

Policy

Child Safe Code of Conduct 2022



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Further Document Information and Relationships	
Related Legislation*	
Related Policies	Child Protection Policy 2022 Code of Conduct 2020 Complaint Handling Policy 2021
Related Documents	

**Note: Any reference to Legislation will be updated in the Policy as required. See website <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/> for current Acts, Regulations and Environmental Planning Instruments.*

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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline Council's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct helps manage risks to child safety that may arise through adult interactions with children and young people. It establishes a clear set of rules and expectations for behaviour that is in line with Council's culture and values.

2 SCOPE

The Code of Conduct applies to the following:

- Council staff - full time, part-time, fixed term contract employees, casual and agency staff
- Volunteers
- Contractors
- Work experience participants
- Councillors (Elected Members).

3 PRINCIPLES

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies in all council venues and situations, including direct service delivery, Council events and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Liverpool Plains Shire Council is committed to creating and maintaining an environment that promotes the safety of all children. This includes encouraging a culture where the prevention and reporting of abuse is supported and encouraged. All staff and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children.

This Code of Conduct sets expectations for how adults at Council should behave around children. This is important to help prevent children from being harmed. Child abuse takes many forms and can include physical, sexual and psychological abuse, ill-treatment and neglect.

Our Child Protection Policy provides more information about these different types of abuse. This Code of Conduct identifies positive child safe behaviours that we encourage all adults to support. It also identifies behaviours that we consider unacceptable. Engaging in unacceptable behaviour is a breach of this Code of Conduct and may result in managerial or disciplinary action.

Some examples of concerning behaviours are also provided below as Appendix A. These are behaviours that on their own may not constitute a breach of the Code of Conduct but together may indicate a pattern of behaviour that poses a risk to the safety of children.

I WILL:

- ✓ Treat all children and young people with respect.
- ✓ Listen to and value children and young people's ideas and opinions.
- ✓ Welcome all children and their families and carers by being inclusive.
- ✓ Actively promote cultural safety and inclusion.
- ✓ Listen to children and respond to them appropriately.
- ✓ Welcome parents and carers to participate in decisions about their child's training schedule and any other matters about their safety.
- ✓ Report any conflicts of interest (such as an outside relationship with a child).
- ✓ Adhere to all relevant Australian and NSW legislation and our child safe policies and procedures.
- ✓ Work within a team to ensure that the needs of the child (and their family) remain the paramount focus.
- ✓ Participate in all compulsory training.
- ✓ Raise concerns with management if risks to child safety are identified, including cultural, environmental and operational risks.
- ✓ Report and act on any concerns or observed breaches of this Code of Conduct.
- ✓ Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse.
- ✓ Respect the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information about child protection concerns confidential.
- ✓ Inform parents and carers if there are situations that need to be safely managed but are outside the boundaries of this Code of Conduct (such as driving an athlete to a swimming competition or undertaking one-on-one training sessions).
- ✓ Take a child seriously if they disclose harm or abuse.
- ✓ Ensure breaches of this Code are reported immediately.
- ✓ Uphold the rights of the child and always prioritise their needs.

I WILL NOT:

- ✗ Condone or participate in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards children, including physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, neglect or grooming.
- ✗ Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- ✗ Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues.
- ✗ Use hurtful, discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language with children.
- ✗ Fail to report information to police if I know a child has been abused.
- ✗ Engage in unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child.
- ✗ Persistently criticise and/or denigrate a child.
- ✗ Deliberately prevent a child from forming friendships.
- ✗ Verbally assault a child or create a climate of fear.
- ✗ Offer children and young people alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs.
- ✗ Show children pornographic images.
- ✗ Encourage a child to communicate with me in a private setting.
- ✗ Share details of sexual experiences with a child.
- ✗ Use sexual language

I understand the following types of behaviour may be of concern:

- Being alone with a child when there is no professional reason for doing so
- Showing favour to one child over others
- Babysitting, mentoring and/or tutoring a child out of work hours (without managerial approval for this kind of secondary employment).

All staff, volunteers, families and community members are encouraged to speak up if they have concerns about the safety of children. Complaints about a breach of this Code of Conduct must be reported to Council's Human Resources Manager, who can be contacted on: 02 6746 1755 or via email: glenn.learmont@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au

Some breaches of this Code of Conduct may need to be reported to the NSW Police, the Department of Communities and Justice and the Office of the Children's Guardian. Our Complaint Handling Policy provides more information about our reporting obligations to external authorities as well as describing protections and confidentiality provisions for anyone making a report. The policy can be found by a link on our website.

Staff and volunteers who breach our Code of Conduct may also be subject to disciplinary action. This can include increased supervision, appointment to an alternative role, suspension, or termination from the organisation.

PLEASE NOTE:

An adult in child-related work in an organisation will commit an offence if they know another adult there poses a serious risk of abusing a child (under 18 years), and they have the power to reduce or remove the risk, and they negligently fail to do so.

All adults in NSW are required to report information to police if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child (under 18 years) has been abused.

Signature

I have read this Code of Conduct and agree to abide by it and its terms.

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix A - Behaviours that constitute child abuse

This Appendix lists unacceptable behaviours (misconduct) and concerning behaviours as they relate to the different forms of child abuse.

Codes of Conduct **do not have** to list all these types of behaviours. They may be grouped into different categories or referred to generally based on your risk analysis. The list below will help you identify which behaviours your Code of Conduct should focus on in order to prevent abuse in your organisation's unique operating environment.

Unacceptable behaviours

General

- Condoning or participating in behaviour with a child that is illegal, unsafe or abusive
- Ignoring or disregarding any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- Exaggerating or trivialising child abuse issues
- Using hurtful, discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language with a child
- Failing to report information to police if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child has been abused
- Trivialising the subject of child abuse, such as telling jokes that make light of children being hurt
- Using unacceptable language or telling unacceptable stories or jokes in front of children

Physical abuse

- Hitting, striking, punching, kicking or slapping a child
- Engaging in rough physical games
- Throwing items or using items to hurt a child
- Dragging or pushing a child
- Threatening to hurt a child through words or gestures, regardless of whether the person actually intends to apply force
- Using hostile force towards a child and/or a pattern of hostile or unreasonable and seriously inappropriate physical conduct

Sexual abuse

- Sexual touching of a child
- Sexual contact with a child
- Masturbating in front of a child or exposing genitals
- Possessing or creating child abuse material
- Sharing sexually explicit photos of a child
- Exposing a child to pornography or other indecent material
- Giving a child gifts, food, money, attention or affection in exchange for sexual activities or images
- Not respecting the privacy of a child when they are using the bathroom or changing

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- Communicating (including online) with a child about romantic, intimate or sexual feelings for a child
 - Using a camera to record a child while they are dressing, bathing or using the bathroom
 - Comments that express a desire to act in a sexual manner with a child
 - Using sexual language or gestures in the presence of children
 - Sexual comments, conversations or communications with a child

Emotional abuse

- Teasing a child
- Yelling at a child
- Bullying a child
- Persistent criticism and discrediting of a child
- Persistent rejection of or hostility towards a child
- Refusing to acknowledge a child's worth and the legitimacy of their needs
- Deliberately preventing a child from forming friendships
- Depriving a child of essential stimulation and responsiveness
- Encouraging a child to engage in destructive, antisocial behaviour
- Exposing a child to family violence
- Making a child feel worthless, unloved, alone or frightened

Neglect

- Depriving a child of necessities such as food and drink, clothing, critical medical care or treatment, or shelter
- Failing to protect a child from abuse (such as, failing to report abuse when a child discloses it or when a staff member observes it)
- Exposing a child to a harmful environment (such as, an environment where there is illicit drug use or illicit drug manufacturing)
- Failing to adequately supervise a child, resulting in injury or harm

Ill treatment

- Making excessive and/or degrading demands of a child
- Disciplining or correcting a child in an unreasonable and seriously inappropriate or improper manner
- Seriously inappropriate and/or degrading comments or behaviour towards a child
- Repeated hostility towards a child
- Seclusion and other types of restrictive practices
- Locking up a child in a room
- Pushing a child to train or perform when they are injured

Grooming

- Engaging in unauthorised contact with a child online for the purpose of developing a sexual relationship

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- Using a computer, mobile phone, camera or other device to exploit or harass a child
 - Unacceptable personal communication that explores sexual feelings or intimate personal feelings with a child
 - Sharing details with a child of one's own sexual experiences
 - Inappropriately extending a relationship with a child outside of work
 - Giving a child special attention or isolating them from peers with the intention of making it easier to access the child for sexual activity
 - Offering a child gifts, food, cigarettes, money, attention or affection with the intention of making it easier to access the child for sexual activity
 - Making close physical contact, like inappropriate tickling and 'play' wrestling.

Failure to prevent/report abuse

- An obvious or very clearly unreasonable failure to respond to information strongly indicating that another adult working at the organisation poses a serious risk of abusing a child
- Knowing or believing, that a child has been abused and not reporting it to police (or not reporting in circumstances where the person ought reasonably to have known)