

Lance Holt School Policies and Procedures

Lance
Holt
School



School Code of Conduct Policy

School Code of Conduct

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1. Policy Statement – School Code of Conduct

1. We are committed to performing the roles and responsibilities of our position as staff of the Lance Holt School .
2. We will perform our duties with integrity, honesty and fairness.
3. As staff of the Lance Holt School we will respect the uniqueness of the individuals and act accordingly in a fair, polite and sensitive manner.
4. As staff of the Lance Holt School we are responsible for upholding the ethos of the school and to fulfill our role lawfully and fairly.
5. We recognise the special vulnerability of the children in our care and are committed to providing a safe, protective and healthy environment for them.
6. Lance Holt School staff have access to sensitive and confidential information about the children in their care and their families. It is essential that we respect the confidentiality of information.
7. We all have a shared responsibility to ensure the school facilities and equipment are properly used and cared for.

2. Policy Background

The Code of Conduct was initially developed by staff during the 2003 teaching year.

The School Code of Conduct is to assist staff, practicum students and volunteers to understand their rights, responsibilities and obligations and to provide guidance if they are faced with an ethical dilemma at work.

The Code of Conduct was reviewed in 2020 with staff with reference to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/national-principles>) and the Australian Human Rights Commission Example Code of Conduct (<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/tools-resources/practical-tools>)

3. Policy Ownership

It applies to all staff including:

- Coordinator
- Permanent, casual or contracted teaching staff
- Support staff, including teaching assistants and administration officer, practicum students and volunteers.

4. Relevant Policy Documents

The Code of Conduct compliments the Lance Holt School Values Statement, which lists the core values that underpin all activities at the school.

The Core Values of Lance Holt School

- We are committed to developing a wonder of the natural world and encouraging care of the environment which reflects a global stewardship.
- We recognise the importance of learning as a lifelong process.
- We actively pursue cooperation and the peaceful resolution of conflict.
- We recognise the special vulnerability of children and their need for a safe and healthy environment.
- We see the education of children encompassing their social, emotional, academic and physical development.

- We promote shared responsibility between self and community.
- We understand the diversity and uniqueness of the Fremantle community and respect the special relationship between ourselves and that community.
- We affirm the equal worth and basic right of all persons. In doing so we recognise individual differences and the uniqueness of the individual.

Relevant Policies and Procedures that relate to the Code of Conduct include:

- Child Protection Policy
- Employment Agreements (Staff) and Job Descriptions
- Standard Operating Procedures
- Guiding Children's Behaviour
- Duty of Care

Staff may refer to these documents for specific details of relevant procedures, concerns, complaints and disputes.

5. Elaborations on the School Code of Conduct

5.1 Employee Expectations.

Lance Holt School Statement: We are committed to performing the roles and responsibilities of our position as staff of the Lance Holt School

The policies, procedures and guidelines of the Lance Holt School established at school level and based on relevant legislation provide the scope within which we perform our duties.

The limits of staff authority and responsibility are determined by job descriptions, regulations, legislation, recognised training or expertise that they possess.

As staff we seek and are provided with professional development opportunities to maintain our knowledge, understanding and awareness of matters that affect the conduct of our duties.

What does this mean?

As an employee, you must be familiar with the school's policies and procedures, know where you can access them for checking purposes and be able and willing to comply with the school's policies and procedures. The policies and procedures are available at School Server, Staff Handbook and online compliance portal Sentrient.

If you are uncertain about the scope or content of a policy with which you must comply, or any legal obligations to which you are subject, you should seek clarification from your direct supervisor, line manager or the Coordinator.

You should also be familiar with the legislation under which you are employed as this may specify requirements with which you need to comply.

As a school employee, you are expected to:

- (a) perform your duties to the best of your ability and be accountable for your performance;
- (b) follow reasonable instructions given by your supervisor or their delegate;
- (c) comply with lawful directions;
- (d) carry out your duties in a professional, competent and conscientious manner, while seeking suitable opportunities to improve your knowledge and skills, including through participation in relevant professional development;
- (e) act honestly and in good faith in fulfilling your duties;
- (f) be respectful, courteous and responsive in dealing with your colleagues, students, parents and members of the public;
- (g) work collaboratively with your colleagues;

- (h) ensure that your conduct, whether during or outside working hours, is consistent with the ethos of the school and does not damage the reputation of the school; and
- (i) dress in a professional manner that is appropriate for your role.

5.2 Good Teaching Practice

Lance Holt School Statement: We perform our duties with integrity, honesty and fairness.

Staff will access identified procedures for dealing with complaints or concerns in regard to a fellow staff member, coordinator or school council. These procedures shall be followed out fairly and without bias. As a member of the community, staff have the right to make public comment. However, when doing so, their own private views should not be presented or implied as the official view of the Lance Holt School .

What does this mean?

As a professional teacher it is expected that you will provide quality teaching appropriate for your students, cater to the diversity of learners in your care and make every effort to help all students equally so they have every chance of succeeding.

Good teaching also means you will work closely with your colleagues, and other carers of your students, and respond appropriately and promptly to any concerns they have.

5.3 Respect for People

Lance Holt School Statement: As staff of the Lance Holt School we will respect the uniqueness of the individuals and act accordingly in a fair, polite and sensitive manner.

We will treat children and parents with professionalism and courtesy.

We will treat each other as fellow professionals with respect, dignity and loyalty.

We will respect the shared work environment of the school including the office, kitchen, meeting area, art area and outdoor area.

What does this mean?

Staff have a responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of students and other staff

The school expects employees to treat each other with respect and courtesy. Our daily interaction with others reflects on the school's reputation. Therefore, all employees are expected to be approachable, respectful, courteous and prompt when dealing with students, parents, other employees and members of the community.

Employees who work with students have a special responsibility in presenting themselves as appropriate role models for those students. Modelling courtesy and respect in your interactions with students can have a profoundly positive influence on a student's personal and social development.

5.4 Duty of Care

Lance Holt School Statement: As staff of the Lance Holt School we are responsibility for upholding the ethos of the school and to fulfill our role lawfully and fairly.

Staff provide appropriate duty of care to protect the health, safety and welfare of the children in their care and also the health, safety and welfare of themselves and others.

Staff will express concerns to the Coordinator or Chair of Council about decisions or actions they believe are contrary to the best interest of the children in our care or the school.

Staff will report to work as scheduled, but when absence is necessary for any reason, notify the Coordinator.

The Coordinator and supervising teachers are obliged to ensure that instructions given to employees are ethical, reasonable and clear.

What does this mean?

As a school employee, you have a duty of care to students in your charge to take all reasonable steps to protect them from risks of harm that can be reasonably predicted.

The duty encompasses a wide range of matters, including (but not limited to):

- the provision of adequate supervision
- ensuring grounds, premises and equipment are safe for students' use
- implementing strategies to prevent bullying from occurring in the school, and
- providing medical assistance (if competent to do so) or seeking assistance from a medically trained person to aid a student who is injured or becomes sick at school.

Duty of care

As an employee of the school, you have a duty of care to students in your charge. That duty is to take all reasonable steps to protect students from risks of harm that can be reasonably predicted. For example, preventative measures should be taken against risks from known hazards and from foreseeable risk situations. The standard of care that is required, such as the degree of supervision, needs to be commensurate with the students' maturity and ability.

Duty of care to students applies during all activities and functions conducted or arranged by the School. The risks associated with any activity need to be assessed and managed before the activity is undertaken.

You should ensure that you are aware of all the school's health, safety and student wellbeing policies, including Duty of Care, Excursions and Incursions and Standard Operating Procedures.

Occupational health and safety

You also have a responsibility under occupational safety and health legislation to take care of your own health and safety at work as well as that of others in the workplace. It is also your responsibility to ensure that your activities do not place your own safety at risk or that of your co-workers, students or other persons that you may come into contact with at work.

Considerations of safety relates to both physical and psychological well-being of individuals.

You should ensure that you are aware of and comply with the School's Safety and Health policies.

5.5 Maintain professional relationships between employees and students

Lance Holt School Statement: We recognise the special vulnerability of the children in our care and are committed to providing a safe, protective and healthy environment for them.

Staff abide by the policies that are in place to ensure the protection and safety of the children in their care.

Staff use appropriate touch (as outlined in the Child Protection Policy) at all times in the care and nurturing of the children in their care. Physical contact between staff and students is always protective in nature and must strictly abide by the guidelines outlined in the Child Protection Policy.

What does this mean?

Teachers need to treat their students with courtesy and respect and provide an environment that encourages their students to do the same.

As a school employee, you are expected to always behave in ways that promote the safety, welfare and well-being of children and young people. You must actively seek to prevent harm to children and young people, and to support those who have been harmed.

While not all employees are required to manage and supervise students, it is important for all school employees to understand and observe the school's child protection policies.

The detection, prevention and reporting of grooming behaviour is a vital consequence of complying with this principle.

5.6 Communication and protecting confidential information.

Lance Holt School Statement: Lance Holt School staff have access to sensitive and confidential information about the children in their care and their families. It is essential that we respect the confidentiality of information.

Access to the personal information concerning fellow employees, students and their families, and their right to privacy, will be respected at all times.

We are responsible for ensuring that documentation under our control is kept secure. Sensitive documents should be locked away.

The privacy of employee information will be respected. All information in personal files will be kept in strict confidence.

What does this mean?

School employees must maintain the confidentiality of school information (refer **Confidential Information** below). You should be mindful of confidentiality when in discussions with parents, staff, family members and others.

You cannot always give a guarantee of confidentiality especially if the matter under discussion is related to mandatory reporting, self-harm or suicidal ideation.

School employees should be aware that there are strong legal requirements around the collection, release and protection of privacy of information (refer to Privacy Policy).

Before asking for information or disclosing information staff need to assure themselves that they are acting in a legal manner. If unsure you should discuss the matter with the School Coordinator / Principal.

5.7 Appropriate use of electronic communication and social networking sites

Lance Holt School Statement: Lance Holt School staff recognise the importance of abiding by the school's technology policy, with awareness that both their professional and personal electronic communications must be appropriate to their role.

What does this mean?

The school provides electronic communication facilities for its students and employees for educational or administrative purposes. It may monitor and view data stored or transmitted using the school's facilities. All staff and students must abide by the school's appropriate use of technology policies. The fast and permanent nature of electronic communication requires staff to be particularly vigilant with their own communications and that of their students.

5.8 Use of alcohol drugs or tobacco

Lance Holt School Statement: Lance Holt School staff recognise that they are responsible for ensuring that their capacity to perform their duties is not altered or impaired by the use of alcohol or drugs.

What does this mean?

Occupational Safety and Health is of fundamental importance to the school. Maintaining a safe work environment requires everyone's continuous cooperation.

You are responsible for ensuring your capacity to perform your duties is not impaired by the use of alcohol or drugs and that the use of such substances does not put at risk you or any other person's health and safety.

The use of illegal substances on the school property is strictly forbidden. Drivers of a school bus must have a no alcohol reading.

5.9 Identifying and managing conflicts of interest

Lance Holt School Statement: Lance Holt School staff recognise that conflicts of interest have the potential to harm relationships, interfere with their capacity to perform their duties and compromise both their own and the school's integrity.

What does this mean?

Personal interests can, or have the potential to, influence a person's capacity to perform their duties impartially and in turn compromise their integrity and that of the school.

A conflict of interest can involve:

- pecuniary interests i.e. financial gain or loss or other material benefits;
- non-pecuniary interests i.e. favours, personal relationships and associations.

Conflict of interest also include:

- a) the interests of members of your immediate family or relatives (where these interests are known);
- b) the interests of your own, business partners or associates, or those of your workplace; or
- c) the interests of your friends.

5.10 Declaring gifts, benefits or bribes

Lance Holt School Statement: Lance Holt School staff recognise that gifts, benefits and bribes received in the course of their duties has the potential to compromise their integrity and that of the school. We commit to use discretion and to act with transparency in declaring gifts benefits or bribes to the school administration.

What does this mean?

As an employee, you may be offered a gift or benefit as an act of gratitude. There are some circumstances when to refuse a gift would be perceived as rude, insulting or hurtful. You are expected to exercise sound judgement when deciding whether to accept a gift or benefit.

Accepting gifts and other benefits has the potential to compromise your position by creating a sense of obligation and undermining your impartiality. It may also affect the reputation of the school and its staff. You must not create the impression that any person or organisation is influencing the school or the decisions or actions of any of its employees.

5.11 We all have a shared responsibility to ensure the school facilities and equipment are properly used and cared for.

Lance Holt School Statement: Lance Holt School staff recognise that part of their day to day duties involves ensuring that school property and equipment is maintained and properly cared for.

What does this mean?

As staff we are accountable for the efficient and effective use of all physical, technical, financial and human resources.

5.12 Record keeping

Lance Holt School Statement: Lance Holt School staff will ensure that all records are up to date, stored securely and kept confidential

What does this mean?

All employees have a responsibility:

- a) to create and securely maintain full, accurate and honest records of their activities, decisions, appropriate school-based interactions and other relevant transactions;
- b) to upload or store records in the school's record systems, as required; and
- c) to not deliberately access school information to which they are not authorised to do so.

5.13 Copyright and intellectual property

Lance Holt School Statement: Lance Holt School staff recognise their responsibility to uphold the legal requirements around Copyright and intellectual property laws at all times when going about their duties.

What does this mean?

When creating material, you need to ensure the intellectual property rights of others are not infringed and information is recorded about any third-party copyright/other rights included in materials.

If you develop material that relates to your employment with the school, the copyright in that material will belong to the school. This may apply even if the material was developed in your own time or at home.

5.14 Child Protection

Lance Holt School Statement: We are committed to a Child Safe School. We are dedicated to safeguarding the rights and safety of children. We actively promote a child safe environment as the main consideration in all our activities and management practices.

What does this mean?

I will

- Act in accordance with Lance Holt School's child safety and policy and procedures at all times.
- Behave respectfully, courteously and ethically towards children and their families and towards other staff.
- Listen and respond to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they communicate (verbally or non-verbally) that they do not feel safe or well.
- Promote the human rights, safety and wellbeing of all children in Lance Holt School
- Demonstrate appropriate personal and professional boundaries.
- Consider and respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of children.
- Create an environment that promotes and enables children's participation and is welcoming, culturally safe and inclusive for all children and their families.
- Report objectively, observable behaviour which breaches or is suspected of breaching this Code, (other than those subject to mandatory reporting obligations) to the Coordinator, a designated senior staff member or the chair of the school's governing body).
- Involve children in making decisions about activities, policies and processes that concern them wherever possible.
- Contribute, where appropriate, to Lance Holt School's policies, discussions, learning and reviews about child safety and wellbeing.
- Identify and mitigate risks to children's safety and wellbeing as required by Lance Holt School's risk assessment and management policy or process.
- Respond to any concerns or complaints of child harm or abuse promptly and in line with Lance Holt School's policy and procedure for receiving and responding to complaints.
- Report all suspected or disclosed child harm or abuse as required by the Teacher's Registration Board and by Lance Holt School's policy and procedure on internal and external reporting.
- Comply with Lance Holt School's protocols on communicating with children.
- Comply with Privacy Legislation and Lance Holt School's policies and procedures on record keeping and information sharing.

I will not

- Engage in any unlawful activity with or in relation to a child.
- Engage in any activity that is likely to physically, sexually or emotionally harm a child.
- Unlawfully discriminate against any child or their family members.
- Be alone with a child unnecessarily.
- Arrange personal contact, including online contact, with children I am working with for a purpose unrelated to Lance Holt School 's activities.
- Disclose personal or sensitive information about a child, including images of a child, unless the child and their parent or legal guardian consent or unless I am required to do so by Lance Holt School 's policy and procedure on reporting.
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children or show or provide children with access to inappropriate images or material.
- Work with children while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child harm or abuse.

5.15 What happens if I breach the Code of Conduct?

Any alleged breaches of the School Code of Conduct will be subject to scrutiny and if substantiated the person may be warned, suspended or have their employment terminated. If the breach is suspected to have involved grooming behaviour, the school is obliged to report this to the Director General of the Department of Education as a reportable incident. Any potentially illegal activity will be reported to the Police and appropriate actions will be taken by senior management.

- The consequences of inappropriate behaviour and breaches of this *Code* will depend on the nature of the breach.
- Employees are required to report all objectively observable behaviour, that is not permitted by the Code, other than those subject to mandatory reporting obligations, to the Coordinator, a designated senior staff member or the chair of the school's governing body. NB: If the prohibited behaviour is by the Coordinator then it should be reported to the **chair of the governing body**.
- Factors the school may consider when deciding what action to take may include:
 - a) the seriousness of the breach;
 - b) the likelihood of the breach occurring again;
 - c) whether the employee has committed the breach more than once;
 - d) the risk the breach poses to employees, students or any others; and whether the breach would be serious enough to warrant formal disciplinary action.
- Actions that may be taken by the school in respect of a breach of the Code include management or remedial action, training or disciplinary action ranging from a warning to termination of employment. The school reserves the right to determine in its entirety the response to any breach of this Code. However, please note that circumstances where a formal warning is issued to a staff member or their employment is ceased, as a result of a breach that is suspected to have involved grooming behaviour, the school is required to notify the Director General of the Department of Education, as a critical incident.

5.16 What do I do if I see someone breach the Code of Conduct?

- Act to prioritise the best interests of children;
- Take actions promptly to ensure that children are safe;
- Promptly report any concerns to the school's Coordinator;
- Follow Lance Holt School 's policies and procedures for receiving and responding to complaints and concerns, reports and/or allegations;
- Comply with Mandatory Reporting requirements if relevant, and with Lance Holt School 's policy and procedure on internal and external reporting.

Lance Holt School will not tolerate victimisation or other adverse consequences that are directed towards any person who makes such reports in good faith.

Acknowledgement that the school's Code of Conduct has been read – Staff will be required to read the policy and acknowledge that they have read it, understood it and will comply with it through the School's online Compliance System.

5.17 Definitions:

Child abuse

Four forms of child abuse are covered by WA law and are defined by the Department of Communities:

- (1) Physical abuse occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or caregiver.
- (2) Sexual abuse occurs when a child is exposed to, or involved in, sexual activity that is inappropriate to the child's age and developmental level, and includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:
 - (a) the child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence;
 - (b) the child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
 - (c) there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.
- (3) Emotional abuse includes:
 - (a) psychological abuse; and
 - (b) being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.
- (4) Neglect is when children do not receive adequate food or shelter, medical treatment, supervision, care or nurturance to such an extent that their development is damaged, or they are injured. Neglect may be acute, episodic or chronic.

Corporal punishment

Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm. [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8 (2006)].

Degrading punishment

Any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8 (2006)].

Grooming:

The use of a variety of manipulative and controlling techniques with a vulnerable subject in order to establish trust or normalise sexually harmful behaviour with the overall aim of facilitating exploitation and/or avoiding exposure. Please refer to the school's *Keeping Children Safe; Child Protection Policy* for information on recognising grooming behaviour.

6. **Effective Date:** Created 2004, Revised 2006, 2011, 2017, 2020

7. **Next Review Date:** 2024

