Disclosures are protected from retaliatory action. Protections still apply if the discloser is mistaken about the truth of the disclosure.

Anyone who makes a disclosure they know is false or made in bad faith is not protected under the Act.

When addressing a formal complaint, the school does not use settlement agreements where these contradict a culture of child protection.

## Investigating a Formal Complaint or Serious Allegation

The following general guidelines will help investigate a formal complaint or serious allegation. They are directed at complaints made against staff members, but can be adapted as appropriate to apply to any complaints (about students, parents, the principal, board member, or any other person), and to reflect the nature of the matters under investigation.

### Guidelines for investigating a formal complaint or serious allegation

#### Principal, and/or the board chair, and/or nominated board member

##### 1. Preparing for investigation and decision-making

Acknowledge receipt – Acknowledge receipt of the complaint within five working days.

- **Preliminary assessment** – Conduct a preliminary assessment of the complaint to determine the scope of the investigation and level of board involvement (if any). This may include seeking further information from the complainant and the subject of the complaint. If a formal investigation is deemed to be unnecessary (e.g. for more general complaints or those that are unlikely to lead to disciplinary action against a staff member), consider returning to the Raising Concerns process to resolve the issue informally, or deem the issue resolved.
- **Refer to board** – Potentially sensitive matters and/or more serious complaints that could lead to disciplinary action against a staff member may be referred to the board for consideration in-committee, with a view to determining the required level of board involvement.
- **Legal consultation** – If the complaint is serious and relates to matters that could justify a staff member's suspension or subsequent dismissal, consult NZSTA and/or the school's lawyer. Relevant collective agreement provisions for dealing with complaints about staff members must be observed, including protecting the staff member's dignity and mana, advising them of their right to seek support and representation before responding to complaints, and giving them a reasonable opportunity to take that advice.
- **External agencies** – Consult with external agencies as appropriate (e.g. Oranga Tamariki – Ministry for Children, and/or police) to ensure any actions do not undermine other investigations.
- **Appoint investigator** – Consider who will be appointed to investigate the complaint. This may be the principal, a board member, board committee, or an independent or specialist investigator, depending on the seriousness of the issue or any potential conflicts of interest or potential for bias.
- **Awareness** – Be aware of school policy and legislative requirements. If the complaint involves a child, you must get permission to interview the child. Also consider appointing an investigator with expertise in interviewing young people.
- **Conflict of interest** – Consider if any investigator or other person involved in the investigation or decision-making (including any staff member or student representative) has a potential conflict of interest or potential for bias. Decide how to manage or mitigate that potential, including removal from the investigation or decision-making process.

**Terms of reference** – The board may resolve to delegate a decision about the outcome of the complaint to a board member or board committee. However, the board cannot delegate decision-making responsibility to non-board members. Provide an appointed investigator with clear terms of reference, including the boundaries and expectations of their role. You may choose to specify that you only want fact-finding, including the investigator's conclusions on the balance of probabilities regarding disputed facts.

## 2. Insurance requirements

- Inform the school's insurer of the complaint and keep them informed of progress and resolution. This is an insurance policy requirement to maintain cover when a matter might result in an insurance claim. Insurers usually require boards to follow advice from NZSTA and/or the school's lawyer in dealing with any matters that could lead to disciplinary action against a staff member.

## 3. Contact with respondent (person complained about)

- Inform the respondent that an investigation is required, and the scope of the investigation. Include, if relevant, the identity of any independent investigator, and confirm (in writing) that they are entitled to seek union or legal advice and representation. Remind them that they may also bring a support person or whānau member to any meeting. Consider the vulnerability of a person subject to a complaint and offer them ongoing support during and after the investigation (e.g. if a staff member, NZEI, EAP).
- In most cases you should provide the respondent with a letter explaining the specific concerns, attaching all relevant information, and outlining any potential disciplinary outcome. Set a time frame that allows the respondent a reasonable opportunity to consider the complaint and seek independent advice before providing their written and/or oral response.
- Seek NZSTA and/or legal advice regarding your correspondence and meetings with the respondent.

## 4. Contact with complainant

- Where necessary and appropriate, keep the complainant informed of the expected time frame for resolution. Offer the complainant ongoing support during and after the investigation.

## Investigator/Investigating committee

### 5. Seeking information

- In accordance with the terms of reference, complete relevant inquiries and interviews.

### 6. Note-taking

- Note-taking and interview recording should be addressed in the terms of reference. (Recording meetings is allowed if you tell the participants and make a copy available to them.) Make detailed notes of all discussions, interviews, questions, and answers. The notes should record the facts related to the investigation rather than opinions or comments that could be taken to suggest the outcome is predetermined.
- Be aware that employees are entitled to access their personal information, which will generally include interview notes about their own conduct. Seek legal advice if unsure about the disclosure of information, or contact the Office of the Privacy Commissioner or the Ombudsman.
- Disclose notes from a person's own interview to them for confirmation.

### 7. Summarise and conclude

- Consider all relevant information, reach a conclusion regarding disputed facts, and conclude whether the complaint has been substantiated.
- Prepare a draft investigation report. If required by the terms of reference, share the report with the subject of the complaint, seeking their comments.
- Finalise the report

## Investigator

### 8. Present investigation findings to board

- Brief the board in-committee on the scope and outcome of the investigation and its findings.

## **Decision-maker (board investigator or committee, the full board, or the headmaster)**

### **9. Present investigation findings and next steps to subject of complaint**

- Determine any next steps, including whether disciplinary action is appropriate.
- Provide the subject of the complaint with a copy of the final investigation report and a letter that explains any next steps. Any next steps should identify specific concerns and proposed disciplinary actions, and why these may be appropriate.
- Before any decision is made, invite the subject of the complaint (through their representative, if applicable) to respond at a meeting and/or in writing to the report's findings and to the specific concerns, and to comment on any disciplinary options being considered.
- If a meeting is held, ensure notes are taken and confine discussion to issues already identified. This is not an opportunity for either party to raise new matters.

### **10. Resolve the complaint and inform the subject of the complaint**

- Following the meeting, or on receipt of the written response, consider whether any further investigation may be required.
- Before making a decision, ensure you have carefully considered any feedback, comments, and explanations from the subject of the complaint. Any mitigating circumstances should be also explicitly be considered.
- Make your decision, recording how you arrived at the decision, and the reasons for any disciplinary consequences.
- Depending upon the seriousness of the situation, you may need to take a day or two to consider all relevant information before making a final decision.
- Inform the subject of the complaint of the decision. If this is done at a meeting rather than by letter it must be confirmed in writing.

## **Principal and/or the board chair**

### **12. Contact the complainant**

- Where appropriate, report on the resolution of the complaint to the complainant while maintaining confidentiality and any collective agreement requirements. Outline the steps taken to resolve their complaint, and discuss any further steps that may be required for closure.
- If the complainant is not satisfied, advise them of further courses of action, e.g. contacting the Human Rights Commission, Ombudsman, Ministry of Education, ERO, Office of the Privacy Commissioner.

### **13. File documentation**

- Store all documentation confidentially and securely, in keeping with the requirements of the school's privacy policy and the Privacy Act.

### **14. Make any further necessary reports**

- Determine whether a report needs to be made to the Teaching Council, in compliance with the mandatory reporting requirements.

## **Child protection policy requirements**

Schools are subject to the Children's Act 2014 and must have child protection policies which are readily available. As required by the Act, child protection practices are incorporated into our policies and procedures. Sacred Heart College has a designated person responsible for child protection policies. Our designated person is the Headmaster and is the primary point of contact for concerns about a child, including concerns about abuse or neglect. Our child protection policies apply to school staff, contractors, and volunteers.

## **External agency interviews**

If Oranga Tamariki - Ministry of Children contacts the school to interview a child, that child has the right to a support person to sit alongside them if they wish. This support person (e.g. guidance counsellor, teacher, or headmaster) focuses on the safety and wellbeing of the child.

The police may contact the school to question a student – that student has the right to remain silent, and the right to a lawyer. If the student is under 18 and is interviewed by police they can nominate an adult to support them [See Youth Law: Rights with Police](#)

### Reviewing our policies and procedures related to child protection

Child protection policies and procedures are reviewed at least every three years as part of Sacred Heart College review cycle. Our school's designated person/people for child protection are involved in reviewing any policies and procedures related to child protection. The Headmaster assures the board yearly on the implementation of key child protection policies/procedures.

## Parent Involvement

Parents may wish to support the school by volunteering their time and skills. This may include helping with class programmes, sports coaching, fundraising, school productions, trips, and camps. Parents may also take part in school policy reviews or become members of the board or parent group.

Parent involvement contributes to a strong school community and has benefits for everyone involved. Many events would simply not take place without the involvement of parent volunteers.

### Becoming a Volunteer

- Parents are welcome to offer their time and assistance
- Parents are invited to help when the need exists. When there are more offers of help than required, the school declines some of these offers. The school reserves the right to decline offers of help at any time.
- Parents are considered for their suitability for the event or activity and are asked to complete a volunteer agreement form. For Education Outside of the Classroom (EOTC) events, suitability may include specific skill levels required for the event.
- Parents are informed of their obligations and role as helpers.
- Activities involving volunteers are monitored by staff.
- Note that it is not always appropriate for younger siblings to come along with the parent helper. Please discuss this before the event/activity.

All volunteers are expected to comply with the school's **smokefree** and **alcohol/drugs** policies.

### Care and protection of children

- The school's **child protection, privacy and sharing of images** of student's policies apply to anyone helping in the school. For example, volunteers must maintain confidentiality regarding other students, and should be aware of not being alone with students.
- Volunteers at school will sometimes become aware of issues relating to an individual families or specific students. Any issues or concerns should be communicated immediately to the classroom teacher who should be able to reassure parent volunteers that the school is managing the situation. Concerns and issues should not be discussed with other parents.
- If the parent volunteer continues to have concerns, these should be raised with the principal.

## Privacy

Sacred Heart College promotes and protects the privacy of all individuals associated with the school, i.e. students, staff, parents, whānau, guardians, and any others. We follow the key principles of the Privacy Act 2020, which describe how we may collect, use, store, and dispose of personal information. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner administers the Act and encourages best practice. Our privacy officer deals with requests for personal information and, if required, liaises with the Privacy Commissioner in any investigations. Our privacy officer is the headmaster.

Our Privacy Guidelines inform:

- how we collect, store, and dispose of information
- what information we collect
- how we use and disclose information about individuals, including **official information requests**
- how individuals may access information relating to them that is held by the school
- how to manage the **rights of parents** regarding information about their child.

It is important that staff understand the school's privacy guidelines, especially in relation to personal information and reporting breaches. See information from the Privacy Commissioner about reporting privacy breaches.

## Sharing Images of Students

Sacred Heart College follows guidelines to protect students' privacy and safety at school when we **publish student information**. This includes sharing photos of our students. We encourage our school community to also consider privacy issues when sharing photos and videos taken at school events. We are happy for parents to take photos/videos of their children at sports day, cultural day, or other public-school events. If copyright issues apply, such as at a school play, which forbid photos or videos to be taken, the school makes this known.

If parents want to share photos/videos on social media, they should consider the following:

- Show the images to your children and discuss them before posting them on social media. This will help your children understand that they should always think about what goes out to the public on the internet.
- If the images have pictures of other students, think about editing to remove them.
- Make sure that other students are not named in any online posts.

Parents should remember that posting photos of other people can amount to **harassment** and they should take care to ensure photos are fair to other people.

Students are also expected to consider **privacy** and **cybersafety** issues when sharing photos and using social media.

## Smokefree Schools

Our smokefree policy allows us to comply with smokefree legislation and promote a smokefree lifestyle to all members of the school community. This policy applies to all smoking and vaping products, including e-cigarettes. For the purpose of this policy, "smokefree" also means "vapefree".

### The Legislation

The Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990 directs that all school buildings and grounds are smokefree and vapefree, 24 hours a day, seven days a week (with no exemptions).

The education provisions in the Act aim to:

- prevent the exposure of children and young people to second-hand smoke
- prevent children and young people being influenced by seeing others smoke or vape
- send a positive message about a smokefree lifestyle as the norm.

The Act applies to anyone on the school grounds, including students, staff, visiting parents, contractors, and people hiring or using the school facilities outside school hours.

To comply with the legislation, schools must ensure that everyone coming on to the school site is aware that the entire grounds are smokefree at all times. This means:

- displaying no smoking and no vaping signs at every entrance to the school grounds and the outer entrance of every building
- advising contractors and other people working at school of our smokefree policy
- communicating the policy to parents through the newsletter and other means
- ensuring that people hiring or using the school facilities are aware of the policy and accept that there are no exemptions and that it applies 24 hours a day, seven days a week
- having a procedure for breaches of the policy.

Failure to take these steps may result in the management of the school being fined up to \$4,000 for non-compliance. It isn't smoking that is the breach - it's failure to take the steps above.



## **Promoting a smokefree lifestyle**

Smoking is the single most preventable cause of premature death and ill-health in New Zealand, and most people who take up smoking do so by the age of 18.

Exposure to second-hand smoke (passive smoking) affects the health of non-smokers, especially babies and children. Recent studies have shown that, in addition to causing health problems for children, exposure to second-hand smoking affects a child's behaviour and ability to learn.

Children who receive consistent messages (see role models below) and grow up in a smokefree environment are less likely to smoke. Our school aims to reduce smoking uptake among students and work towards a smokefree society through:

- We prominently display our smokefree policy in the staffroom and the public area of the office.
- We display the required signage and ask anyone smoking or vaping to stop.
- We do not provide ashtrays or smoking areas.
- We educate students through the curriculum about harmful effects of smoking and vaping products and exposure to second-hand smoke.
- Where possible, we provide staff with smokefree-related professional development.
- We communicate our smokefree policy to the school community via the newsletter and other means and promote Quit Smoking programmes as appropriate.
- We inform parents of new entrants, and prospective employees, of our school's smokefree policy.

## **Role models**

- Young people are more likely to start if they see adults smoking or vaping.
- We promote all school activities outside of our school's premises as smokefree, e.g. EOTC activities and sporting events, and remind parent helpers that they must not smoke or vape while transporting or looking after students.
- We regularly remind current employees of the policy and ask them to ensure that students don't see them smoking or vaping even when they are off the school grounds.

## **Smokefree environment**

- There is no smoking or vaping anywhere at school at any time.
- Parents are encouraged to embrace a smokefree lifestyle.

## **Breaches of the smokefree policy**

Students found smoking or vaping in or around school are offered appropriate counselling and education. Parents are contacted and encouraged to deal with it as a health issue rather than a discipline issue.

Adults smoking or vaping in or around school environment will be reminded that the school is smokefree by law and asked to stop or leave the premises.

## **Complaints**

All complaints involving smoking or vaping are referred to the headmaster, who may pass these to the board for investigation. Investigations take place within 20 working days of the complaint or incident and follow the procedures laid down in the legislation.