



Tarremah Steiner School
Code of Conduct for Employees
June 2007

Policy Aims

1. to provide guidance to all employees on the acceptable standards of conduct Tarremah Steiner School requires as a condition of employment. The school aims for high standards of conduct.
2. to comply with the Schools Registration Board Standard 3.11: Code of Conduct.

Background

Tarremah Steiner School seeks to provide, through the professional attitude and behaviour of all staff, a secure and supportive environment that:

- Promotes the care and education of students through the philosophical framework of Steiner education,
- Develops good relationships among staff,
- Develops the confidence of parents.

Tarremah Steiner School expects that all staff behave professionally, with respect and consideration towards colleagues, parents, students and general community members. Employees must undertake to support the ethos of the school and the school's statements of principles and practices. The ethics articulated in this Code are governed by the principles of service, impartiality and a continual striving for improvement.

The school seeks to provide a workplace that is free from discrimination and harassment, where employees act with care and diligence when fulfilling the requirements of their employment contract, while maintaining confidentiality and complying with any applicable Australian laws.

Procedures

The College of Teachers will provide access to the Code of Conduct and all relevant policies as required by employees. Employees must be cognisant of these policies and procedures and be familiar with their Mentor Folder and/or Staff Manual on Policies and Procedures.

Employees who need clarification or advice on the policies and procedures which apply to them should examine the relevant information and seek advice from the College Executive.

1. Professional and Ethical Conduct

- 1.1 In the course of their employment, employees must act in a professional and respectful manner that enhances their reputation, the reputation of Tarremah Steiner School and the standing of Steiner education.
- 1.2 Employees must treat fellow employees, students and others within their work environment in a fair and just manner, as Tarremah School seeks to promote a supportive environment that is free from harassment, victimisation and discrimination.
- 1.3 Employees are expected to behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and well being of students, colleagues and others in their workplace environment.
- 1.4 Employees whose work involves interacting with students have a special responsibility to comply with Duty of Care statements and provide appropriate role models for students.
- 1.5 Employees must perform their work duties competently and responsibly, with a focus on delivering or supporting high quality educational services to students based on the philosophical framework of Steiner Education for child development and education.
- 1.6 Employees need to maintain professional competence through appropriate professional development or learning experiences with a particular focus on the principles of Rudolf Steiner education.
- 1.7 Employees need to maintain accuracy, integrity and appropriate confidentiality about their dealings with and information involving students, parents, staff and visitors.
- 1.8 Employees must act promptly in reporting breaches of the law and Tarremah's Code of Conduct to the College Chair or a member of the College Executive.
- 1.9 Employees must comply effectively with all lawful and reasonable decisions and directions given by the College of Teachers or a person having authority to give such directions.
- 1.10 Dress, personal appearance and hygiene are important elements of professional presentation. Employees must ensure that their personal appearance and presentation are appropriate for their work role in accordance with the expectation of the school. (Teachers should refer to the Mentor Folder for guidelines.)

2. Duty of Care

- 2.1 Duty of Care is a duty to do everything reasonably practicable to protect others from foreseeable harm, as outlined in the Tarremah Duty of Care statement.
- 2.2 Teachers have a particular duty of care towards students. It arises out of what is known as a fiduciary relationship, that is, a relationship based on trust.

2.3 Employees have a responsibility to assist in managing a safe physical and emotional environment that is free from harm. Harm includes any significant detrimental effect to a staff member's or student's physical, psychological or emotional well-being and includes minor harm that is cumulative in nature and which would result in a detrimental effect of a significant nature to an employee or student if allowed to continue. Amongst other things, harm can be caused by:

- physical, psychological or emotional abuse or neglect; or
- sexual abuse or exploitation; or
- domestic or family violence; or
- bullying; or
- self harm

2.4 Employees are referred to Tarremah's Child Protection Policy which presents the reporting procedures required of employees based on their obligations under the Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act 1997.

3. Physical Contact

3.1 Employees must not use any form of discipline that involves corporal punishment, or engage in contact that could physically harm a student or another adult.

3.2 There may be occasion, however, where physical intervention is appropriate in order to protect students, self and others. In these circumstances this would be deemed reasonable action providing that the physical intervention is to prevent physical harm where possible. The physical intervention would need to be proportionate to the circumstances.

4. Discrimination

4.1 Tarremah Steiner School will endeavour to provide a workplace free of discrimination. Employees must not discriminate against a student or an adult on the basis of age, disability, family responsibilities (including breast feeding), gender, sexual orientation, irrelevant medical or criminal record, marital relationship or parental status, political or industrial belief or activity, pregnancy, race or ethnicity or religious belief or activity in accordance with relevant school policies and legislation including the Anti-Discrimination Act 1998.

5. Sexual Misconduct

5.1 Tarremah Steiner School seeks to provide an environment that is free from harassment including sexual harassment.

5.2 Employees' interactions with students and other employees must be, and be seen to be, professional at all times.

5.3 Employees have a particular responsibility towards students. Employees must not attempt to sexualise a relationship with a student. To do so is a breach of trust, an abuse of authority, professional misconduct and criminal.

5.4 The following behaviour constitutes either misconduct or sexual misconduct:

- unwarranted and inappropriate touching;
- inappropriate communication or actions of a sexual nature;
- obscene behaviour including gestures, language and jokes;
- inappropriate and deliberate exposure of students or other employees to the sexual behaviour of others;
- dating a student;
- expressing romantic feelings towards a student;
- inappropriately responding to advances of a sexual nature initiated by a student.

6. Use of Tobacco, Alcohol, Other Drugs and Medication

6.1 Upon the written request of parents, employees are authorized to administer prescribed medication in accordance with the School Policy on The Administration of Medication.

6.2 Employees have an Occupational Health and Safety obligation to ensure that their use of alcohol and drugs, whether illicit, over-the-counter or prescribed as medication, does not adversely affect their work performance or endanger the health and safety of others.

6.3 Employees must not provide students with alcohol, tobacco or drugs and must not encourage or condone the illegal use of alcohol (such as underage drinking) or the excessive use of these substances.

6.4 Smoking is not permitted in school facilities. Similarly, smoking is not permitted whilst staff members have direct responsibility for or contact with students of the school campus.

6.5 Use of illegal substances is not permitted in school facilities. Similarly, use of illegal substances is not permitted whilst staff members have direct responsibility for or contact with students of the school campus.

6.6 Employee consumption of alcohol is generally not permitted at any school activity or event where students may be present such as fairs, barbecues and graduations. However, in special circumstances where the College of Teachers has authorized the selling or serving of alcohol, the limited consumption of alcohol by adults may be permitted.

7. Use of School Resources

7.1 Employees must ensure that all school equipment and resources are used appropriately for the work and business of the school. Limited and occasional private use of school equipment and resources may occur providing it does not adversely affect the performance of the employee's work duties, or the work duties of others, or the business or reputation of the school.

- 7.2 Employees must have approval to use school equipment and resources off site for work purposes, and must ensure that they are safely stored and secured.
- 7.3 Employees must not use any school resource, including mobile phones, the internet, electronic mail systems or other means of electronic communication for accessing, storing or transmitting words, images or other material that are illegal, sexual explicit or violent.

8. Procedure for Dealing with breaches of the Code of Conduct

- 8.1 Potential breaches of the Code of Conduct, including apparent breaches and allegations, will be dealt with in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice. Potential breaches will be addressed in the context of the Tarremah Steiner School Grievance Policy or Staff Issues Resolution Process depending on the breach.
- 8.2 Employees have an obligation to report breaches of the Code of Conduct to the College Chair or a member of the College of Teachers.
- 8.3 Employees should be aware that College of Teachers may apply sanctions if this Code of Conduct is breached. Depending of the nature of the breach, various sanctions such as the following may be applied:
- appropriate warnings or discussion,
 - counselling,
 - enforced leave,
 - dismissal,
 - laying of criminal charges or civil action.

The decision to change any provisions of this policy will be at the discretion of the school (through the College of Teachers).

Policy Title	Code of Conduct
Policies, procedures and legislation to be read in conjunction	Mentor Folder, Child Protection, Grievance, Duty of Care (draft), Equal Opportunity (draft), Behaviour Management, Administration of Medication, Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997, Anti-Discrimination Act 1998, Disability Discrimination Act (1992)
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