



VILLANOVA COLLEGE



CODE OF CONDUCT

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PREFACE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



At Villanova College, our mission is to form young people of character and compassion through a Catholic education grounded in the values of Humility, Interiority, Community, Restless Search for Truth and ongoing conversion. This mission is sacred and transformative work, entrusted to each member of our staff as we walk together in the spirit of St Augustine - one in mind and heart on the way towards God.

As educators, support staff, and leaders within this community, we hold a profound responsibility to model Gospel values and contribute to a culture that fosters excellence, inclusion, care and respect. Our students look to us not only as professionals, but as role models. The example we set - through our words, decisions and relationships - shapes the learning environment and the development of each young person in our care.

This Code of Conduct sets out the professional standards and behaviours expected of all Villanova College employees. It reflects our commitment to providing a safe, respectful, and faith-filled environment where the dignity of every person is upheld and protected. It also ensures that we work consistently and ethically as we serve the mission of Catholic education and uphold the distinct Augustinian character of our College.

I trust that each member of staff will approach this Code with the seriousness and reflection it deserves. In doing so, we not only comply with policy but honour the values we share as a College community.

Thank you for your ongoing dedication to the mission of Villanova College, for the profound difference you make in the lives of our students and for the strength you offer one another as colleagues. Together, let us continue to walk with purpose and unity, shaping a community where all can thrive.

Mr Paul Begg
Principal
Villanova College



PURPOSE

Guided by the Gospel and inspired by St Augustine, Villanova College is entrusted with the mission of building the Kingdom of God through education and service. As a proud Catholic and Augustinian community, we strive to live the Gospel values of faith, truth, love, and service, nurturing relationships marked by respect, humility, integrity, and a deep sense of belonging.

This Code of Conduct sets out the responsibilities and standards of behaviour required of all Villanova College workplace participants so that we act and work in line with these core values. The code is clear about the standard of behaviour required of all workplace participants around maintaining professional boundaries, safe work practices and the standards of professional conduct required to ensure that our community is a safe and productive place for everyone.

APPLICATION

This Code of Conduct applies to all workplace participants.

SCOPE

The Code of conduct applies in Villanova College's workplace.

DEFINITIONS

Workplace participant is any person who works for Villanova College in any paid or unpaid capacity (including as an employee, contractor, or volunteer).

Workplace means where work at Villanova College takes place, work-related locations (e.g., client sites, worksites, public spaces, remote sites), and places where workplace participants do things related to work, including outside normal working hours (e.g., camps, excursions, tours, conferences, social events, business trips, and work parties). The workplace is physical and virtual. It includes work-related interactions using technology and social media even if workplace participants are not using our resources.

Conduct refers to the way a person behaves, especially in a particular situation, such as the workplace.

Conflict of Interest occurs in the workplace when an employee undertakes an activity that benefits them but does not benefit Villanova College.

Discrimination occurs when a person is treated less favourably or harassed in certain areas of public life including their employment because of a personal characteristic or prescribed attribute that is protected under law.

Direct discrimination occurs when a person is denied a benefit or an opportunity on the grounds of any of the prescribed attributes.

Indirect discrimination occurs when a policy, rule or practice has a discriminatory effect against a person or group of people in relation to any of the prescribed attributes.

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards a worker or a group of workers that creates a risk to health and safety and is unlawful. Bullying can occur by direct or indirect means.

Repeated behaviour refers to the persistent nature of the behaviour and can involve a range of behaviours over time.

Unreasonable behaviour means behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard for the circumstances, would see as unreasonable, including behaviour that is victimising, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

Direct bullying occurs between the specific people involved.

Indirect bullying involves third parties participating in bullying behaviours, for example passing on insults or spreading rumours.

Harassment occurs where a person engages in uninvited or unwelcome behaviour which a reasonable person would expect would cause another person to be offended, humiliated, or intimidated. It does not matter if the person who committed the act intended, or did not intend, to upset or cause offence to the other person.

Sexual harassment is defined in the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) (SD Act)* as: 'any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature that a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances would have anticipated would offend, humiliate or intimidate the other person.' Similar definitions are found in State and Territory anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation.

Corrupt behaviour refers to any conduct that lacks virtue or integrity, including usage or attempts to use one's position for personal advantage.

Fraud is any dishonest activity that causes actual or potential financial loss to any person or entity.

Reportable conduct scheme is established under the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)* and commenced in Queensland on 1 July 2026. The Scheme requires reporting entities, including schools, to identify, report, investigate and respond to allegations and convictions involving reportable conduct by workers towards children. The Scheme is regulated by the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC).

1 OBLIGATIONS

All workplace participants have an obligation and duty of care to:

- Comply with Catholic ethos of equity, justice, fairness, and compassion in dealing with others within and beyond the College.
- Comply with all College policies and procedures.
- Perform duties in a responsible and professional manner, with due regard for College policies and other legal requirements and obligations.
- Practice responsible stewardship of College resources.
- Promote and protect the College's reputation in the wider community.
- Act appropriately when a conflict arises between their own self-interest and duty to the College.

2 BEHAVIOUR

2.1 Personal Conduct

All workplace participants are expected to:

- Treat everyone with dignity, courtesy, respect, kindness, consideration, and sensitivity to their rights.
- Refrain from all forms of harassment and discrimination based on gender, race, religious belief, political affiliation, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, or illness.
- Always act honestly, in good faith, and respectfully of the trust placed in us.
- Respect everyone's rights to privacy and keep personal information in confidence.
- Consider the impact of decisions and behaviour on the wellbeing of others.
- Refrain from acting in any way that would unfairly harm the reputation and career prospects of other workplace participants.
- Refrain from allowing personal relationships to affect professional relationships.
- Seek advice from an appropriate manager where a colleague's behaviour is perceived



to be in breach of this Code of Conduct, and report any suspected corrupt, criminal, or unethical conduct to the Principal, Deputy Principal or Director of HR.

- Villanova College will not tolerate discrimination, harassment or any behaviour or language that is abusive, offensive, or unwelcome.

2.2 Professional Conduct

All workplace participants are expected to:

- Perform duties diligently, impartially, conscientiously, with integrity, and to the best of their ability.
- Take responsibility for the health and safety of themselves and others when carrying out duties.
- Dress appropriately for the workplace and work tasks.
- Arrive to work on time according to their employment agreement/contract and respect the time of others within and outside the College.
- Keep up to date with advances and changes in the body of knowledge and the professional and ethical standards relevant to our area of expertise.
- Strive always to achieve the highest professional standards.
- Comply with any relevant legislative, industrial, or administrative requirements including observance and application of anti-discrimination policy.
- Comply with the principles of environmental responsibility.
- Foster teamwork and collegiality among all workplace participants, and give due credit to the contributions of others.
- Maintain adequate documentation to support any decisions made.
- Take no improper advantage of any official information gained in the course of employment.
- Refrain from allowing personal political views and/or affiliations or other personal interests to influence the performance of duties or exercise of responsibilities.

2.3 Out of Hours Conduct

All workplace participants are expected to engage in appropriate conduct outside school hours. Employee conduct outside of hours may warrant investigation and discipline if it:

- is likely to cause serious damage to the relationship between Villanova College and the employee;
- damages Villanova College's interests; or
- is incompatible with the employee's duty as an employee.

3 INTERACTIONS WITH STUDENTS

Villanova College holds a unique position of influence, authority, trust and power in relation to students. By their very nature, student interactions are open to scrutiny. All workplace participants must:

- treat all students with respect
- always abide by professional boundaries

- avoid placing themselves or a student in a compromising position
- have a firm understanding of the College's Student Protection Policy
- avoid actual, potential or perceived breaches of the College's Student Protection Policy
- apply and act in accordance with the College's Student Protection Policy
- be vigilant and proactive in taking all reasonable steps to protect children from harm.

3.1 Professional Boundaries

An important aspect of the conduct and behaviour of all teachers in regard to their interactions with students. The Queensland College of Teachers Professional Boundaries Guidelines provide a comprehensive overview of appropriate teacher-student interaction. In addition to this, all members of the Villanova Community must:

- Always maintain professional boundaries when interacting with students, including interactions that extend beyond the College setting, College hours, College grounds, in person and by any technology, including social media.
- Ensure that social interactions with students do not give grounds for allegations against them.
- Not initiate or develop a relationship with any student that is or could be perceived or misinterpreted as having a personal element rather than a professional element.
- Not engage in open discussions of an adult nature in the presence of a student, or which may be overheard by students.
- Avoid as far as possible communicating with students on their personal mobile phone and/or providing their personal number to students. However, the College does recognise, due to our extensive co-curricular program, the need to be contactable when no other means exist. At the discretion of the employee, it may be appropriate for an employee to give a student their mobile phone number to ensure the care and wellbeing of the student along with the smooth running of co-curricular and other College approved activities.
- Remove any imagery from their personal device such as a mobile phone, and to take imagery of students for approved College related purposes only as far as reasonably practicable.
- Not allow students to take imagery of staff or staff and students on the student device.
- Avoid, as far as possible, situations where they are alone with a student. In such situations, the relevant College procedure with specific reference to working alone with students must be applied.
- Never purchase or provide students with alcohol or condone the use of alcohol by students.
- Not drive a student in their car unless they have written parental permission to do so, and with prior approval from the Principal. In the event of an emergency, workplace participants should attempt to contact the parents for consent and report the matter to the Principal or Deputy Principal where possible prior to the journey commencing.

Professional boundaries between a staff member and a student may, or may be seen to be compromised by:

- treating a student with favouritism, or perceived favouritism (e.g., by offering gifts

or special treatment to specific students)

- attending parties or socialising with students outside of organised College events
- sharing personal details with students
- meeting students outside of school hours without permission from the College.

3.2 Personal Relationships with Students

There may be instances where a pre-existing personal relationship exists with a student, such as family relationships or close family or other friendship networks. In these instances, actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest may arise, and professional boundaries may be tested. Where there is a pre-existing personal relationship with a student, workplace participants are expected to:

- be diligent in always maintaining professional boundaries both within and outside of College hours and on or outside of College grounds
- take steps to ensure actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest are avoided.

3.3 Student Behaviour Education

Student behaviour education practices at Villanova College aim to facilitate the development and experience of responsible self-discipline amongst students and to promote the wellbeing, safety and effective management of the College community. All members of the College community must:

- Always use positive and affirming language when speaking to students.
- Create open, safe and supportive environments where students are encouraged to interact, socialise and 'have a say'.
- Develop and use effective, consistent and appropriate behaviour education strategies in day-to-day interactions with students.
- Include clear, consistent and published methods of dealing with inappropriate student behaviours which reflect and apply Villanova College values.
- Ensure that student behaviour education strategies are developed in accordance with the relevant College policies and other required standards such as Occupational Health and Safety and Disability Standards.
- Refer students who display recurring challenging behaviours, particularly unsafe behaviours, to the appropriate person in accordance with the relevant College Behaviour Management Policy.
- Exercise prudent judgement and intervene when students engage in bullying, humiliating, or vilifying behaviour towards others in accordance with the relevant Behaviour Management Policy and Student Anti-bullying Procedure.
- Understand that use of any form of child abuse, corporal punishment, or other degrading punishment is expressly forbidden in all circumstances.

3.4 Reportable Conduct Scheme

Villanova College is committed to providing a child-safe environment and complying with the requirements of the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)* and the Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme. Queensland's Reportable Conduct Scheme commenced on 1 July 2026 and applies to non-state schools and other organisations that care for, supervise or exercise authority over children.

All workplace participants must:

- maintain the highest standards of professional conduct and professional boundaries when interacting with children and young people;
- immediately report any concerns, allegations or information that may constitute reportable conduct to the Principal or delegated Child Protection Officer as soon as practicable;
- cooperate fully with any internal or external investigation;
- preserve evidence and maintain confidentiality regarding any allegation or investigation;
- participate in child safeguarding, student protection and reportable conduct training as required by the College; and
- comply with all lawful directions issued during a risk assessment, investigation or regulatory process.

Workplace participants should be aware that reportable conduct may arise from behaviour occurring:

- during normal duties;
- at camps, excursions, sporting activities and co-curricular events;
- through online interactions and digital communications;
- outside working hours; and
- in a worker's private capacity where the conduct may impact child safety or suitability to work with children.

The College's obligations under the Reportable Conduct Scheme are separate from and additional to obligations relating to:

- Student Protection reporting;
- Mandatory Reporting obligations;
- Queensland Police Service reporting requirements;
- Blue Card requirements;
- Queensland College of Teachers notification obligations; and
- any other legislative or regulatory child safety requirements.

4 RESPONSIBILITY OF COLLEGE RESOURCES

All workplace participants are expected to:

- Use College technical and physical resources properly, responsibly and for legitimate purposes only
- Seek permission before using College property for personal purposes
- Use resources in a manner that causes no harm to the community or environment
- Strive to always obtain value for College money spent and avoid waste and extravagance in the use of College resources
- Secure all College property against theft or fraud
- Maintain the integrity and security of all College intellectual property

- Maintain the security, integrity and confidentiality of all relevant College commercial and other information.

5 PROTECTION AND PROMOTION OF THE COLLEGE'S REPUTATION

All workplace participants are expected to:

- Promote the College wherever possible in our professional dealings with others.
- Refrain from representing ourselves as spokespersons, or acting for or on behalf of the College, unless authorised to do so (and when in doubt seek advice from the Principal or Deputy Principal).
- Refrain from engaging in any activity that may compromise the College's integrity and reputation.

6 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All workplace participants are expected to:

- Ensure that our financial and other interests and actions do not conflict or seem to conflict with the obligations and requirements of our College position or advance our own interests over those of the College.
- Avoid any financial or other interest or undertaking that could, directly or indirectly, compromise the performance of our duties.
- Take all suitable measures to avoid or deal appropriately with any situation in which we may have, or been seen to have, a conflict arising out of our relationship with others within or beyond the College.
- Notify Director of HR, Deputy Principal or Principal, as appropriate, of the existence of an actual or potential conflict of interest.
- Declare your relationship when participating in decisions affecting another person with whom we have a personal relationship.

7 CORRUPTION AND FRAUD

All workplace participants are expected not to:

- Engage in any corrupt behaviour. Examples of corrupt behaviour include:
 - conflicts of interest
 - receiving inappropriate gifts or entertainment
 - receiving corrupt payments such as 'kick backs'
 - internet or email misuse
 - leaking confidential or private information
 - bribery or abuse of a position of trust.
- Engage in any fraudulent behaviour. Examples of fraudulent behaviour include:
 - theft, obtaining property or financial advantage by deception
 - providing false or misleading information or misstatement
 - causing loss (or avoiding or creating liability) by deception
 - false accounting

- money laundering
- unlawful use of College assets
- manipulating expenses or salaries.

It is a requirement for all workplace participants to report other employees, contractors, or volunteers engaging in any behaviour that is unlawful, unethical or criminal in nature to the Director of HR, Deputy Principal or Principal as appropriate.

8 COLLEGE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Villanova College acknowledges that the teaching profession is one of collaboration. Intellectual property includes all written, audiovisual and website material created by or for Villanova College including, but is not limited to music, written works, symbols, designs and programs. The copyright of any material produced during your employment belongs to the College.

All workplace participants are required to comply with copyright legislation and regulations. Any use of copyright material requires the permission of the copyright-holder consistent with copyright legislation. Permission must also be sought from your manager or the Principal as appropriate before distributing, reproducing or publishing any College intellectual property.

9 PUBLIC COMMENT

Only workplace participants authorised by the Principal can give public comment on matters relating to Villanova College.

9.1 Traditional Media

All workplace participants are expected to refer journalists to the Principal. Workplace participants should never give any information, even if it is thought to be harmless or simply trying to be helpful.

9.2 Social Media

All workplace participants are expected to:

- not comment on confidential matters
- expressly convey that you are giving your opinion, and not the opinion of the College, if you do comment on public matters
- be polite and respectful in your interactions on all social media platforms.

10 COMPLIANCE AND BREACHES

All College workplace participants must comply with this Code of Conduct and report any breaches to their immediate manager, Director of HR, Deputy Principal or Principal, as appropriate. This includes reporting minor and major breaches.

Any workplace participant who becomes aware of a reportable allegation or reportable conviction involving another worker must report the matter immediately to the Principal (as Head of Entity) or their delegate. Where the allegation involves the Principal, the matter must be reported directly to the Queensland Family and Child Commission.

The College may be required to:

- notify the Queensland Family and Child Commission within three (3) business days of becoming aware of a reportable allegation or conviction;
- conduct a risk assessment and take immediate protective action where necessary;

- undertake a procedurally fair investigation;
- provide an interim report within thirty (30) business days; and
- provide a final report and findings to the Queensland Family and Child Commission as soon as practicable.

Failure by employees to comply with reporting obligations under the College's child safeguarding framework may constitute misconduct and result in disciplinary action.

Villanova College takes a proactive approach to code breaches, and such reporting of potential minor breaches can assist in acting and manage the matter before it becomes a major problem. The College will investigate all reported instances of questionable or unethical behaviour. In every instance where improper behaviour is found to have occurred, the College will take appropriate action in accordance with procedural fairness.

Workplace participants whose conduct falls below the standards outlined in the Code of Conduct will be counselled accordingly and/or disciplined in accordance with College disciplinary procedures.

We will not tolerate retaliation against workplace participants who raise genuine ethics concerns in good faith.

10.1 Confidentiality

Whilst Villanova College will endeavour to preserve the confidentiality of those involved in alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct, it may be necessary to speak with other workers or people involved to determine what happened and to maintain the integrity of the investigation process.

Where potentially unlawful conduct has occurred, Villanova College will need to alert the appropriate authorities.

Those people who are involved in the investigation (including the complainant, witnesses etc.) are also under a duty to maintain confidentiality and display a commitment to uphold the integrity of the investigation process. If the complainant chooses to bring a support person with them to any meetings, they too are bound by confidentiality. Gossiping and/or the spreading of rumours because of, or in connection with, a process followed under this policy will not be tolerated under any circumstances and may lead to further disciplinary action for those concerned.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Role	Responsible For
Principal and The Governing Board	Oversight and review of this strategy
College Leadership Team	Implementation, compliance and reporting
All workplace participants	Compliance with this strategy

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)*
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)*
- *Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)*
- *Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017 (Qld)*
- *Queensland College of Teachers Act 2005 (Qld)*
- *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*
- *Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)*
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)*
- *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- *Age Discrimination Act 2004 (Cth)*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)*

ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Description	Document Type
Governing Board Code of Conduct	Code
Parent Code of Conduct	Code
Student Code of Conduct	Code
Parent Code of Conduct	Code
Queensland College of Teachers' Code of Ethics	External Document
Queensland College of Teachers' Professional Boundaries	External Document

REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Version	Review	Author/s	Authorisation	Approval Date	Next Review
4.0	Periodic Review Update publishing platforms.	Deputy Principal Director of HR	College Board/Principal	April 2026	April 2027
3.0	Periodic Review Update publishing platforms.	Deputy Principal Director of HR	College Board/Principal	2025	2026
2.0	Periodic Review Update publishing platforms.	Deputy Principal Director of HR	College Board/Principal	2020	2021
1.0		Deputy Principal Director of HR	College Board/Principal	2018	2019