central coast montessori
EDUCATION FOR LIFE

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Introduction

Central Coast Montessori is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children, including those under our care and supervision. We recognise the importance of, and our responsibility for, ensuring a safe and supportive environment that respects the rights of children and fosters their enrichment and wellbeing.

Purpose

This Code of Conduct, as part of Central Coast Montessori's Child Safety and Wellbeing Program, is designed to protect children from harm and reduce the opportunity for situations to arise where abuse or harm may occur.

This Code of Conduct makes clear the types of behaviours that are appropriate in fostering a child-safe environment and those which are unacceptable.

Scope

This Code of Conduct applies to all activities and locations where children are under the supervision or care of Central Coast Montessori. This includes both physical and virtual environments.

Everyone associated with Central Coast Montessori must abide by this Code of Conduct, including the School Council, staff, parents, students (as it applies to them), visitors, volunteers, and contractors.

Code of Conduct

We will support and promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people by:

- Acting in accordance with Central Coast Montessori's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at all times
- Taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse and harm
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to leadership or the Child Safety and Wellbeing Officer
- Treating children with respect

- Working to prevent discrimination and promoting the participation and inclusion of all children, with particular sensitivity to:
    - The cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
    - The cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
    - The safety of children with a disability
- Modelling appropriate and respectful behaviour
- Being open and transparent in our interactions with children in physical and virtual environments
- Ensuring adults are always aware of 1:1 interactions with children and maintain professional boundaries at all times
- Listening to children and encouraging their participation and empowerment in matters that affect them.

We will never:

- Ignore or disregard concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse or inappropriate behaviour
- Seek to use children in any way to meet the needs of adults
- Use discriminatory or oppressive behaviour or language with children
- Discriminate on the basis of age, gender, race, culture, religion, disability, vulnerability, sexuality or other protected attributes of the Equal Opportunity Act 2010
- Develop a 'special relationship' with a student or show favouritism through the provision of gifts, special treatment, inappropriate attention, or in any other way which contravenes the Staff and Student Professional Boundaries Policy
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact with children or do things of a personal nature that children can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes
- Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with children
- Engage in rough physical games or other conduct that is likely to cause physical harm
- Exchange personal contact details such as phone number, social networking profile or personal email address with children
- Consume alcohol contrary to Central Coast Montessori policy.

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Officer is identified in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (Deputy Principal).

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Breach of this Code of Conduct

Breach of this Code of Conduct will incur disciplinary consequences. For staff and other adults associated with Central Coast Montessori, this may include:

- Dismissal or termination of contract
- Referral to the Police (where associated with criminal behaviour)
- Referral to regulatory bodies, including:
    - NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA/for registered teachers)
    - NSW Ombudsman (Child Protection Unit)
    - Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ)
    - Office of the Guardian of Children and Young People

For students, this may include suspension or expulsion.

Governing Legislation, Standards and Codes

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005

Children and Justice Legislation Amendment (Youth Justice Reform) Act 2017

Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012

Education and Training Reform Act 2006

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017

Worker Screening Act 2020

Crimes Act 1958

Wrongs Act 1958

Family Violence Prevention Act 2008

Ministerial Order No. 1359