

Code of Conduct for visiting service providers



Diocese of Toowoomba
Catholic Schools

1. Introduction

Toowoomba Catholic Schools (TCS) is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, productive and positive environment for our students. This Code of Conduct seeks to affirm the standards of behaviour that are expected of visiting service providers, to ensure the continuing safety and wellbeing of our school communities.

2. Applicability

This Code of Conduct applies to all visiting service providers within TCS, including both those conducting activities in schools and with the Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office (TCSO).

3. Principles

It is expected that visiting service providers abide by the following principles.

- the safety and wellbeing of students is met at all times
- visiting service providers engage in respectful and supportive relationships with students, families, staff members and other volunteers and service providers
- the privacy and confidentiality of students, families, staff members, volunteers and other visiting service providers is respected at all times
- visiting service providers are committed to the educational, religious and social values of TCS
- visiting service providers carry out all duties in a conscientious and ethical manner

The safety and wellbeing of our students is everyone's responsibility.

4. Standards of behaviour

It is expected that visiting service providers will behave in a manner that is consistent with the principles outlined in this Code of Conduct. Visiting service providers must also

- participate in an induction program prior to commencing duties that will cover a number of areas, including student protection
- consider safety as a priority in all activities, following all school and/or TCSO safety procedures eg must be aware of evacuation processes within schools
- work only within the limitations of the visiting service provider role, acknowledging the requirement to seek guidance from, and report any issues to, the school and/or TCSO
- follow the instruction of staff members to ensure that correct procedures are implemented within schools/at TCSO
- avoid being alone with students, acknowledging that in conducting their role, some visiting service providers may be required to work in a one-to-one situation with a student. In such situations, visiting service providers must follow the school's policy and procedure. If working with a single student, a visiting service provider should
 - have previously discussed arrangements with the principal
 - maintain visibility into a room eg a door to remain open
 - where possible, interact with the student in an area open to observation
- report all concerns to an appropriate staff member, such as the principal or a School Student Protection Contact eg a suspicion of illegal activity or concerns about harm to a student should be reported immediately
- exercise due care and diligence in the performance of their work at the school.

5. Visiting service providers must not

- smoke, vape or use tobacco products whilst working or on any TCS grounds
- possess, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs whilst working within schools or at TCSO
- supply tobacco products, alcohol or illegal drugs to students
- engage in any behaviour that may cause harm to a student
- engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards a student.

Examples of inappropriate behaviour include, however are not limited to

- swearing at, or in front of, students
- pushing, shoving or grabbing a student
- using threats or instilling fear in a student
- using sarcasm towards or demeaning a student
- showing favouritism towards specific students, including giving gifts or showing special favours
- any and all forms of sexual behaviour, including sexual jokes or innuendo.

6. Communication

Visiting service providers must use appropriate communication skills with students in order to maintain a safe and supportive environment. Such communication includes

- listening to and supporting students
- being aware of physical boundaries and personal space, including your own body language
- being visible when interacting with students, ensuring the presence of other staff members or visiting service providers
- being clear, calm and positive in verbal interactions with staff, students and families
- avoiding any discriminatory, offensive or inappropriate language when interacting with staff, students and families.

7. Declaration form

As a visiting service provider engaged with a Diocese of Toowoomba Catholic School or working within the Toowoomba Catholic Schools Office, it is a requirement that you are aware of the student protection processes to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students. This includes reading this document and the student protection information for visiting service providers and completing the visiting service provider declaration form.

8. What should I do if I have a concern about a student or the behaviour of a staff member, volunteer or other visiting service provider?

Student Protection and Code of Conduct

All staff members within TCS are required to follow the TCS Student Protection Processes and Guidelines in relation to the reporting of abuse and harm to students, and inappropriate behaviour by staff members, visiting service providers or volunteers towards students. In addition, all staff members are required to act in accordance with the Toowoomba Catholic Schools [Code of Conduct](#).

If a visiting service provider has a concern regarding a student, or the behaviour of a staff member, other visiting service provider or volunteer, then this must be raised immediately with the school principal or School Student Protection Contact. If in doubt, a visiting service provider should always report the concern. More detailed information can be found in the [Student Protection - Information for visiting service providers](#) document.

If the school principal, the School Student Protection Contact or any other staff member receives information from a visiting service provider about abuse, harm or inappropriate behaviour to a student, that person is required to follow the appropriate student protection process to ensure the safety and well-being of the student.

9. Breaches of the Code of Conduct for visiting service providers

Any allegations of breaches of this Code of Conduct are treated seriously by TCS and will be investigated accordingly with due regard to the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. Any allegation of abuse, harm or inappropriate behaviour toward students will be dealt with according to the [TCS Student Protection Processes and Guidelines](#). If necessary, the appropriate authorities will be notified.

10. How can I access more information about student safety and wellbeing?

Student protection is a high priority for TCS. Information regarding the policies and procedures that schools are required to follow can be found on the TCS website.

Alternatively, visiting service providers can seek further information from school administration or by contacting the TCSO Student Protection team on 0409 306 827.

11. How can I access support?

Visiting service providers are highly regarded by TCS. To access any support or guidance, please do not hesitate to approach school or TCSO.