

LORETO NEDLANDS

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS



Policy Name: Code of Conduct Parent Agreement

Implemented: 2018

Due for Review: 2019

Rationale:

The purpose of the Code of Conduct for Loreto Nedlands is to describe minimum standards of conduct for all those who engage or join with Loreto Nedlands, in any capacity. It is an expectation that all who joins the school comply with the Code of Conduct. "The school" refers to all those who are associated in any way with Loreto Nedlands.

The Code of Conduct Policy reflects our school Mission Statement:

Loreto Nedlands creates empowered thinkers who are inspired to excel, feel confident to lead and show compassion as they serve others in the spirit of Mary Ward.

Inspired. Confident. Compassionate.

Loreto Nedlands is committed to ensuring our students reach their full potential and to reflect Christ in all aspects of their lives. The Code of Conduct Policy contributes to ensuring our students have opportunities to use their gifts and continue to thrive.

The Code of Conduct outlines the work practices, behaviours, relationships, attitudes and responsibilities for staff, parents, volunteers, visitors and students at Loreto Nedlands. The Code of Conduct will formulate staff employment and professional conditions as well as the enrolment policy of families new to the school. It applies to all current and future staff, parents, visitors, volunteers and students at Loreto Nedlands.

LORETO NEDLANDS CODE OF CONDUCT

Purpose

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to describe minimum standards of conduct in all behaviour and decision making to ensure the safety and well being of students.

Application

The Code applies to staff, students, volunteers, parents and guardians as applicable. The term 'parents' includes guardians.

Introduction

You acknowledge the inherent vulnerability of the students in your care.

You recognise that the safety and well being of students depends upon your vigilance and diligence and the vigilance and diligence of all adults.

The Code does not give you detailed professional advice on specific behaviour. Rather, it describes the minimum requirements expected of you.

The Guidelines are illustrative and not an exhaustive list of the behaviours covered by the Code.

If your behaviour varies from the standards described in this Code and Guidelines, you should be prepared to explain and justify your decisions and actions.

While mandatory language such as 'must', 'shall' and 'will' is not used throughout the Code, there is a presumption the conduct described is mandatory and therefore not discretionary.

You have a responsibility to students and their family, other members of the school community and the wider community to provide and support safe and competent education and care of students.

You will do your best to support other members of the school community to comply with the Code.

In cases of conflict between parts of the Code, between the Code and other school policies, or in any decision making choices, you give priority to the outcome that will be in the best interests of the safety and well-being of the child.

Breaches

Breaches of the Code must be notified to the Principal and it is a breach of the Code not to do so.

A breach of the Code may constitute a failure to follow a lawful direction from the Principal and therefore the Principal will have the discretion as to what action to take, which may include counselling, professional development or sanctions under any agreement between you and the Principal. If you are a parent, volunteer or visitor, the Principal may take such action as is appropriate in your circumstances to maintain the safety and well being of students.

The Principal must notify the appropriate authorities of any breach of the Code that was grooming behaviour: i.e. Deliberately undertaken with the aim of befriending and establishing an emotional connection with a student, to lower the student's inhibitions in preparation for engaging in sexual activity with the student. Examples include:

- Developing relationships that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific students)
- Being alone with a student in circumstances where you are unseen or unlikely to be randomly interrupted
- Initiating unnecessary physical contact with students or doing things of a personal nature that a student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- Photographing or videoing a student without the consent of the parent
- Being in the presence of a student whilst under the influence of alcohol or non-medically prescribed drugs or offering either to a student

The Principal must notify the appropriate authorities of any breach of the Code that was sexual abuse of a child: i.e. sexual behaviour in circumstances where:

- The student is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence;
- The student has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
- There is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.

Therese Hussey

Principal

Loreto Nedlands

1 May 2018

Conduct Statements

1. You act safely and competently.
2. You give priority to students' safety and wellbeing in all your behaviour and decision-making.
3. You act in accordance with the values of the Gospel as defined in the Code of Ethical Conduct.
4. You conduct yourself in accordance with laws, agreements, policies and standards relevant to your relationship with the school community.
5. You respect the dignity, culture, values and beliefs of each member of the school community.
6. You treat personal information about members of the school community as private and confidential.
7. You give impartial, honest and accurate information about the education, safety and wellbeing of students.
8. You support all members of the school community in making informed decisions about students.
9. You promote and preserve the trust and privilege inherent in your relationship with all members of the school community.
10. You maintain and build on the community's trust and confidence in Catholic schools and the Church.
11. You act reflectively and ethically.

Conduct Statement 1

You act safely and competently.

Guidelines

1. You are expected to put the safety of students ahead of every other relevant but secondary consideration.
2. In doing so, you are expected to act within the scope of your role as a parent or volunteer within the school community.
3. If the safety and wellbeing of a student requires skills and experience outside your core competency, you must refer the student to the appropriate expert.
4. You recognise that the Principal, staff, parents and students assess your ability to act safely and competently based on your behaviour and decision-making, and you do likewise in your assessment of them. You are responsible for conducting yourself in all things such that there is no speculation, doubt or ambiguity that you do so in the best interests of students. You must take reasonable steps to avoid situations where your decisions or behaviour could be interpreted as putting students at risk. You must also notify the Principal as soon as possible if you found yourself in such a position of ambiguity so that you can explain the circumstances.
5. You recognise each student's and their parents' right to receive accurate information; be protected against foreseeable risk of harm; and be involved in and informed about decisions in relation to their education.
6. You notify an appropriate person or the Principal of any information relevant to maintaining student safety and wellbeing, or any observation of questionable, unethical or unlawful behaviour, including breaches of this Code, and intervene to safeguard the student if the circumstances require it.
7. You ensure that any information you receive relevant to the safety and wellbeing of students is either acted upon by you in the best interests of the student if you are the relevant decision maker, or passed to the relevant decision maker for them to act.
8. You perform duties in accordance with wider standards relating to safety such as those relating to occupational health and safety. All parents are responsible for ensuring mandatory and critical incident reporting, and participation in incident analysis and formal open disclosure procedures.
9. You make decisions about students at functions and events at school based on their age, ability, and in the best interests of the student's sense of security, and physical, social, emotional and mental safety. E.g. disco, and picnic.
10. You seek advice, assistance and second opinions from experts and Principal as necessary.

Specific Behaviours: Parents and volunteers of Loreto Nedlands

1. During classroom help parents and volunteers discuss concerns about individual children only with the classroom teacher and not with other parents.
2. Children are never discussed in a negative way in a public forum, including the playground.
3. Any concerns about other students are only discussed with the teacher concerned.
4. The role of the parent class representative is not to discuss staff members or other students with parents or other members of the school community.
5. All P&F procedures are informed and revised against the Code of Conduct.
6. Grandparents and other relatives and friends volunteering in the school in any capacity need a Working With Children Card.
7. All disclosures from students to parents or volunteers must be reported to the Principal or other relevant authority e.g. DCP.

Conduct statement 2

You give priority to students' safety and wellbeing in all your behaviour and decision-making.

Guidelines

1. You accept that you and all adults have individual and joint responsibility for the safety and wellbeing of students.
2. You ensure the safety and well-being of students are the primary focus of your actions and decisions and take precedence over any other considerations including the reputation of the school and your own needs.
3. You support the safety, health and wellbeing of each student, promoting and supporting decisions and behaviour that contribute to the student's self-confidence, safety and wellbeing.
4. You do not behave in any way that risks creating ambiguity about whether you are acting in the best interests of a student.
5. You endeavour to ensure the voice of the student is heard as appropriate, taking into account age and circumstances. You ensure children are listened to, with respect.
6. You respectfully advocate for the safety and wellbeing of students above all other considerations.
7. You recognise the importance that students' education continues without interruption of disturbance.
8. You disclose to the Principal any information that a reasonable person would recognise may be relevant to the safety and wellbeing of students so that the Principal may make appropriate decisions to manage any risk to them. This includes any relationship with any person who may have been accused of harming children or acting unsafely towards them.

Specific Behaviours: Parents and volunteers of Loreto Nedlands

1. All absences, other than sick leave, are formally requested, via the Principal, and in accordance with school policy.
2. All incidences at school and at school events relating to children and parents are treated with confidentiality to ensure the dignity and safety of all is respected.
3. Parents and volunteers do not initiate any touching, including hugging, of students whilst on parent help.
4. Alcohol is not to be consumed at any official school functions involving students.

Conduct statement 3

3. You act in accordance with the values of the Gospel as defined in the Code of Ethical Conduct.

Guidelines

1. You are mindful that your decisions and behaviour are opportunities for students and others to see the school's values in action and how faith integrates with life. Therefore, you are responsible for ensuring the values are lived when participating in school life. For example, values expected when speaking to children and adults.

2. You accept that as a member of a Catholic school community, your conduct reflects on Catholic Education and the Church, and therefore you must strive to uphold the letter and spirit of the Code of Ethical Conduct.

3. You are called upon by the Code of Ethical Conduct act in a manner that is:

- Based on Christian ethics
- Contextually appropriate

4. The Code of Ethical Conduct requires you to take an ethical approach based on the living out of Gospel values which find expression in:

- Respect for the dignity of each person
- Acknowledgment of the giftedness of each person
- Commitment to building positive relationships
- Confidentiality
- Accountability

5. Respecting dignity is based on:

- A conscious appreciation of the sacredness of the individual's creation
- A sensitivity to the fact that everyone has emotions, fears, hopes and an innate goodness which flows from creation in the image of God

6. Recognising the giftedness of others involves:

- Discerning these gifts
- Acknowledging these gifts
- Empowering individuals and groups to use their gifts

7. Fostering positive relationships which flow from being:

- Welcoming and open
- Honest and loyal
- Trusting and trustworthy
- Willing to share knowledge, skills, resources and insights

8. Committing to appropriate confidentiality based on:

- Respect for others

Specific Behaviours: Parents and volunteers of Loreto Nedlands

1. You respect and maintain confidentiality of information regarding parents and students in all contexts, e.g. classroom parent help.
2. You refer all communication regarding students to the relevant teacher.
3. All communication from parents and volunteers to staff should be respectful. This includes written and verbal communication.
4. You have a right to respectful communication from staff, parents and others in the school community, in both written and oral formats, and report breaches of acceptable communication in relation to school matters to the Principal.
5. Parents and volunteers should expect a response from a staff member via email or telephone call within a timely manner that is reasonably practical and within office hours.

Conduct statement 4

You conduct yourself in accordance with laws, agreements, policies and standards relevant to your relationship with the school community.

Guidelines

1. Your relationship with other members of the school community is defined by whatever written or verbal agreement has given rise to that relationship. If you are a parent or acting in a parental capacity, it is the student's enrolment agreement. If you are a member of the school board, it is your school board constitution. If you are a visitor/volunteer, it is in accordance with the permission of the Principal to be on school grounds on condition that you act safely and competently.
2. If you witness the unlawful or unsafe conduct of any other member of the school community, or breaches of policy or this Code, whether in teaching, administration, school support services, or while engaging with students in person or via digital or other media, you have both a responsibility and an obligation to notify such conduct to the Principal or an appropriate authority and take other action as necessary to protect students.
3. Where you notify the Principal or a delegate of unsafe conduct, including breaches of this Code, and that notification fails to produce an appropriate response in the circumstances, you may take the matter to an appropriate external authority.
4. You respect both the person and property of students and their families, and of other members of the school community, and the property and finances of the school.
5. You use school property and resources responsibly and for the purposes of the school.

Specific Behaviours: Parents and volunteers of Loreto Nedlands

1. You will receive written confirmation from the Principal about any notification about a breach of the Code of Conduct within seven days of the notification.
2. Communication of the outcome of the breach will be confidential in order to respect the right of the individual to privacy. Any exceptions to this will be undertaken in accordance with the relevant legal and/or police advice.

Conduct statement 5

You respect the dignity, culture, values and beliefs of each member of the school community.

Guidelines

1. You respect both the person and capacity of each member of the school community, treat them with dignity, and show respect for their culture, values, and beliefs.
2. You interact with members of your school community in an honest and respectful manner.
3. You conduct your relations with students and members of the school community with fairness and justice. This includes taking appropriate action to ensure the safety and quality of care of students are not compromised because of harmful or prejudicial attitudes about culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age, religion, disability, spirituality, political, social or health status.
4. In all interactions in the school community you uphold the standards of culturally safe and competent care. This includes according due respect and consideration to the cultural knowledge, values, beliefs, personal wishes and decisions of each member of the school community. You acknowledge the changing nature of families and recognise that families can be constituted in a variety of ways.
5. You do not express racist, sexist, homophobic, ageist and other prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours toward any member of the school community. Any such prejudicial and discriminatory attitudes and behaviours and reported to the Principal.

Specific Behaviours: Parents of Loreto Nedlands

1. You will treat all members of the Loreto community with dignity and equal importance.

Conduct statement 6

You treat personal information about members of the school community as private and confidential.

Guidelines

1. You use personal information, including parent email, for appropriate school related matters.
2. You have ethical and legal obligations to treat personal information as confidential. You protect the privacy of each member of the school community by treating the information gained in the relationship as confidential, restricting its use and disclosure for school related purposes only.
4. You seek advice from the Principal if you identify a conflict between protecting personal information and any resulting risk to the safety and well being of a student.

Specific Behaviours: Parents and volunteers of Loreto Nedlands

1. You are to bring any pastoral care concerns of students and parents to the attention of the Principal.
2. Parents ensure that at home students use their school digital accounts for school related information and not for personal interactions.

Conduct statement 7

You give and seek the best, honest and most accurate information about the education and care of students.

Guidelines

1. Parents provide relevant and accurate information regarding the education, safety and well being of their children, e.g. medical information.
2. Parents have the right to receive clear explanations about the advantages and disadvantages of any educational options for students, so all involved can participate constructively in decision making to deliver the best results for the student.
3. Parents have a right to request, seek and participate with staff in sourcing outside experts for the benefit of the student, e.g. school psychologists and counsellors.

Specific Behaviours: Parents and volunteers of Loreto Nedlands

1. **You ensure that you are not left alone with students without the supervision of an appropriate staff member or the child's parent.**

Conduct Statement 8

You support all members of the school community in making informed decisions about students.

Guidelines

1. Parents are the first educators of their children and equal partners in the education of students.
2. You understand that each member of the school community has skills, experience and knowledge that may be a unique resource that can be directed towards the safety and wellbeing of students.
3. Parents and volunteers inform and engage with teachers about the education and wellbeing of their child on the assumption that it is in the student's best interests to do so.
4. Parents and volunteers act to strengthen, preserve, restore and promote positive relationships between themselves and the school.

Specific Behaviours: Parents of Loreto Nedlands

1. Parents of separated families have the right to be treated equally and provided with the same information regarding their child, except as otherwise instructed by court orders.

Conduct statement 9

You promote and preserve the trust and privilege inherent in your relationship with all members of the school community.

Guidelines

1. Parents and volunteers promote and preserve the trust inherent in their relationship with staff.
2. Parents and volunteers take reasonable measures to establish a sense of trust to protect the physical, psychological, emotional, social and cultural wellbeing of each student. Parents and volunteers protect students who are vulnerable, including but not limited to students with disability and students whose first language is other than English, from exploitation and harm when engaging in school activities.
3. Parents and volunteers have a responsibility to maintain appropriate boundaries with students and to actively support other adults to do likewise, including bringing to their attention any failure to do so.
4. Parents and volunteers do not engage in any behaviour with a student, whilst engaging in school activities, that a reasonable person could interpret as creating an opportunity to engage in emotional, physical or sexual intimacy with a student.
5. Parents and volunteers recognise that the power imbalance between themselves and students means that the onus is on the adult to avoid any ambiguity or misunderstanding by a student or third party about intentions in behaviour towards them.
6. Parents and volunteers understand that the power imbalance between themselves and students means a student is unable to give their consent to engaging in emotional, physical or sexual intimacy with them, regardless of the legal age of consent, or the student's age or maturity.
7. Parents and volunteers notify the Principal of any involvement in criminal investigations or other legal processes that may undermine the judgement and care of students.
8. Parents and volunteers never place the reputation of the school above the safety and well-being of students.

Specific Behaviours: Parents and volunteers of Loreto Nedlands

1. Parents and volunteers are clearly informed, where appropriate, of the expectations of their duty of care of children at school events outside of normal school hours.

2. Parents and volunteers ensure that they are not left alone with students without the supervision of an appropriate staff member or the child's parent.
3. Parents and volunteers avoid situations where they need to be alone with a student. If this is unavoidable parents and volunteers must keep the door open and inform a staff member or parent that you are in the room with an individual student, e.g. uniform shop, canteen.

Conduct statement 10

You maintain and build on the community's trust and confidence in Catholic schools and the Church.

Guidelines

1. Your conduct maintains and builds public trust and confidence in your school, other members of the school community, and the Church.

Specific Behaviours: Parents and volunteers of Loreto Nedlands

1. You disclose any relevant information regarding involvement with law-enforcing agencies and/or offences involving children with the Principal.
2. Volunteers working with students maintain a Current Working with Children Card at all times.

Conduct statement 11

You act reflectively and ethically.

Guidelines

1. You engage with the school reflectively and ethically to ensure that you consciously put student safety and wellbeing at the forefront of your behaviour and decisions.
2. You evaluate your conduct and competency according to this Code, the terms and conditions of your relationship with the school, and appropriate school policies.
3. You contribute to continuous improvement and reviews, by supporting opportunities to discuss and learn from incidents involving student safety and wellbeing, in order to improve the safety of school activities and events guided by parents.

Specific Behaviours: Parents and volunteers of Loreto Nedlands

1. Parents and volunteers understand and acknowledge that the health and wellbeing of yourself, staff and students is of high importance.
2. Parents work with the Principal to de-brief following school events involving students and provide informed and consistent procedures for the health, safety and wellbeing of students.

