



THE HUTCHINS SCHOOL

Practice and Behaviour Standards

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Introduction

The Hutchins School (the School) is committed to the promotion and protection of children's safety, health, development, education and wellbeing. Accordingly, we expect the highest possible standards from our staff and volunteers in respect to safeguarding children from abuse and neglect. The purpose of these Practice and Behaviour Standards is to support staff in identifying and preventing behavior that may be harmful to the children and young people in our care, and to provide a standard of expectations that will support positive outcomes for children.

These standards have been formally approved and endorsed by the School Board.

Commitment Statement

These standards should be read and understood in conjunction with:

- The Hutchins School [Code of Conduct](#);
- the [Code of Professional Ethics for the Teaching Profession in Tasmania](#);
- the specific requirements of your role description;
- all relevant policy and procedure documents, including the School's [Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy](#) and [Mandatory Reporting Policy](#);
- all applicable laws; and
- general community expectations in relation to appropriate behaviour between adults and children.

As part of the School's commitment to best practice, every person engaged in child-related work with the School (whether on a paid or voluntary basis, in a teaching or non-teaching role) will be required to agree to a formal statement of commitment to the School's [Code of Conduct](#) and [Practice and Behaviour Standards](#) prior to commencement. This process is managed through our online induction.

The School considers the failure to observe these standards as misconduct and will take appropriate disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may, depending on the seriousness of the misconduct, include suspension while matters are investigated and/or dismissal. In addition to any internal disciplinary proceedings, we will report to the police all instances in which a breach of the law has or may have occurred. The School also acknowledges its responsibilities to report misconduct by teachers to the Tasmanian Teachers Registration Board.

Scope

All people engaged with the School, whether staff or volunteers, are required to observe and adhere to these Practice and Behaviour Standards.



There may be exceptional situations where certain elements of these standards do not apply, such as where a child's immediate safety takes priority over the requirements of this document (for example, a student may not be collected by a parent or carer after an excursion/school event and it is therefore safer to transport that student in a private vehicle to the School's boarding house or their residence). Likewise certain programs (such as Outdoor Education, Power of 9 and Performing Arts) may also require a tailored set of strategies given the nature of their activities.

Where it becomes necessary to act outside of the standards outlined in this document, transparency is essential. If, as a staff member or volunteer, you have questions or concerns about your responsibilities toward safeguarding children, please seek clarification from your Head of School, the Policy and Compliance Manager or Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator. Wherever possible, seek management authorisation prior to taking action that may potentially contravene these standards.

At all times staff and volunteers must always act in accordance with the law.

Responsibilities

Person	Responsibility
Senior Leadership Team	Implement policies and procedures across the School. Ensure staff have access to this policy and related procedures. Ensure all Directors, Heads of School, Heads of Faculty, managers/supervisors have access to support and advice to understand and implement procedures.
Policy and Compliance Manager	Review and update this document and supporting resources in consultation with relevant stakeholders; support the co-ordination of the Safeguarding Children and Young People framework and implementation. The Policy and Compliance Manager also currently acts as the School's Safeguarding Children Co-ordinator. Provide training and advice in the application of procedures.
Directors, Heads of School, Heads of Faculty, managers/supervisors	Ensure that all staff and volunteers under their control are aware of and adhere to the requirements of these Practice and Behaviour Standards.
All staff	Comply with these standards.

Definitions

Students	Refers to a child or young person that participates in educational, co-curricular or recreational programs under the auspices of the School.
Staff	The term 'staff' is used broadly in this document to include a wide range of people who engage with students at the School. It includes but is not limited to, employees, contractors, volunteers



	and Board members. In places this document will refer to staff and volunteers to emphasise to readers its application to volunteers.
Safeguarding Children Program Coordinator	The Safeguarding Children Program Co-ordinator's role is to develop, maintain and review all Safeguarding policies and processes, and to provide advice based on best practice principles of Safeguarding Children to all involved staff of the School. The Safeguarding Children Program Co-ordinator must consistently act in the best interests of the student.
Sexual Behaviour	<p>For the purposes of these standards, 'Sexual behaviour' is interpreted widely to encompass the entire range of actions that would reasonably be considered sexual in nature, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 'contact behaviour', such as sexual intercourse, kissing, fondling, sexual penetration or exploiting a child through prostitution; and• 'non-contact behaviour', such as flirting, sexual innuendo, inappropriate text messaging, inappropriate photography or exposure to pornography or nudity.

About these standards

These Practice and Behaviour Standards address the major areas of interaction with the children and young people who take part in the School's programs and services. The School has developed these standards to help safeguard children and young people from abuse or neglect, and to help create a culture in which children and young people are valued, respected and supported.

We communicate our Practice and Behaviour Standards to staff and volunteers by:

- requiring all staff and volunteers to sign their assent to these documents during the induction process (no one is permitted to work or engage with children or young people until this process is complete);
- reminding staff and volunteers of our [Practice and Behaviour Standards](#) regularly; and
- inviting staff and volunteers to contribute to reviews of this document.

We communicate alterations to our practice and behaviour requirements and resources whenever they are made.



Interpersonal conduct

In undertaking professional or voluntary duties within the School, it is expected that staff and volunteers act within the limits of their professional expertise and/or specified roles. They are also expected to model the School's values of integrity, humility, kindness, courage and respect.

Any person engaged in paid or voluntary child-related work at the School:

- must not engage in activities with children or young people who are students of the School outside authorised curricular or co-curricular programs (for example, arranging to meet a student at the movies, at a sporting event, for a coffee etc.);
- must not attend private social functions where students are present unless prior confirmation has verified that other parents or carers of students will be in attendance. Staff should be mindful that even when attending a social function in which they are not officially representing the School, others may assume that they are. For this reason, at such functions staff should ensure that their actions align with the School's Code of Conduct;
- must not seek contact with children or young people outside authorised curricular or co-curricular programs; and
- must not provide transportation of students unless specifically authorised for a purpose directly linked to a school program (refer to section titled Student Transport).

These standards do not seek to restrict interactions where a staff member has a dual role (e.g., a staff member's child attends the School, a staff member's relative attends, or the student is a child of a family friend). In such cases, staff are asked to be mindful of their professional reputation and the reputation of the School.

If a staff member or volunteer becomes aware of a situation in which a child or young person requires assistance that is beyond the scope of that person's role (or beyond the scope of the School's usual service), they should at the earliest opportunity seek advice from their supervisor, Head of School, Deputy Headmaster or Headmaster.

This may lead to further action such as:

- referring the matter to an appropriate support agency;
- referring the child or young person to an appropriate support agency; or
- contacting the child or young person's parent or carer.

Supporting a positive culture

The School strives to ensure that children and young people engaged with the School's programs and services are aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that a positive experience can be enjoyed by all. However, there may be times when staff or volunteers may be required to use behaviour guidance strategies to ensure a safe



and positive environment, and to ensure the safety and/or wellbeing of children or young people. In such instances, the School employs strategies that are fair, respectful and developmentally appropriate.

Under no circumstances may staff or volunteers take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

Language and tone of voice used in the presence of students should:

- provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage or affirm them; and
- not be harmful to children – in this respect, avoid language that is:
 - discriminatory, racist or sexist;
 - derogatory, belittling or negative;
 - intended to threaten or frighten; or
 - profane or sexual.

Supervision

The School recognises the right of all children and young people to feel safe and confident while at school, or while engaged with any of the School's excursions, tours or services. Staff and volunteers must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the behaviour of students remains aligned with the School Rules and that students are protected from harm.

Staff and volunteers who are responsible for supervising students at the School are required to:

- encourage students to engage positively with our educational programs;
- encourage students to behave appropriately toward one another;
- ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that students are in a safe environment and are protected from external threats;
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that no student is exposed to any unnecessary risk of injury;
- be familiar with and comply with the School's Work Health and Safety procedures, including but not limited to excursion and tour procedures; risk assessment requirements; evacuation and lockdown procedures, and injury and hazard reporting procedures;
- be punctual to classes and/or allocated supervision; and
- remain with students at after school activities until all children and young people have been collected.

In the event that a child or young person is not collected from school, or from an event, function, or service, staff and volunteers are expected to:

- as far as reasonably possible, ask another adult to remain behind so that two adults are present;
- contact the student's parent/carer to ascertain their whereabouts and estimated pick up time;



- ensure that if contact cannot be made with the parent/carer (or there is a lengthy estimated pickup time) that the child or young person is escorted to the School's boarding house so that they may safely wait for collection (this is deemed most appropriate if you are at or near the School);
- ensure that if the location is not at or near the School, that transportation of the student to their home address is considered an appropriate safety measure if further contact cannot be made with the parent/carer; and
- notify your supervisor as soon as possible.

Working alone with students

As far as is reasonably possible, staff should avoid one-on-one situations with students to whom we provide services, and (where possible) conduct all activities and/or discussions with students in view of other staff.

Strategies that should be adopted to avoid one to one situations include:

- Conducting interactions in a public place. Where possible, use rooms with glass (for improved visibility) or open doors. The more public and visible, the better.
- Having other staff members or adults present.
- Conducting activities within school hours as far as possible.

It is recognised that in the conduct of professional duties, there may be situations where our staff and volunteers may be required to work in a one to one situation with a student (e.g., a School Counsellor meeting with a student; Head of School meeting with a student in relation to a confidential matter; the School Nurse caring for a sick student; tutoring of a student; or solo music tuition). In such situations our people are required to follow the School's policies and procedures, including (but not limited to) the [Code of Conduct](#), [Code of Professional Ethics for the Teaching Profession in Tasmania](#), and these standards. Such situations are documented in the School's risk register along with the risk control measures that have been implemented.

Where a situation arises and the strategies listed above are not reasonably practicable, our staff must ensure that they:

- have previously discussed arrangements with their Head of School or (for co-curricular activities) the Director of Sport;
- communicate through the School's authorised systems, avoiding personal email or phones to make arrangements; and
- ensure parent/carer consent prior to the activity taking place (as far as reasonably practicable). This requirement does not apply to School Counsellors in fulfilling their counselling role.



Use, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs

The School has clear policies regarding drugs and the consumption and service of alcohol. These policies require that staff do not:

- attend any school-related function, event, program or service while under the influence of illegal drugs;
- attend any school-related function, event, program or service while under the influence of alcohol, except where the event is sanctioned by the School and alcohol is provided (e.g., beginning/end of year events, staff gatherings);
- consume alcohol to excess at work-related functions, events, programs or services;
- possess or consume illegal drugs or alcohol during the course of their regular work;
- be incapacitated by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs; or
- supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco) to children or young people.

Use of legal drugs (other than alcohol) is permitted where such use does not interfere with or impair your ability to care for children involved in our programs and services.

All School staff are expected to model the responsible consumption of alcohol.

Dress code and identity cards

Providing a consistent 'brand' enables children and young people to identify and recognise school staff and volunteers, which contributes to their safety and wellbeing. Our staff should wear their uniform (where one is provided) and their Hutchins branded identification badge or card while involved in the delivery of our programs, or as required by the School, such as when representing the School at designated functions, or to and from work.

Giving gifts

Gifts given to children or young people are subject to the School's [Gifts and Benefits Policy](#). Gifts may not be given to students without prior authorisation from the relevant Head of School and a transparent notification to the student's parents/carers (which must include detail of the gift(s) being given).

The exception to this standard is that items commonly viewed as reward items within a classroom context, such as stickers or small gifts given to all students in the classroom are permitted.



Sexual and physical conduct

Physical contact with children and young people

Any physical contact with students must be appropriate to the delivery of our educational programs and services. This would include acts such as demonstrating the correct technique in dance, in a sporting context, or holding the hand of student in the early years (e.g., when crossing a road). Such contact must always be based upon the needs of the child or young person rather than on the need of a staff member or volunteer.

Under no circumstances should any of our staff have contact with children or young people participating in our educational programs that involves touching of genitals, buttocks, or breasts, except where that contact forms part of the delivery of medical or allied health services. Even in this context, staff must avoid contact that:

- would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation;
- is intended to cause pain or distress to the child or young person – for example corporal punishment;
- is overly physical – for example, wrestling, horseplay, tickling or other roughhousing;
- is unnecessary – as is, for example, assisting with toileting when a child does not require assistance;
- is initiated against the wishes of the child or young person, except where such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the child or young person, or to others, in which case:
 - physical restraint must be a last resort;
 - the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances, and aimed solely at restraining the child or young person to prevent harm to themselves or others; and
 - the incident must be reported to management as soon as possible.

Hutchins staff and volunteers are required to report any physical contact initiated by a child or young person that is sexual and/or inappropriate (e.g., acts of physical aggression) as soon as possible, to enable the situation to be managed in the interest of the safety of the child or young person, our staff and any other participants.

Sexual misconduct

Under no circumstances may any form of sexual behaviour occur between, with, or in the presence of children or young people at the School or any of its events, functions, programs or services. Engaging in sexual behaviour while in the School's service is prohibited even if the young persons involved are above the legal age of consent.



Use of digital media

When communicating with children and young people to whom we provide services, staff and volunteers must:

- restrict that communication to issues directly associated with delivering the School's programs and services (such as advising that a scheduled event is cancelled, or feedback in relation to school work);
- limit the personal or social content in such communications to what is necessary to convey the service-related message in a polite, friendly manner;
- not promote unauthorised social activity or arrange unauthorised contact; and
- not request a child or young person to keep a communication a secret from their parents/carers.

Staff are expressly forbidden to communicate with children or young people that are engaged with the School using internet chat rooms or forums, social networking sites, game sites or instant messaging. Electronic communication such as email or text messages sent to a child or young person must be copied to their parent or carer. Staff, volunteers, children and young people are all required to follow the School's Computer, Network and Internet Services Acceptable Use Standards (shown at the login screen on every Hutchins device) in relation to use of our organisation's computers. Staff are encouraged to monitor children and young people's use of internet-connected devices to safeguard them against the risk of exposure to inappropriate material online.

Social media

Social media networking sites created for and authorised by the School are the only social media networking sites that may be used for communication between our staff and volunteers, and children and young people. It is a requirement that our people are not 'friends' with, and do not 'follow' or 'like' current students on any form of social media, *except* where the child or young person is a relative. Where our people identify a need for communication through social media with current students, a school endorsed social media group or page can be implemented. For more information, please speak with the Marketing and Communications Manager for assistance, or refer to the School's [Social Media Policy](#).

Photographs of children and young people

The School values the representation of our children and young people in photographs and images. We are mindful, however, of the importance of consent and the consideration of privacy concerns. As a result, only students to whom we deliver programs and services may be photographed while engaged with the School, and even then, only if:

- the context is directly related to participation in the School's programs or services;
- the child is appropriately dressed and posed; and
- the image is taken in the presence of other staff.



Images may not be distributed without the direct consent of a parent or carer, nor to anyone outside the School's organisation (other than the child photographed or their parent/carer). Images to be used on the School's website or social media platforms may likewise not be used without express parental permission, except where the images are presented in a manner that de-identifies the child or young person. Any caption or accompanying text may need to be checked so that it does not identify a child or young person if such identification is potentially detrimental.

Note: The Hutchins School seeks parent/carer permission in relation to publishing photos of students on an annual basis. Parent/carer permission can be viewed on our student information system (Synergetic) and assistance can be obtained from the School's Marketing and Communications Team.

Storage of photographs

Images and photographs of students may only be stored on the School's approved services (OneDrive / SharePoint Online). When those images are no longer required, it is the responsibility of the staff member to archive or delete those images. If you are unsure as to how to handle stored images, please seek advice from the School's Communications and Records Officer.

While the School does provide resources for those who take photographs routinely as part of the scope of their work, we also understand that there may be times where personal devices are used to take photographs of students. In such instances, the photographs taken must be uploaded to these same locations (and deleted from the personal device) as soon as practicably possible.



Student transport

Transporting students

Students are to be transported by school bus, external coach service or agreed rental vehicle, and only in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of the School's programs and services. The use of private motor vehicles is a last resort. Students should not be given lifts or transported without prior authorisation from a parent or carer, and the School. Where such transport is absolutely necessary, please contact the Marketing and Communications Team, who can provide you with a form for parent/carer permissions.

Expectations for routine student transport

Students may only be transported with prior authorisation from the relevant Head of School (or Head of Boarding for boarders) and the child's parent/carer. Gaining approval involves providing information about the proposed journey, including:

- the form of transport proposed, such as school bus, taxi, rental vehicle;
- the reason for the journey; and
- details of anyone who will be present during the journey other than our staff who are involved in delivering our programs and services.¹

It is noted that situations may arise where a student is not collected from a program, service or event, which may require transportation using a private vehicle to ensure the safety of the child or young person. This is permissible where transporting the child in a private vehicle is a safer option than leaving them on their own. In these cases, the requirements described under supervision in this document must be followed.

There may be situations where school staff (e.g. the School Nurse) may be required to transport boarders to medical appointments using a private vehicle. Situations such as these must be risk assessed; safety strategies must be agreed upon and signed off by the transporting staff member.

¹ Requirements for the School's Children's Services (Pre-Kindergarten, Kindergarten and OSHC) are more tightly legislated. Please speak with the Director of Children's Services if you require further information, and consult the Children's Services [Transportation Policy](#).



Co-curricular activities

Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements

Overnight stays may only occur with the authorisation of the relevant Head of School and the parents/carers of the children or young people involved. Practices and behaviour by staff during an overnight stay must be consistent with the practices and behaviour expected during delivery of the School's programs and services at other times.

The following standards of conduct are expected from staff supervising an overnight stay:

- Students must be provided with privacy when bathing and dressing.
- Staff must observe appropriate dress standards when students are present – such as no exposure to adult nudity.
- Staff must not allow children or young people to be exposed to pornographic material; for example, through movies, television, the internet or magazines.
- Staff must not leave children or young people under the supervision or protection of unauthorised persons (such as hotel staff or friends).
- Staff must ensure sleeping arrangements that safeguard children and young people, including making sure that sleeping arrangements are supervised, and that no adult is permitted to sleep in the same bed or bedroom as a child or young person.
- Staff must ensure that children have the right contact their parents/carers, or others, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable or distressed during the stay.

Parents/carers also have the right to expect that their children may make contact with them at any time.

Change room arrangements

Staff and volunteers are required to supervise students in change rooms while balancing that requirement with a child or young person's right to privacy. In addition, staff and volunteers should:

- avoid one-to-one situations with a child or young person in a change room area;
- avoid using the change room area to undress while students are present. Dedicated staff bathrooms and change facilities are provided at the School for such purposes;
- ensure adequate supervision in public change rooms when they are used;
- provide the level of supervision required for preventing general misbehaviour by students or abuse by members of the public, while also respecting a child's privacy; and
- ensure that female staff do not enter male change rooms and male staff do not enter female change rooms.



Supporting/related documents

[Children's Services Transportation Policy](#)

[Commitment to Kindness](#)

[Gifts and Benefits Policy](#)

[Inappropriate Conduct Report Form](#)

[Mandatory Report Notification Form](#)

[Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy](#)

[Social Media Policy](#)

[The Hutchins School Code of Conduct](#)

External documents and legislation

Children, Young Persons and their Families Act 1997 (Tas)

Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas)

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care (Cth)

Record keeping

This policy is to be kept for three (3) years until review, unless there is a significant legislative or organisational change requiring earlier review. External audit and verification based on a sample, conducted by the Australian Childhood Foundation shall occur at 3 yearly intervals.

The master copy is kept in SharePoint Online in read-only in PDF form. All printed copies are uncontrolled.

Document owner

Headmaster



Document History

Version #	Date	Changes Made
1.0	12/7/2018	Practice and Behaviour Standards submitted to ACF.
1.0	18/7/2018	Initial release.
1.1	1/12/2020	Updated; placed in new template, textual review.
2.0	1/2/2021	Updated; placed in new policy template, full textual review. Significant changes made for clarity and simplicity; title changed to "Practice and Behaviour Standards".