

IGNATIUS LEARNING CENTRE CHILD SAFETY CODE OF CONDUCT

1. PRINCIPLES

The principles that underpin this policy include:

- the Ignatius Learning Centre (ILC), Jesuit Social Services and the Province have zero tolerance for child abuse
- the ILC is committed to promoting child safety, children's wellbeing and protecting children from abuse
- the adult/child relationship should be professional at all times
- an adult's response to a child's behaviour or circumstance should be commensurate with the child's age and vulnerability and the adult's responsibility for the care, safety and wellbeing of the child
- clear expectations of staff about appropriate behaviour with children will serve to safeguard children against abuse, harm and neglect and ensure staff play a critical role in protecting children from abuse, harm and neglect
- when creating a child safe environment, the ILC takes into account the needs of all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities and children who are vulnerable.

2. PROCEDURES

2.1 Acceptable behaviours

DO:

- comply with the ILC's Child Safety and Wellbeing policy, and the Jesuit Social Services' Code of Conduct and uphold the ILC's statement of commitment to child safety at all times, which includes zero tolerance for child abuse
- comply with the ILC's Behaviour Encouragement Policy to manage rules, behaviours and disciplinary matters proactively in consideration of individual needs
- treat students and families/guardians/carers in the ILC community with respect and dignity both within the school environment and outside the school environment as part of social and community activities
- listen and respond to the views and concerns of students, no matter how they communicate their thoughts, views or concerns, particularly if they are telling or exhibiting to you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child
- promote the safety, participation and empowerment of students with disabilities
- promote the safety, including cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- promote the safety, including cultural safety, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promote the safety, including cultural safety, of LGBTIQ+ students
- intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate behaviour towards others
- report any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the Principal

- understand and comply with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
- Follow the “Four Critical Actions” –Respond to an emergency – Report to Authorities – Contact parents/carers – Provide ongoing Support
- if child abuse is suspected, ensure as quickly as possible that the student(s) are safe and protected from harm
- report any breaches of this Child Safety Code of Conduct.

2.2 Unacceptable behaviours

DO NOT:

- engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour towards students or expose students to such behaviour
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- develop a relationship with any student that could be seen as favoritism or amount to ‘grooming’ behaviour (for example, offering gifts)
- put children at risk of abuse, for example, by locking doors
- exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with students which may be interpreted as abusive and not justified by the educational, disciplinary, therapeutic, or service delivery context (inclusive of touching, handling, pushing or otherwise physically engaging with students)
- ignore behaviours by other adults towards students when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate
- discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance, delivering the education curriculum or a therapeutic setting
- treat a child unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, gender identity or ethnicity
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc.) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances, related to school work or extra-curricular activities or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter. Where personal channels of communication are used these must be reported to the Principal at the first available opportunity
- photograph or video a child in a school environment except in accordance with school policy or where required for duty of care purposes
- in the school environment, within the radius of school grounds or at other events where students are present, smoke, consume alcohol contrary to school policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances
- engage in any form of physical violence or threats of violence
- engage in any form of behaviour that has the potential to cause a student serious emotional or psychological harm
- use inappropriate or profane (swear) words, gestures or images
- use IT systems, email database, social network or similar technologies for inappropriate purposes, including, but not limited to, harassment, bullying, or victimisation of others
- undertake any behaviours that are considered ‘reportable conduct’ under the Reportable Conduct scheme.

2.3 Monitoring and implementation

The Principal will implement and monitor the Code of Conduct, and will plan, apply and oversee arrangements to provide an inclusive, safe and orderly school. The Principal will provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

2.4 Breaches of Code of Conduct

All adult members of the ILC community involved in child-connected work must comply with this Code of Conduct. To ensure staff are aware of their obligation to adhere to the Code of Conduct, they are required to sign a copy of it.

Any actual or suspected breaches of this Code of Conduct should be reported to the Principal. If there are concerns about the Principal's conduct, they should be raised with the Chair of the Jesuit Social Services Board. Failure to report a suspected breach of the code may in itself breach the Code of Conduct.

Alleged breaches will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out in the Child Protection Reporting Obligations Policy.

The ILC employees who breach this Code of Conduct may be liable to disciplinary action. Such disciplinary action may include:

- counselling
- receiving a written warning
- loss of privileges
- suspension from duties
- termination of employment.

Contractors and volunteers who breach this Code of Conduct may face termination of their engagement by the ILC. Employees of contractors or subcontractors may be refused permission to continue working in the school environment.

In line with legislation and relevant codes, a breach will be referred to the Victoria Police and/or a regulatory body, such as VIT as required.

The Principal is required to report to VIT any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to sexual offences or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

2.5 Communication

All members of the ILC community will be made aware of this Code of Conduct and the ILC's commitment to child safety.

The Code of Conduct will be publicly available on the ILC website and communicated in the school's newsletters, in information sessions, at staff meetings, during recruitment and staff induction, during Board induction and during the enrolment process.

3. EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The expected outcomes of this code of conduct include that:

- there is a Child Safety Code of Conduct for school employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy in which appropriate behaviour with children is clearly defined, accessible and understood by all members of the ILC community
- the interests of school staff (including other professional or occupational codes of conduct that regulate particular school staff) and the needs of all children are taken into account
- there is consistency between the Code of Conduct and the ILC's child safety strategies, policies and procedures as revised from time to time
- staff are clear about how to raise concerns about behaviour which does not appear to be in keeping with the Code of Conduct.

END OF DOCUMENT

Document Status	DRAFT	FOR APPROVAL	APPROVED
Document Number:	12.4.14		
Version:	4		
Policy owner:	ILC Principal		
Policy category:	Care, Safety and Welfare of Students		
Level of approval:	Board via Education Committee		
Policy Approved by:	Board		
Date Approved:	August 2023		
Effective date:	May 2020		
Review Frequency:	One Year		
Review Date:	August 2024		
Purpose:	To outline the appropriate behaviours and processes required to maintain child safety at the ILC		
Relevant legislation and/or standards:	<i>Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)</i> <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)</i> <i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)</i> <i>Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)</i> <i>Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)</i> <i>Ministerial Order 1359 Implementing the child safe standards – managing the risk of child abuse in schools and school boarding premises Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)</i>		
Risk Awareness:	Commercial and Legal, Programs and Services, Human Resources, Strategic		
Related Documents:	Internal <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jesuit Social Services' Code of Conduct ILC Child Protection Reporting Obligations Policy ILC Duty of Care Policy ILC Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy ILC Behaviour Encouragement Policy External <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CECV Child Safety Guides VRQA Child Safety Resources Province Child Abuse Reporting Policy ACF Accreditation Program 		
Scope:	This Code applies to employees, volunteers, contractors and clergy. It is particular to matters of safeguarding children and young people in line with the requirements of the Victorian Child Safe Standards. It does not replace other professional or occupational Codes.		
Definitions:	ACF	Australian Childhood Foundation	
	CECV	Catholic Education Commission of Victoria	
	ILC	Ignatius Learning Centre	
	Province	Australian Province of the Society of Jesus	
	VIT	Victorian Institute of Teaching	
	VRQA	Victorian Regulations and Qualifications Authority	
<i>Please note:</i> The definitions given in the Child Safety Policy apply to this Code of Conduct			
Policy:	This Child Safety Code of Conduct establishes for all school staff, clear behavioural expectations and boundaries in the ILC environment and enables all adults to be held accountable.		
Responsibilities:	ILC Principal and ILC staff		