



## Child Safety Code of Conduct

<b>Approved:</b> College Board	<b>Date approved:</b> 17 November 2022
<b>Responsible Officer:</b> The Principal	<b>Policy Review Date:</b> Term 4 2024

### 1. Rationale

Lyrebird College is committed to ensuring a respectful school that is safe, positive and supportive to all members of the College community. Lyrebird College takes a zero tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safe Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No 1359.

The Code of Conduct sets out the standards expected of behaviour for all adults towards students whilst at the College, representing the College or when communicating with other College Community members or on behalf of the College. It outlines the boundaries about staff and volunteer interaction with College students, including personal care assistance.

The Code of Conduct aims to protect all children and in particular children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Lyrebird College recognises the high support needs of our students and has robust and rigorous policies and strategies to reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. The Code of Conduct is intended to complement child protection legislation, college policies and procedures and professional standards, codes or ethics as these apply to staff and other personnel. It helps to ensure our college is a safe, supportive and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

### 2. Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all adult members of the Lyrebird College community involved in child-connected work, including all staff, contractors, therapists and volunteers. The application of this Code is not limited to conduct at Lyrebird College. It extends to all functions, events, including any school travel (bus and private car) and online communications when representing or acting on behalf of the College. The definitions given in the Child Safety Policy apply to this Code of Conduct.

**If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.**

### 3. KEY ELEMENTS OF THIS CODE

#### 3.1 Acceptable behaviours

DO:

- comply with Lyrebird College's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and uphold the College's statement of commitment to child safety at all times, which includes zero tolerance for child

abuse

- comply with Lyrebird College's statement Culturally Safe Environment to create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of aboriginal children and students and their families, which includes zero tolerance of racism
- comply with Lyrebird College's Student Behaviour Support Policy to manage rules, behaviours and disciplinary matters proactively in consideration of individual needs
- comply with Lyrebird College's Digital Learning Policy and Internet Usage policy to act responsibly when using social media, email, instant messages, SMS and other apps
- treat students and families in the College community with respect both within the school physical and online environment and outside the school environment as part of normal 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 an Autism Spectrum Disorder and those with any disability
- promote the cultural safety, expression, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students
- promote the cultural safety, expression, participation and empowerment of students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- intervene when students are engaging in inappropriate bullying behaviour towards others
- report any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns, including racial or discrimination based on identity or sexual preference to the Principal or senior teacher
- understand and comply with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse
- 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.

### **3.2 Unacceptable behaviours**

#### **DON'T:**

- engage in any form of inappropriate behaviour both in the physical and online environments 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 in the physical and online environment (for example, offering gifts)
- 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 or ethnicity
- communicate directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, SMS and other apps 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
- 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 College grounds or at other College 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 or gestures and images
- use inappropriate references of racial or cultural background or act in a racial or discriminatory manner based on identity or sexual preference.
- use IT systems, email data base, social network or similar technologies for inappropriate purposes, including, but not limited to, harassment, bullying or victimisation of others

### **3.3 Culturally Safe Environments**

Lyrebird College promotes diversity and inclusion and is committed to providing a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children, students and their families. Lyrebird College actively supports participation and inclusion of Aboriginal people and promotes expression of aboriginal culture and enjoyment of their cultural rights. Staff, students, volunteers and the school community acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and the importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal students.

Lyrebird College caters for students with high needs disabilities and is committed to ensuring inclusion, diversity and equity for all. Students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students who are unable to live at home, international students, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) students are supported in a culturally safe and respectful environment and within a culture of child safety.

Lyrebird College has a zero tolerance for racism and incidents of racism will be addressed by college leadership. Lyrebird College takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to investigate thoroughly and quickly. Staff are trained to deal appropriately with racial allegations.

### **3.4 Personal care and hygiene**

Lyrebird College students may require additional support in personal care. This may include but is not limited to:

- toileting
- nappy changes
- changing clothes
- dental care
- personal hygiene

Teachers owe a duty of care to students and should, where possible, be in attendance in the classroom. As personal care/toileting will take place outside the classroom this should be undertaken where possible by Educational Support (ES) staff members. In consideration of our Child Safe policies and issues with protective behaviours, children should be attended to primarily by ES staff members and teachers who are known to them and around whom they feel safe. For this reason, casual or replacement staff are not to undertake personal care duties where possible.

Lyrebird College has developed Student Personal Care and Hygiene Guidelines and these need to be followed stringently. Random room checks will be undertaken daily by rotating senior staff.

### **3.5 Student health, wellbeing and therapy**

First aid is to be administered to students by qualified First Aid staff members. The Code of Conduct applies to all school related activities, including application of first aid treatment.

Lyrebird College identifies additional and potentially high risk activities that may be undertaken during school hours at the College by external providers such as allied health professionals. These may include, but are not limited to:

- therapy sessions
- counselling
- visiting specialist teachers

All providers and programs must be approved by the Principal and meet legislative requirements including, current Working with Children Check, understanding and adhering to the College's Child Safe policies and Procedures for Responding to Suspected Child Abuse, with a signed agreement to adhere to this Code of Conduct.

### **3.6 Child Information Sharing Scheme**

Lyrebird College provides a respectful, safe, positive and supportive school that aims to protect all children and in particular children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Lyrebird College is committed to the Information Sharing and Family Violence Reform Ministerial Guidelines made under section 41ZA of the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act, ensuring that our organisational policies and practices meet all Information Sharing and Family Violence Reform guidelines inclusive of:

- Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS)
- Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS)
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM)
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### **3.7 Monitoring and implementation**

The Principal and senior teacher of Lyrebird College 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 of Lyrebird College will provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

### **3.8 Allegations, concerns and complaints**

Lyrebird College takes all allegations seriously and has practices in place to carry out investigations thoroughly and quickly, while giving support to students throughout the process. Staff and volunteers are trained to deal appropriately with allegations.

**If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.**

The Policy and Procedures for Responding to Suspected Child Abuse outline **how to take action** if an allegation of abuse is made.

### **3.9 Breaches of Code of Conduct**

All adult members of the College 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, they are required to sign a copy of the Code.

Any actual or suspected breaches of this Code should be honestly reported to the Principal or senior teacher. If there are concerns about the Principal's conduct, they should be raised with the Chair of the College Board.

Alleged breaches will be dealt with in accordance with the procedures set out in the Policy and Procedures for Responding to Suspected Child Abuse.

Employees of the College 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 College. Employees of contractors or sub-contractors may be refused permission to continue working in the college environment.

When circumstances require, a breach may be referred to the Victoria Police and/or a regulatory body, such as the Victorian Institute of Teaching.

The Principal is required to report to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to sexual offence or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

### **3.10 Communication**

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

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

### **3.11 Evaluation**

This document will be reviewed if legislative or other changes are required in the interim or as part of the two year cycle review. Any review will involve consultation with members of the College community.



Melissa Handbury

**Board Chair**

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**I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this Code to the Principal.**