



10 Lacey's Rd, Cottles Bridge VIC 3099 Phone: (03) 9715 2776

Child Safe Code of Conduct

All staff, parents, board directors, visiting allied health professionals, volunteers and contractors engaged in child-related and child-connected work at the Learning Co-operative share a responsibility for supporting the safety and wellbeing of children.

This responsibility extends to physical environments both on and off site, and online environments, including the use of school-owned devices, networks and digital communication platforms.

The Learning Co-operative has zero tolerance for child abuse in any form. All allegations, safety concerns and suspected abuse will be treated seriously and acted upon immediately in accordance with Ministerial Order 1359 and the PROTECT Four Critical Actions for Schools.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct outlines our expectations for acceptable behaviour and concerning and unacceptable behaviours, both online and in person.

This Code of Conduct is one of the ways our school aims to protect children and reduce opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur.

Accountability

Any breach of this Code of Conduct should be reported to the Coordinator or Child Safety Officer regardless of the severity of the concern.

Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action, termination of employment or engagement, and/or referral to Victoria Police, the Social Services Regulator, the Victorian Institute of Teaching, or other relevant authorities.

Staff, parents, board members, visiting allied health professionals, volunteers and contractors are responsible for:

- Adhering to the Learning Co-operative's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and upholding the Statement of Commitment to Child Safety at all times.
- Treating students and families in the school community with respect, both in and outside of the school environment as part of normal social and community activities.

- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child.
- Ensuring that immediate action is taken to ensure the safety of a child if an allegation or disclosure of abuse is made, including following the Protecting Children Policy.
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from child abuse and or harm.
- Ensuring students are appropriately supervised when accessing digital technologies.
- Using school-owned devices and networks only for authorised educational or administrative purposes.
- Not accessing, attempting to access, storing or transmitting pornographic or sexually explicit material on school-owned devices or through school networks.
- Immediately reporting any exposure to inappropriate online material on school-owned devices or on school networks by any individual, even if it was not intentional.
- Not bypassing, disabling or interfering with internet filtering or monitoring systems.
- Ensuring school devices are not accessed by unauthorised individuals, including non-enrolled students.
- Maintaining professional boundaries in all digital communications with students.
- Using only school-approved platforms for communication with students.
- Ensuring that one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult.
- Encouraging children to voice their opinions, have a say and participate in all relevant school activities.
- Supporting children to raise concerns about physical or online safety without fear of punishment or reprisal.
- Taking a zero-tolerance approach to racism and discrimination based on an individual's background or personal characteristics.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all students, including Aboriginal students, students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with a disability, international students, students who are unable to live at home and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTQI+) students.
- Ensuring that one-to-one interactions between an adult and a student are to be in an open space or in line of sight of another adult.
- Reporting all suspected child abuse or child safety concerns as per the Protecting Children Policy.
- Involving children in making decisions about activities, policies and processes that concern them or are important to them, wherever possible.

Digital Conduct and eSafety Expectations

All adults engaged with the Learning Co-operative must:

- Use designated adult devices where available and avoid using student-designated laptops for personal purposes.
- Ensure school devices are securely stored when not in use, including during school holiday periods.
- Not take school-owned devices off-site without authorisation and completion of the device sign-out register.
- Immediately secure any device found displaying inappropriate material and report it to the Principal or Child Safety Officer.
- Not expose children to inappropriate content, including content of a sexually explicit, violent or discriminatory nature.
- Not provide students access to any of your personal devices.

Concerning behaviors include:

- Wearing inappropriate clothing around young children, including sexually explicit or violent images or clothes that expose personal body parts.
- Disciplining or correcting a child in an unreasonable manner including using physical force that is unnecessary and using words or actions that are discriminatory or derogatory.
- Making unrealistic, excessive and/or degrading demands of a child or young person.
- Taking photographs or video of a child who is in the care of our school, outside of official duties or with a non-school device.
- Providing gifts or favors to a student in secret or without the knowledge of their parent/guardian.
- Visiting a child or family in their home for no professional reasons. This excludes social situations where a colleague/family has been invited to a social function/event, as is often the case in a members-based Co-operative and community.
- Developing a relationship with any student that could be seen as favoritism or amount to 'grooming' behaviour (for example, offering gifts, communicating with them without the knowledge of their parent/guardian).
- Engaging in activities or physical contact with students that is unnecessary or not justified by the educational, therapeutic, or service delivery context, and with regards to their age, abilities or needs.
- Creating situations to be alone with a child.
- Disrespecting the privacy of children or young people when using the bathroom or changing for example at a school camp or excursion.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Initiating unnecessary physical contact. (e.g., that may be of a personal nature, that child can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes).

- Showering or dressing with the door open on excursions or camps.
- Ignoring or disregarding any suspected or disclosed child harm or abuse.
- Placing a child at risk by locking them behind doors or leaving them isolated, including in a vehicle.
- Ignoring concerning behaviors by others towards students.
- Showing or providing children with access to inappropriate images or material including allowing students the use of non school owned technology devices.
- Working with children while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs, or any medications that may impair the ability to carry out required duties.
- Engaging in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children.
- Using inappropriate language in the presence of children.
- Expressing personal views on characteristics such as culture, race, gender or sexuality in the presence of children.
- Discriminating against any child or their family member, because of culture, race, gender, sexuality, ethnicity or disability.