



POLICY AND PROCEDURES MANUAL

Child Safety (Online Learning Environments)

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1. PROTECTIVE PRACTICES FOR TEACHERS

In the event of a transition to Rehoboth@Home due to the current Covid-19 pandemic much of the teaching and learning will be delivered online. It is imperative that we keep the importance of how to deliver educational requirements and ensure that staff interactions with students are appropriate in a digital learning environment at the forefront of our minds.

The College has established clear and safe practices for online interactions between students and staff during Rehoboth@Home.. These online communication protocols have been communicated to all members of the community.

1.1 Professional and Role Boundaries

As education professionals we rely on fostering positive relationships between staff and students. The learning environment is a place where staff have significant influence in the lives of students because these relationships involve regular communication over extended periods of time. This makes it extremely important that staff establish boundaries and foster positive relationships that do not compromise the welfare and safety of students, both in an educational setting and in a personal capacity. Examples of areas where staff may need to consider appropriate boundaries include:

- communication;
- personal disclosure;
- targeting individual students;
- role;
- possessions;
- figital/electronic.

These boundaries present a greater risk in the online learning environment. Many have been clarified in Consent2Go permissions, Codes of Conduct and other ICT policies; however, staff are encouraged to be familiar with and cognisant of the outworking of each of these policies.

The Teacher Registration Board WA have released an updated version of the Teacher-Student Professional Boundaries resource. It provides additional information about professional boundaries in teacher-student relationships, specifically relating to the online learning environment. It is available to assist teachers to become more informed about behaviours which may breach professional boundaries. For example, it is considered best practice for teachers to not be 'friends' with students on social media. This is the case whether the students attend Rehoboth or any other school.



The Resource is not a statutory code and, is not intended as an exhaustive list of inappropriate or unacceptable behaviours or activities. Teachers must exercise their own sound judgement and common sense in applying the material contained in the Resource to the situations in which they may find themselves. Teachers are ultimately responsible for their own actions and will be judged by them.

2. GLOBAL POLICY STATEMENTS

The following statements apply to all online staff and student interactions:

- a) It is recommended that staff pre-book video or voice calls with students in an online calendar, including parents in the invite, if at all possible.
- b) It is recommended that during video or voice calls a staff member sights a parent present and keeps a brief note of who was present.
- c) It is an absolute requirement that staff record all video and voice calls for the safety of the student and the staff member. These recordings should be kept on file.

3. USING DIGITAL FORUMS AND SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES

It is a requirement that College-approved platforms be used for interactions with students and parents.. The College strongly advises against sharing personal phone numbers or emails with students or parents. Student access to staff members' personal internet locations (e.g. social networking sites - Facebook/Instagram etc) is not permitted.

3.1 Interactive Video or Voice Communication with Students at Home (Teams, etc.)

- a) Teachers will model and expect respectful, responsible and appropriate conduct from students online as they would in the classroom/school environment.
- b) Students and staff will be dressed in school-appropriate clothing for online learning.
- c) Students and staff need to consider their surroundings when using video conferencing (e.g. what is in the background).
- d) Teachers will provide lessons and access to curriculum resources via online delivery according to standards approved by the Principal.



- e) A parent agreement will be sought via Consent2Go to ensure that a parent/guardian will be in the room or within the immediate vicinity of a student whenever a one-to-one video or voice call is made (this includes tutoring sessions under the Instrumental Music Program).
- f) Should a student wish to speak to a chaplain about a personal matter, the student must select either the other chaplain or a trusted support adult to also be invited to join the video or voice call.

3.2 Time and Access

Staff are asked to clarify for parents and students what days/times they will be available/online/able to respond and should set realistic response times. Unless otherwise indicated, staff are available from Monday to Friday on school agreed platforms between 8:30 AM – 3:30 PM.

3.3 Inappropriate Behaviour of Students Towards Staff

If a student engages in inappropriate behaviour towards a staff member online, then immediate respectful steps must be taken to discourage the behaviour and the matter should be reported and documented promptly with the Principal and a plan of action developed to support the student and relevant staff member.

3.4 Privacy

- a) The internet does not provide the privacy or control assumed by many users. Staff must appreciate that, irrespective of the protections they place around access to their personal sites, their digital postings are still at risk of reaching an unintended audience and being used in ways that could complicate or threaten their continued employment. Staff need to consider the electronic social environments they use and the suitability of what they post online, to ensure they meet the College and community expectations.
- b) Students, parents and staff need to undertake due diligence in regard to the College's [Privacy Policy](#) in respect to student data and how it will be used by the apps/sites they are requesting students use.
- c) Recorded videos should be treated in accordance with privacy legislation and the College's [Privacy Policy](#), which determines that it should be kept securely, and not be distributed or made available to anyone beyond the staff of the College and only for the purposes of facilitating teaching and learning.



4. ATTENDANCE AND DUTY OF CARE

- a) It is the responsibility of parents to ensure their children are attending Rehoboth@Home. Attendance records will be kept as normal.
- b) Teachers have duty of care over students in all matters that are within their control (e.g. during online interactions, when a student emails a teacher with a concern, etc). Parents are to fulfil duty of care requirements while students are undertaking Rehoboth@Home.

5. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE

- College [Code of Conduct \(Staff and Volunteers\)](#)
- College [ICT Usage and Social Media \(Staff\) Policy](#)
- College [Privacy Policy](#)
- [eSafety Education](#) Online safety resources and training for teachers, schools and communities
- [eSafety Digital Checkup](#) - ensure your devices and online accounts are secure
- [Using social media tools: considerations](#) (Victorian Education)
- Teacher-Student Professional Boundaries resource (TRBWA)

6. KEY REFERENCE

[SA Protective Practices for staff in their interactions with children and young people](#) (2019)