



EAST PRESTON ISLAMIC COLLEGE

**CHILD
SAFE
CODE
OF
CONDUCT
POLICY**

Purpose

It is the policy of EPIC Early Learning Centre that the learning and working environment is safe for all children in the School's care. The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to outline the School's commitment to child safety, and the staff of the School's responsibilities, whenever children are in the School's care.

This Code of Conduct has been framed in response to Ministerial Order No.870.

In accordance with East Preston Islamic College's governance structure, the School's governing body assigns the responsibility for the discharge of this Code of Conduct to the Principal.

Definitions

A **Child** means any student enrolled at EPIC Early Learning Centre

Child connected work means work authorised by the EPIC Early Learning Centre governing body and performed by an adult in the School environment where children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Child Abuse includes any act committed against a child involving:

- A sexual offence;
- A grooming offence;
- The infliction on a child of physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm or serious neglect.

Child Abuse includes but is not limited to Child Sexual Abuse.

Child Safety encompasses matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to incidents or allegations of child abuse.

School environment means any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by the School's governing body for use by a child during or outside school hours including:

- a campus of the School;
- online School environments (including email and intranet systems), and;

- other locations provided by the School for a child's use (including, without limitation, locations used for school camps, sporting events, excursions, competitions, and other School events).

School staff means an individual member of staff working for EPIC Early Learning Centre who is:

- directly engaged or employed by the School's governing body;
- a volunteer;
- contracted service provider (i.e. Casual Relief Teacher);

Child Safe Principles

The following principles will guide staff behaviour when undertaking work connected with children:

- the staff/student relationship should be professional at all times regardless of context, such as camps, sports, excursions, incursions, trips;
- the response to a child's behaviour or circumstance should be appropriate with the child's age and vulnerability and the adult's responsibility for the care, safety and welfare of the child;
- as far as practicable, staff should not be alone with a child unless there is line of sight to other adults; staff should not initiate or seek physical contact;
- staff should not initiate or seek social contact with children outside school, unless there is a valid professional or personal context, such as a relationship with their own child.

Child Safe Code of Conduct

All staff are responsible for supporting the safety of children by:

- adhering to the EPIC Early Learning Centre's Child Safety Policy and upholding EPIC Early Learning's statement of commitment to child safety at all times;
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse;
- treating everyone with respect;
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused or that they are worried about their safety/the safety of another child;
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children;
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination);
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example during personal care activities i.e. wudu and toileting);
- adhere at all times to EPIC Early Learning Centre's Social Media Policy;
- ensuring, as far as practicable, that adults are not left alone with a child;

- reporting any allegations of child abuse to EPIC Early Learning Centre's Wellbeing Team and ensure any allegation is reported to DHS;
- understanding and complying with all reporting obligations as they relate to mandatory reporting and reporting under the Crimes Act 1958;
- reporting any child safety concerns to EPIC's Wellbeing Team;
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensuring as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe;
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them;
- reporting to the Victorian Institute of Teaching any charges, committals for trial or convictions in relation to a sexual offence by a registered teacher, or certain allegations or concerns about a registered teacher.

Staff (teaching and non-teaching) at EPIC Early Learning Centre hold a unique position of influence and trust that must not be violated or compromised. They exercise their responsibilities in ways that recognise that there are limits or boundaries to their relationships with children. The following examples outline some of those limits.

A professional relationship **will** be violated if a member of staff:

- has a sexual relationship with a child;
- uses sexual innuendo or inappropriate language and/or material with children;
- touches a child without a valid reason;
- holds conversations of a personal nature or has contact with a child via written or electronic means including email, letters, telephone, text messages or chat lines, without a valid professional context;
- accept or offer gifts, which could be reasonably perceived as being used to influence them or seen as favouritism, from/to children or their parents.

A professional relationship **will** be compromised if a member of staff:

- attends parties or socialises with children;
- invites a child or children back to their home, particularly if no-one else is present.

Staff must not:

- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors);
- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
- perform acts of a personal nature that a child can do for themselves, such as toileting;
- engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children (for example, personal social activities);
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children;
- express personal views on cultures, race, religion or sexuality in the presence of children;
- discriminate against any student, including because of age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, ethnicity, religion or disability;

- exchange personal contact details such as mobile or home phone numbers or email addresses, without a valid professional or personal context;
- photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardians;
- work with children whilst adversely affected under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- have contact with a child or their family outside of EPIC Early Learning Centre without the EPIC ELC leadership and parental consent (for example, babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing children in the street or shopping centre, is appropriate).

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to East Preston Islamic College's wellbeing team.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone DHS:

Business Hours: 1300 664 977 After Hours: 13 12 78

Breaches of this Code

EPIC Early Learning Centre expects that any staff member who becomes aware of a breach of these instructions and code of conduct by another School staff member will advise the Wellbeing Team without delay. The School will consider each breach of these procedures in the context in which it has occurred and will determine if the matter is a minor breach or a serious breach. In the case of EPIC Early Learning Centre employees, a serious breach may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. In relation to volunteers and contracted service providers, a breach may result in the termination of the person's engagement with EPIC Early Learning Centre and the withdrawal of permission for them to be on the premises.

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of EPIC ELC on 04/02/2019.

Review Date

This Policy needs to be reviewed on the 26th of August 2022