

Leibler Yavneh College: Child Safe Code of Conduct

Purpose

The purpose of Leibler Yavneh College's Child Safe Code of Conduct (the Code) is to outline the College's expected standard of behaviour for all staff, including Board members and casual/temporary staff, and volunteers, including parents, in their interaction with or in the presence of students.

Abiding by the Code and reading and understanding Leibler Yavneh College's Child Safety Policy and Child Safe Reporting Procedure will help support the College to promote a child safe culture including building the capacity of staff and volunteers to act ethically and professionally, identify and report harm, and respond appropriately to disclosures, allegations or suspicion of harm.

Scope

All Leibler Yavneh College staff, including Board members and temporary/casual staff, and volunteers including parents and students on placement, are required to sign the Code and, in doing so, agree to be bound by the standards set out within.

It is expected that staff and volunteers read and understand the College's Child Safety Policy and Child Safe Reporting Procedure in conjunction with the Code.

Staff and volunteers will abide by the Code in all dealings with students. This includes interacting directly with students and/or being made aware of issues concerning students. The scope extends to staff and volunteers beyond the College's work hours and includes the physical, virtual and online environments.

Child Safe Values and Principles

Leibler Yavneh College is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and to being a child safe organisation with zero tolerance to child abuse. Its commitment is based on the following overarching principles, the Victorian Institute of Teaching's Code of Conduct and the 11 Victorian Child Safe Standards. These principles guide the conduct of staff and volunteers at Leibler Yavneh College:

1. All children regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, culture, socio-economic status, disability or other status have the right to feel safe.
2. The welfare and best interests of the child are paramount.
3. The views of the child must be respected.
4. Child safety awareness is promoted and openly discussed within our College community.
5. Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
6. Staff and volunteers have an obligation to ensure a 'duty of care' that protects students from harm. This includes avoiding acts or omissions that place children in circumstances that may lead to harm.
7. Staff and volunteers will empower students in areas that affect their safety and rights.

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8. Children and young people from culturally or linguistically diverse backgrounds, those with a disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people, LGBTIQ+ children and young people and those who cannot live at home have the right to special care and support. They will be supported to access the College's programs in a safe and nurturing manner.
9. Staff and volunteers take a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse, child harm and neglect and will report any alleged breaches of the Code and allegations of child abuse via the College's internal and external reporting procedures.

Appropriate and Inappropriate Behaviour

Appropriate Behaviour

The expectations for Leibler Yavneh College staff, Board Members, students on placement and volunteer's appropriate behaviour towards, and in, the company of students are listed below.

All staff and volunteers will commit to the following actions:

- Uphold the Code and adhere to the Child Safety Policy
- Report any allegations of child abuse as per the Child Safe Reporting Procedure
- Undertake child safety risk assessments including reporting child safety risks in a proactive manner
- Support children and young people if an allegation of child abuse is made, in line with the Child Safety Policy and Child Safe Reporting Procedure
- Lead by example and model appropriate behaviour amongst colleagues and in interactions with students
- Respect the privacy of students and their families while adhering to the College's and legislative mandatory reporting guidelines
- Treat students and their parents and carers with dignity and respect, and refrain from expressing discriminatory views on cultures, language, religion, race, sexuality, health status or ability
- Promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people
- Use positive and affirming language towards children and young people
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people. This includes boundaries related to physical contact, use of language and appropriate avenues of communication such as social media
- Report any conflicts of interest (such as an outside relationship with a student)
- Do not engage in behaviour with students that might be interpreted as, or intended for, the purpose of exploitation. This includes giving gifts or providing special treatment to students
- Empower students and families to participate in a consultation process and support them to provide feedback in areas that affect their rights and safety
- Listen and appropriately respond to the views and concerns of students
- Ensure that conversations in the presence of children and young people are appropriate to their chronological and developmental age

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- Promote the empowerment, participation and cultural safety of particularly vulnerable students (for example, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children living with disability, LGBTQI+ children and children who are unable to live at home)
- Ensure adults are not left alone with children, except when unavoidable (for example, in an emergency)
- Participate in child safety training each year.
- Report any breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct to one of the College’s Child Protection Officers. These persons be found in the Child Safety Policy.
- Call the police 000 if a student is in immediate danger.

Unacceptable Behaviour

Engaging in unacceptable behaviour is a breach of this Code. It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to avoid misinterpretation and/or ambiguity when interacting with students.

Breaching this Code includes, but is not limited to:

- Engaging in any activity with a child that is likely to cause harm including participating in any behaviour that would constitute abuse, harm, neglect, exploitation, harassment, discrimination or victimisation
- Use of inappropriate language such as swearing or using racial, cultural, homophobic or sexist insults
- Ignoring or disregarding any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or harm
- Inappropriate physical contact such as hugging or physical restraint that is initiated by an adult. Where physical contact is initiated by a child, e.g., a spontaneous hug, the adult must set appropriate limits and not encourage repeated interaction
- Using physical means to discipline or control a child
- Where urgent comfort or care to an injured child may be required, it is expected that limited physical contact be made. Boundaries appropriate to the situation should be set by the adult. Limiting the contact to the specific situation for only as long as necessary is the responsibility of the adult
- Undertaking a task of a personal nature for a child if they can do it for themselves, such as changing clothes, feeding, personal grooming or toileting
- Sexual misconduct, which includes any sexual activity (touching, fondling, oral, anal or vaginal penetration, voyeurism, exhibitionism), exploitation, inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature and grooming
- Being alone with a child when there is no professional reason for doing so. If this cannot be avoided, it is the responsibility of the adult to let a supervisor or colleague know as soon as practicable
- Gift giving or forming special and close relationships with children and their families
- Not respecting the privacy or confidentiality of a student including taking photographs of a student without their and/or their parent’s consent.
- Communicating directly with a student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, personal email, instant messaging, chat rooms, gaming sites, texting, etc)
- Requesting that a child keeps communication with an adult a secret from their parents/carers

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Additional guidance on professional conduct

As stated, the Code extends to staff, Board Members, students on placement and volunteers beyond the College's work hours and includes the physical, virtual and online environments. In circumstances where the risk of unsafe conduct is increased or children may be particularly vulnerable, staff and volunteers are required to act with an increased sense of professionalism and model the Code's professional boundaries and expectations.

Teaching students / supervision in a one-on-one setting

There are various circumstances in which a teacher or volunteer may work with a student in a one-on-one setting. These include but are not limited to:

- Sitting a make-up test
- Catching up on work including one-on-one tutoring to assist the student
- One-on-one coaching, including music or sports coaching

Working with students in a one-on-one setting should only occur where there is a pedagogical, wellbeing or health reason to do so. Teachers and volunteers should determine that having additional students or staff/volunteers in the setting would be to the detriment of the outcome. For example, a student catching up on a test would sit this in a one-on-one setting. Where such circumstances occur teachers and volunteers should:

- Operate where there is a line of sight to other adults and young people (e.g., keeping the door open, operating in a room that has clear windows, etc); and
- Operate in a one-on-one setting as part of the regular function of the school (e.g., a one-on-one music lessons); and
- Seek guidance from their line manager regarding the appropriateness and necessity to operate one-on-one with a student
- Ensure one on one activity is logged centrally, for example by being recorded at the school office.

Teachers and volunteers should seek guidance from a Child Safety Officer, or a Board Member or the Leadership Team, when considering removing a child or young person from their ordinary course of work (e.g., having a student sit a make-up test during their ordinary class time).

Promoting the safety of students who cannot live at home

Out-of-home care is a temporary, medium or long-term living arrangement for children and young people who cannot live in their family home.

Statutory out-of-home care includes foster care, kinship care, permanent care, residential care and lead tenant arrangements. The Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) has oversight of these arrangements.

For every student in statutory out-of-home care, and for the first year of a student entering permanent care, schools must:

- appoint a learning mentor
- assign a student support group
- develop an individual education plan
- develop an educational needs assessment

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- nominate a designated teacher as the student's in-school mentor

Out-of-home care also includes informal out-of-home care arrangements. Informal out-of-home care refers to an arrangement in which a child or young person is living with someone other than their parent or legal guardian, without an out-of-home care legal order in place.

When a student is living in an informal out-of-home care arrangement, the carer should complete an [Informal Carer Statutory Declaration form](#). The declaration is a written statement that sets out the care arrangements for the child or young person. A completed declaration is required to allow the school the student attends, or where they are seeking enrolment, to work with an informal carer.

Generally, an informal carer who has provided the school with a completed Informal Carer Statutory Declaration may make school-based decisions for the child and may access school information ordinarily provided to a parent.

Subject to any court orders, generally, a parent's decision overrides any decision made by an informal carer. Other factors that might be relevant to decision-making and information-sharing for the child include a consideration of whether the child is a mature minor or any safety and wellbeing concerns

Transporting Students

Staff and volunteers should not transport students to events as part of the normal course of the school's curricular and extra-curricular activities. While the school does not encourage staff to use their own cars to transport students or to transport students in a one-one-one setting, there may be exceptional circumstances where this occurs (e.g. an emergency).

Students may be passengers in a staff member's car if:

- There is more than one student in the car throughout the journey, and
- Written (or emailed) permission has been obtained from the student's parent/carer for each journey or set of journeys, and
- Written (or emailed) permission has been obtained from the Principal or Deputy Principal for each journey or set of journeys, and
- Another staff member checks in with students the following day
- The car is registered and has comprehensive insurance

Students may be transported by staff and volunteers in exceptional circumstances. When this occurs, staff and volunteers should, as soon as practicable:

- Contact a Child Safety Officer or Leadership Team Member to advise that the transportation occurred, when it occurred and the reasons for the transportation.
- Contact the child's parents to advise that the transportation occurred, when it occurred and the reasons for the transportation.

When staff and volunteers use their own car or travel in a one-on-one setting, it is advisable that students sit in the back seat of the car. And they must comply with road rules, wear seat belts, etc.

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Contact Outside of School

Staff and volunteers must not arrange social activities with students outside of school and they must not enter relationships with students of any age. Staff may also not engage in relationships with former students until two years after the student's graduation

Staff may host students in their homes for Shabbat meals, etc, provided that:

- There are two or more students present at all times; and
- Students' parents have given permission; and
- The staff member informs their line manager.

As per the Code's guidelines, the same professional standards and guidelines apply to staff in all circumstances including when students are hosted for Shabbat meals.

Camps involving overnight stays

In line with the Child Safety Policy, staff should aim to minimise risk involved when students are involved in camps that involve overnight stays. This includes:

- Knowing their designated roles as well as the key roles of other staff and volunteers on the camp
- Maintaining a copy of the students' medical records
- Maintaining a copy of key contact details of parents and school staff
- Understanding the emergency response procedure including responding to bushfires
- Maintaining an up-to-date and stocked first aid kit
- Ensuring that all areas for camp activities are under supervision when used by students
- Monitoring camp grounds for any unknown person/s and approaching unknown person/s to question the reason for their presence
- Identifying and assessing hazards that students are likely to face in any activities. Such an assessment must consider the circumstances of individuals students with medical and other conditions.
- Taking reasonable measures to prevent injury to students
- Supporting the standards of safe practice in any activity established by the accredited organisation and its specialist practitioners
- Using correct activity equipment, including any required safety equipment

The guidelines for accommodation and interacting with students on camp below reflect the Code's section on 'Supervision in a one-on-one setting'. This includes:

- Under no circumstances should students and staff be sleeping in the same room or the same secluded area
- No student may sleep, even in a separate room, on their own, in an area to which only staff have access
- Staff accommodation should be near student accommodation
- Staff and volunteers, including Youth Leaders and camp personnel, must not be alone in an enclosed or secluded area with a student
- Older students should not have unsupervised interactions with younger students, unless they are authorised Youth Leaders, and have been approved for such interaction.

Staff and volunteers should not bring or consume alcohol or drugs while on camp.

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Breaches of the Code

Breaches of the Code

All staff and volunteers are required to report any breaches of this Code to one of the College's Child Protection Officers. These Officers are listed in the Child Safety Policy. In instances where an allegation of child abuse has been made, the matter will be managed in accordance with the College's Child Safety Policy and Child Safe Reporting Procedure.

Consequences of breaching the Code

All Leibler Yavneh College staff and who breach this code will be subject to disciplinary action which may include being stood down with, or without pay, and termination. As per the College's legislative obligations and Child Safe Reporting Procedure, the College will conduct an internal investigation and will report serious instances of child abuse to the police and/or DFFH Child Protection.

Declaration

All Leibler Yavneh College Board members, staff, volunteers and temporary/casual staff will undergo the College's mandatory induction program annual child safety training where the content of the Child Safe Code of Conduct is examined.

All Leibler Yavneh College Board members, staff, volunteers, and temporary/casual staff must participate in a regular review process that incorporates their understanding and obligations of the Code

By signing below, Board members, staff, volunteers, and temporary/casual staff acknowledge they have read and understood the Leibler Yavneh College's **Child Protection Policy, Child Safe Reporting Procedure** and agree to abide by the **Child Safe Code of Conduct**.

I, _____, have read and understood the Child Safety Policy and Child Safe Reporting Procedure.

I, _____, agree to abide by the Child Safe Code of Conduct during my employment with Leibler Yavneh College.

I, _____, understand that breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct may lead to disciplinary action or termination of my employment with Leibler Yavneh College