

Understanding the BCE Code of Conduct for Employees

and why it matters for BCE students

**A RESOURCE
FOR BCE STUDENTS**

✓

About this document

Contents

About this document2

Introduction3

Duties and Responsibilities
of Employees5

Professional Behaviour
of Employees8

General12

Every student, and adult,
has the right to be safe at school.

A Code of Conduct explains the rules about how BCE employees must behave and conduct themselves, especially towards students, at school and in the community to help keep everyone safe. All the adults who work at BCE schools and offices must follow the BCE Code of Conduct.

This document is not the full Code of Conduct and it does not replace the Code of Conduct. It is a summary to help students understand what behaviour is expected from the adults.

This document has used the same section headings as the Code of Conduct to make it easy for students to go to the full document and find additional information.

To help explain some sections of the Code of Conduct this document uses three subheadings:

Core Principle

This is the main idea of the section.

What This Means

Explains more about what the main idea means at school or in the community.

Why It Matters

This part is about how the rules help make school a safe community where students can focus on learning.

Introduction

1. Commitment

Core Principle

Every student deserves to be valued and treated with dignity and respect, no matter their background, beliefs, or abilities. Brisbane Catholic Education schools follow the teachings and values of the Catholic Church and has zero tolerance for any actions which could hurt a student.

What This Means

BCE employees listen to students, provide opportunities for students to participate in decisions which impact them, respect everyone's feelings, and always act in ways that make the school a safe place. They also follow BCE rules to make sure everyone is protected from harm.

Why It Matters

Treating each other with kindness and respect helps build trust. When students feel safe and supported, they can learn and grow in the best way possible.

2. Purpose of the Code

Core Principle

This Code of Conduct explains how BCE employees are expected to behave at BCE school, offices and in the community.

What This Means

It provides information about a range of situations and guidelines for making sure adults are behaving professionally and ethically in every situation. This helps make sure every BCE school is a safe place for learning.

Why It Matters

A safe school allows students to focus on learning without fear or distraction, and it ensures that everyone can participate fully in school activities.

3. Definitions

BCE means Brisbane Catholic Education.

BCE employee is any person who works for BCE, whether at schools or the main office, in roles that can be full-time, part-time, casual, or temporary.

Bullying, harassment, or discrimination is any behaviour that hurts, humiliates, or excludes others based on who they are, how they look, or what they believe.

Confidential Information means any private information about BCE or its people that employees learn while working and that is not publicly available.

Conflict of Interest is a situation where an employee's personal interests, like making money or helping friends, could affect their ability to make fair and professional decisions at work.

Personal information means any details or opinions about a person, whether true or not, that could identify them.

Principal is the person in charge of running a BCE school, responsible for leading both religious and educational activities.

Safeguarding means protecting students and vulnerable adults by creating safe spaces that prevent abuse or harm.

Student is any person enrolled in a BCE school or college.

Introduction (continued)

4. Vision, Mission and Values

At BCE we:

- follow Jesus' example.
- build strong connections with God and each other.
- actively work to make the world a better place.

Our Vision

We are a faith-filled learning community creating a better future.



Our Mission

We teach, challenge, and transform through our work in Catholic education. We promote faith, challenge everyone to live well together, and help each person grow and make a positive impact in the world.



Our Values

Excellence

Always try to do our best.

Integrity

Act honestly and ethically.

Justice

Build respectful relationships and support those who need it most.

Hope

Look to the future with confidence and positivity.



5. When does this code apply?

The Code of Conduct applies to all BCE employees, no matter what their job title is, where they are working or what part of their job they are doing.

6. What happens if there is a breach of the Code?

A 'breach' is when a BCE employee does something that does not match the expectations and rules in the Code of Conduct. When this happens, BCE can ask the staff member to explain why they breached the Code and help them to understand their responsibilities. There are consequences for serious breaches of the Code.

Adults working for BCE need to report any potential breaches of the Code to their Principal, Manager or to the BCE office.

If a student thinks a BCE employee has potentially breached the Code of Conduct they should talk to a safe adult at school or home. If a student feels uncomfortable about a BCE employee's behaviour, but they are unsure whether they have breached the Code, they should still talk to a safe adult. Everyone has the right to be safe and feel safe at school.

7. Questions?

If you have any questions about the Code of Conduct you can look at the full Code of Conduct or speak to a teacher or staff member at your school.

Duties and Responsibilities of Employees

8. Compliance with Laws, Standards and BCE Policies, Processes, Procedures and Regulations

Core Principle

BCE employees must follow all the rules and guidelines set by the school and the law. If there's ever a conflict between the school's rules and the law, the law always comes first.

What This Means

BCE employees are responsible for knowing, understanding and following all the school rules and legal requirements relevant to their job.

Why It Matters

Following school rules and the law help BCE employees to do their jobs safely and professionally.

9. Professional Responsibilities

Core Principle

BCE employees must be polite and respectful, both at work and outside of work.

What This Means

This means being kind and doing their job well. Always following the rules and being open to learning. BCE employees should be truthful, follow the values of the Catholic Church and be a good representative of BCE.

Why It Matters

Having a standard for how to behave means everyone knows what is expected.

10. Duty of Care and Risk Management

Core Principle

BCE employees have a responsibility to keep students safe and manage any risks that might cause harm. They also need to take care of their own health and safety.

What This Means

They should always be alert to any risks and take steps to stop something from going wrong if they can. This includes supervising students carefully and following safety procedures.

Why It Matters

Students deserve to have a safe school environment, this can only happen if everyone works together to make it as safe as possible.

Duties and Responsibilities of Employees (continued)

11. Social Media, Electronic Communications, Phones, and Media Communications

Core Principle

BCE employees must use social media and technology in ways that are professional and appropriate.

What This Means

Online interactions with students must be related to school and should take place through approved networks, like school email or learning platforms. BCE employees should not become “friends” or connect with students on social media or have personal conversations with students online.

Why It Matters

Clear boundaries online help maintain a professional relationship and prevent misunderstandings or inappropriate situations.

12. Alcohol, Other Drugs, and Smoking

Core Principle

BCE employees are not allowed to use alcohol, drugs, or smoke while at school or during school activities.

What This Means

BCE employees must never be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while working or supervising students. They also have a responsibility to prevent students from accessing these substances if they can.

Why It Matters

Adults at school are role models. Using these substances can harm their ability to care for students and sets a bad example.

13. Privacy and Confidentiality

Core Principle

BCE employees must respect students' privacy.

What This Means

Any personal information shared with a BCE employee is kept confidential unless it's necessary to share it to protect the student or someone else. This includes information about a student's health, family situation, or other personal matters.

Why It Matters

Students have the right to privacy, and BCE employees are responsible for protecting that right. Respecting privacy builds trust between students and BCE employees, and it can make it easier for students to seek help when they need to.

Duties and Responsibilities of Employees (continued)

14. Managing Conflicts of Interest

Core Principle

BCE employees should avoid situations where their personal life could interfere with their work life.

What This Means

If a BCE employee has a personal relationship that could affect their work (like a family member at the school), they must talk to their Principal or Manager. The BCE employee and their Principal or Manager work together to make sure there is no conflict of interest and plans are in place to make sure everyone is treated fairly.

Why It Matters

Everyone should be treated equally, keeping personal life and work life separate makes sure decisions and actions are fair.

15. Use of BCE Resources

Core Principle

School resources, including equipment, materials, and time, should be used responsibly.

What This Means

BCE employees are careful not to waste resources. They use school property only for its intended purposes and ensure that all tools and materials are well cared for and returned after use.

Why It Matters

Responsible use of resources ensures that everyone at the school has what they need to learn and work effectively.

Professional Behaviour of Employees

16. Professional Behaviour with Students

Core Principle

BCE employees should always maintain professional boundaries with students.

What This Means

BCE employees need to always act professionally and respectfully with and towards students, even outside school hours or if they are somewhere other than school. They must report any behaviour they see or hear about that goes against the Code.

Why It Matters

Keeping professional boundaries and reporting any concerns helps protect students from harm and lets students know they can trust BCE employees because they will act safely.

Behavioural Boundaries with Students

Core Principle

BCE employees must maintain professional relationships with students, avoiding any behaviour that could blur the line between professional and personal interactions.

What This Means

BCE employees should treat all students fairly and not give special attention to just one. If a BCE employee has a personal connection with a student, they must tell the Principal or their Manager. BCE employees should not drive students without permission, be alone with students in private places, or use personal devices to talk to or take pictures of students. They must not use social media, give gifts, or overshare personal information with students.

Why It Matters

Keeping these boundaries helps make sure that BCE employee's relationships with students stay professional and focused on teaching and helping students. It stops favouritism and protects students, ensuring everyone trusts that BCE employees are acting in the students' best interests.

A BCE employee can...

- ✓ tell a funny story about their dog (or cat, or pet elephant).
- ✓ teach about body parts, puberty and sexual education.
- ✓ use a school camera, iPad, phone or other device to take pictures at the sports carnival.
- ✓ use their staff email to send information to a student's school email about assignments, events or other things related to school.
- ✓ correct a student who is breaking school rules.

A BCE employee cannot...

- ✗ talk about adult issues like their relationship problems or share a lot of personal information about their family and friends.
- ✗ show pornography, ask a student about their sexuality and sexual history or comment on a student's physical appearance such as the shape of legs or body changes.
- ✗ use their personal camera, iPad, phone or other device to take pictures of students for no reason.
- ✗ contact a student using personal social media or email accounts.
- ✗ call a student mean names or swear at them for breaking school rules.

Physical Boundaries with Students

Core Principle

Physical contact between students and teachers or staff must always be appropriate, reasonable, and respectful.

What This Means

BCE employees may use physical contact only when it is necessary for teaching, supporting, or protecting students, and even then, they must think about the students age and needs. A BCE employee is never allowed to physically punish a student.

Why It Matters

Students need to trust they will be physically safe at school. Having clear rules about physical contact helps students to know what behaviour is okay and what is not. This protects students from harm.

It is okay for a BCE employee to...

- ✓ help a young student put up their hair if their hair fell out.
- ✓ grab a student's arm if they were about to walk onto the street in front of a car.
- ✓ ask a student to kneel during mass.
- ✓ comfort an upset student by putting an arm around them.
- ✓ make a plan for appropriate bathroom use if a student is going to the bathroom a lot without a medical reason.

It is not okay for a BCE employee to...

- ✗ stroke a student's hair.
- ✗ grab a student's arm and pull them if the student is walking slowly but is safe.
- ✗ push a student to their knees or force them to remain kneeling for a long period of time.
- ✗ force a student to hug them.
- ✗ refuse to allow a student to go to the bathroom.

Emotional Boundaries with Students

Core Principle

BCE employees must be kind and respectful to students, and they should avoid doing something which might hurt a student's feelings.

What This Means

They should never do things that make students feel bad, like making fun of them, criticising them unfairly, or talking about their personal stuff. Instead, they should be encouraging, kind, and focus on the good things students do. BCE employees can correct students' behaviour or tell them if they have an answer wrong, but they should do this kindly and not in a way which makes the student feel worse.

Why It Matters

Having emotional boundaries helps make sure students feel safe, valued, and respected. This helps them trust the adult around them, feel good about themselves, and do well in school. It also means they'll feel comfortable asking for help if they need to.

A BCE employee is allowed to....

- ✓ put a cross mark on an incorrect answer.
- ✓ tell a lame joke to the class.
- ✓ ask a student to leave a classroom and move to a safe environment if they are not behaving safely.
- ✓ raise their voice to get attention in a loud or outdoor environment.
- ✓ If a BCE employee is worried about a student, they can privately ask that question including about the student's home life.

A BCE employee is not allowed to...

- ✗ hold up an exam and show the whole class a student got an answer wrong.
- ✗ tell a rude or sexual joke to the class or privately.
- ✗ make a student go into a cupboard, stand facing a wall or go and stay somewhere alone as punishment.
- ✗ yell at a student or a class of students.
- ✗ talk publicly about a student's private life including, home situation, culture, sexuality, religion or appearance.

Professional Behaviour of Employees (continued)

17. Inappropriate Relationships and Sexual Misconduct with Students

Core Principle

BCE employees must never have a romantic or sexual relationship with a student, regardless of the student's age or if they say they consent.

What This Means

BCE employees must always maintain a professional relationship with students. If a student makes a romantic or sexual advance towards a BCE employee, the BCE employee is expected to reject the behaviour and immediately report it to their Principal or manager.

Why It Matters

Having clear rules protects the trust and safety of students. Romantic or sexual relationships between BCE employees and students are always unequal because the BCE employee is in a position of power and trust. Strict rules about these types of relationships helps make sure students are safe from abuse and BCE employees know how BCE expects them to behave with students.

18. Student Protection and Safeguarding

Core Principle

Protecting students from harm is the most important responsibility for all BCE employees.

What This Means

BCE employees must look out for signs that a student is being hurt or at risk of being hurt. If a BCE employee notices a student may be at risk of being hurt, they must do something to try to help straight away. This might mean reporting the worry to the Principal or intervening directly if it's safe to do so.

Why It Matters

Every student has the right to be safe. If a student is not safe, an adult acting quickly could help protect them.

19. Professional Behaviour with Parents/Carers

Core Principle

BCE employees should engage with students' parents and carers in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner.

What This Means

They should build relationships with parents and carers based on trust and open communication and work together to support the student's education. All communications should be conducted through official school channels.

Why It Matters

Parents should be respected and involved in their child's education.

Professional Behaviour of Employees (continued)

20. Professional Behaviour Between Employees

Core Principle

BCE employees should treat each other with respect and work together cooperatively.

What This Means

They should treat each other nicely, avoiding any rude or mean words or behaviour. If they have a disagreement, they should try to solve it calmly and talk to the Principal for help if needed.

Why It Matters

When BCE employees are respectful and kind to each other, it makes the school a better place to work and learn.

21. Workplace Bullying, Sexual Harassment, and Unlawful Discrimination

Core Principle

Everyone at school has the right to work in a safe and respectful environment.

What This Means

Bullying, harassment, or discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. If BCE employees see or hear someone being treated unfairly, they need to report it to their Principal or manager. Really serious issues, such as if one person physically hurts another person, might also need to be reported to the police.

Why It Matters

Treating everyone with respect helps create a safe and welcoming workplace where everyone feels valued. By standing up against bullying and harassment, BCE employees help protect each other and ensure that the school remains a positive place for both staff and students.

General

22. Copyright and Intellectual Property

Core Principle

BCE employees must follow rules about using and sharing other people's work and ideas, including what they create as part of their job.

What This Means

They should only use materials they have permission to use and must credit others' work appropriately. Anything a BCE employee creates while working for the school belongs to the school, and they should share it with other staff members.

Why It Matters

Following these rules shows respect for the hard work and creativity of others. By sharing what they create, BCE employees help build a stronger, more collaborative school community.

23. Records, Notices, and Approvals

Core Principle

BCE employees must carefully keep and manage all school-related records, approvals, and important documents.

What This Means

They need to follow school rules when they create or store records for example, if a BCE employee gets permission to transport students, that approval must be properly documented. BCE employees also need to keep all records safe and not throw anything away without permission.

Why It Matters

Properly keeping records helps ensure everything is organised and can be checked if needed. It also shows responsibility and helps protect the BCE employee and the school by keeping track of important decisions and actions.

24. Employee Assistance Program

Core Principle

There is support for BCE employees through an Employee Assistance Program.

What This Means

If BCE employees are facing personal or work-related issues, they can access free and confidential counselling service. This can help them to work through their problems in a private way.

Why It Matters

Looking after your mental health is important for everyone!