



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS POLICY

Policy	Professional Standards Policy
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Policy Officer	KEM EO

Rationale	This policy outlines the professional standards expected and required of all members, staff, associates of and contractors to Kildare Education Ministries (KEM). It expresses KEM’s commitment to the promotion of right relationships and wellbeing among all members of KEM school communities, and to the prevention of behaviour that is illegal, inappropriate, wrong or abusive, and which puts staff and students at risk.
Principles and Values	This policy is founded in an educational vision that is welcoming, open and inclusive, and based in the invitational message of the gospels to ‘come and see’, to experience a style of education and quality of relationships that respects the dignity of each person within a particular faith culture. It acknowledges that relationships are pivotal to the wellbeing of the community and essential for healthy and just behaviour. The values expressed in this document are consistent with the Kildare Ministries Core Values, the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers, the Victorian Institute of Teaching Codes of Conduct and Ethics, and the South Australian Department of Education Protective Practices.
Audience	The audience for this document is the KEM Board and Secretariat, KEM Committee Members, Stewardship Councils, Principals and all who are employed, engaged, contracted to, or who volunteer in KEM schools.
Definitions	Professional standards are actions, attitudes and requirements that recognise and respect the rights and dignity of all people. In a KEM school context, professional standards cover all the actions and attitudes that foster right relationships, and protect the personal, intellectual, spiritual and emotional health, wellbeing and development of all in KEM school communities. Professional standards encompass the ongoing care and concern that staff have for one another and for the young people in KEM schools. They also encompass staff responsibilities to do all in their power to maximise the opportunities that students have for learning and personal development. KEM’s values and principles, as well as legislative frameworks, inform its professional standards. Families should be read as including parents, guardians and/or carers.

	<p>Associates are non-employed persons including KEM Board Members, Stewardship Council Members, and volunteers who undertake work in the name of KEM.</p>
<p>Guiding Practices and Procedures</p>	<p>The professional conduct of staff members and associates of Kildare Education Ministries will be manifest in the quality of relationships they have with students, parents (including guardians and caregivers), and their colleagues. What follows are the practices KEM expects and requires of all who work in or are associated with KEM schools.</p> <p>KEM schools are places of welcome, inclusion and safety, and seek to nurture the development of the whole child. To that end, they adopt broad and holistic approaches to student health and wellbeing and are required to be “Child Safe Environments”. KEM and its schools have zero tolerance for child abuse and are committed to the protection of all children from all forms of child abuse, in the following ways. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Child Safeguarding Program and Child Safety Code of Conduct on Ideagen (formerly Complispace).</p> <p>1 Professional Practices</p> <p>Relationships with Students</p> <p>1.1 All staff must abide by the Child Safety Code of Conduct at all times.</p> <p>1.2 When dealing with student breaches of the school’s code of expected behaviours, staff members will utilise processes in keeping with the principles of restorative justice and commensurate with the nature of the offence.</p> <p>1.3 Staff members will at all times maintain a professional relationship with students, different from that of a parent or friend. Staff members are legally required to abide by the Child Safety Standards and follow the Child Safety and Protection Policy and the school’s Code of Staff Conduct.</p> <p>1.4 Staff must not develop a relationship with any student that is or can be misinterpreted as having a personal rather than a professional element</p> <p>1.5 Staff members must avoid unnecessary physical contact with students. Contact for sports, drama and dance instruction is acceptable only in class settings but not in a 1:1 situation. In circumstances where an expression of professional care is required and consent is provided, appropriate physical contact may be necessary.</p> <p>1.6 Where a staff member is required to meet with a student in an office or separate area, they must utilise a space where the door can be left open or has sufficient windows to allow the interactions to be</p>

seen by other staff and students. This does not apply to medical care applied at the School Health Centre.

Relationships With Colleagues

1.7 Staff members will treat colleagues with respect and courtesy. They will contribute to the development of working relationships that are mutually supportive and strive to build a positive climate of relationships and morale within the staff group as a whole.

Relationships with Families and Community

1.8 Staff members will communicate in a timely and appropriate manner when responding to issues or concerns expressed by family members.

1.9 Staff members will respect the cultural and religious backgrounds of students.

1.10 Where a staff member has an established relationship with a student's family, any interactions between the staff and student should only be with the consent of the parents.

Disclosure of Staff/Student Interactions

1.11 All staff members must declare any interactions with students outside school hours to the HR manager.

This may include instances where the staff member is related to the student, familiar or acquainted with the student's parent or family and/or has been given parental consent to contact the student beyond school hours for academic purposes.

2 Personal Conduct

2.1 Within the broader community, staff members will behave in a manner which contributes to the professional standing of their colleagues and the public image of their employing school. Such personal conduct includes responsible use of social media.

2.2 Staff members will not exploit their position for personal or financial gain nor will they engage in private business undertakings which impinge on their capacity to perform as an employee.

2.3 Within the broader community, staff members will act with discretion and maintain confidentiality with regard to workplace issues.

3 Professional Competence

(Refer also to <http://www.aitsl.edu.au/australian-professional-standards-for-teachers/standards/list>)

	<p>3.1 Staff members will maintain high professional standards and engage in ongoing professional learning with regard to contemporary pedagogy. All staff members must abide by the Child Safety and Protection Policy, Child Safety Code of Conduct and Child Safe Standards at all times.</p> <p>4. Obligations of KEM Directors and Officers</p> <p>4.1 The KEM Board receives regular expert advice regarding changes in legislation and associated regulations that change the obligations of KEM, its staff and officers in regard to Child Safeguarding. Having considered the expert advice, the KEM Board ensures that its Policies and Procedures are modified to adequately respond to the changes in its obligations. The expert advice will usually come from the Executive Officer who reports policy updates received from Ideagen. Ideagen is required to provide ongoing updates following legislative changes in the terms of its contract with KEM. The Board may seek additional legal advice regarding Safeguarding matters along with advice from jurisdictional regulators as required.</p> <p>4.2 The KEM Board receives annual Safeguarding Attestations from the Colleges. The Executive Officer is responsible for the Annual Safeguarding Audit Process and provides the Board with a Report summarising the audit outcomes detailing any concerns requiring the Board's attention.</p>
<p>Responsibilities & Communication Obligation</p>	<p>Principals are required to provide a copy of this document to all staff members, associates, contractors and volunteers as part of the employment or engagement process, and to require acknowledgment of receipt of the document from all new employees, associates, contractors and volunteers. Principals are also requested to review the policy, procedures and appendices annually with all staff.</p>
<p>Breaches of this policy</p>	<p>Breaches of this policy may be addressed by further education or, where judged necessary, corrective or disciplinary action.</p> <p>A serious transgression of professional standards on the part of a person employed by or providing services for Kildare Education Ministries (KEM) is a breach of conditions of employment / engagement in a KEM school.</p> <p>In some circumstances, breaches will need to be reported to Police and/or other statutory bodies.</p>
<p>Appendices</p>	<p>Nil</p>
<p>Related policies and procedure</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEM/School Child Safety and Protection Policy (VIC) • KEM/School Child Safety and Protection Policy (SA) • KEM Promotion of Staff Wellbeing Policy • KEM Promotion of Student Wellbeing Policy

Resources	<p>National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KEM Founding Values and Principles Document • The Living Justice Living Peace Charter • Australian Professional Standards for Teachers • Kildare Ministries' Values, Vision and Mission Statement • Kildare Education Ministries' Mission Statement <p>South Australia:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TRB Code of Ethics <p>Victoria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VIT Codes of Conduct and Ethics <p>Local</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff Code of Conduct for the school (on Ideagen)