

# Code of Conduct for Moss Vale Public School Parents and Citizens Association

This Code of Conduct applies to all financial members and volunteers of Moss Vale Public School Parents & Citizens Association (the Association) while undertaking any role or activity related to the Association.

## Principles

The Code of Conduct is based on the following fundamental ethical principles:

### *Respect for the law*

The Association members, in common with all citizens, are under the jurisdiction of the laws of the State and the Commonwealth and are obliged to observe such laws.

### *Respect for all persons*

The Association members are expected to treat students, school staff, and all members of the community equitably with dignity and respect. This involves, but is not limited to, the following:

- tolerance of the views held by others which are different from your own
- courtesy and responsiveness in dealing with others
- fairness in supervising and dealing with other members
- making decisions that are procedurally fair to all people according to the principles of natural justice
- not discriminating on grounds such as gender, sexual orientation, race, ability, cultural background, religious status, marital status, age or political conviction
- an awareness and respect for cultural difference
- engaging in rational debate allowing for alternative points of view to be expressed
- not engaging in behaviour that might reasonably be perceived as harassment, bullying or intimidation.

### *Integrity*

The Association members shall be honest in carrying out their duties and avoid conflicts between their private interests and their P&C Association roles and responsibilities with respect to:

- personal relationships
- financial relationships
- receipt of gifts
- employment
- use of confidential information obtained in the course of the Association duties
- external activities and public comment.

### *Diligence*

The Association members shall carry out their duties in a professional and conscientious manner. This involves:

- carrying out official decisions and policies faithfully and impartially
- exercising care for others in Association related activities
- ensuring outside interests do not interfere with a member's duties or responsibilities
- adhering to professional codes of conduct where applicable, being encouraged to report fraud or corrupt conduct to an officer of the Association and/or external authorities.

## **Working with children**

The Association adheres to the government's Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 and Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation (Working with Children) 2013 and relevant procedures.

## **Conflict of interest**

Any member of the Association must declare interests which a conflict, either perceived or actual, with their P&C Association duties and activities that might benefit the private interest of a member/s of the Association.

Any member of the Association must always act in the best interest of the P&C Association and adopt a process to disclose and address potential conflicts.

A conflict of interest may include, but is not limited to, existing individual interests or a benefit, professional ethics, personal or professional relationships, financial or proprietary interests. A few examples of conflict of interest:

### *Example 1*

Personal or financial interest: Joe, an office bearer of a P&C Association, owns a building & maintenance company. During a P&C Association meeting, he recommends his company for upcoming building work the Association is considering to undertake, as he believes he can offer the best competitive price. However, he does not disclose the ownership of the company. Does Joe have a conflict of interest?

Yes. It is Joe's duty to act in the best interest of the Association and not his own interests. To promote the profit interest of his own company and receive remuneration is contrary to his role and responsibilities as an office bearer of the Association. There is a clear conflict of interest, as Joe failed to disclose his personal business interests for gaining an undisclosed profit.

### *Example 2*

Non-financial interest involving some close relationships (not limited to partners, family and friends): Vicky, a canteen manager of a P&C Association, suggested at a P&C meeting that an online fresh fruits and vegetables vendor she knew could offer a more competitive price than the existing supplier. She discloses that her son works as a delivery driver for the vendor. Is there a conflict of interest?

Yes. Indirect and or direct employment of an immediate family member, friend or close acquaintance is a conflict of interest. In this case, there is a clear indirect financial gain as her son will benefit from the extra work.

### *Conflict of interest disclosure*

Where a conflict of interest has been identified, it is expected that the conflict must be brought to the attention of the officers and members, and be disclosed or addressed in a meeting.

Breaching and/or violating the conflict of interest may result in removal from the Association in line with Code of Conduct policy.

### *How to deal with a conflict of interest*

- (a) Identified conflict of interest must be carefully managed by impartial decision-makers, who are not involved in the conflict.
- (b) Minutes of meetings should reflect how the conflict was raised, addressed and managed; the outcome should be disclosed to all members.
- (c) The person(s) with the conflict of interest may refrain from participating in all formal or informal discussion, debate and voting, and their duties be re-assigned until a resolution has been found.
- (d) The person(s) with the conflict of interest may be restricted from accessing confidential information and sensitive documents relating to the conflict of interest.
- (e) In the event where a conflict of interest is very significant and prevents the person(s) with the conflict of interest to perform their role and responsibilities, the Association may ask that the person(s) involved with the conflict relinquish their personal interest that creates the conflict and/or resign from their P&C Association role.

**Privacy and confidentiality**

The Association must adhere to the principles in the Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998.

Association must recognise that the privacy of any individual’s personal identifiable information must not be divulged or shared under any circumstances without the individual's written consent within or outside the Association, unless there is a lawful authority for its disclosure.

The Association must take all reasonable steps to ensure confidential data, documents and personal information of any individual is protected from misuse, loss and unauthorised access, and/or disclosure.

All personal and sensitive information must not be viewed, shared or distributed to any person/s other than the officers who have responsibility for such information.

All personal and sensitive information, when no longer required, must be disposed of securely.

Confidential information of the Association must not be used, disclosed, copied, published or removed by any member of the Association.

**Grievances, Complaints and Procedures**

Breaches of this Code of Conduct or other policies of the Association will be addressed by way of the Grievances, Complaints and Procedures Policy. Violations may result in removal from the Association.

As adopted by the Moss Vale Public School P&C Association General Meeting, 6 March 2018.

Signed President: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

Witnessed Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_ NAME: \_\_\_\_\_