

Appendix A: Child Safety Code of Conduct

Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley Inc (ANH@E) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. The House recognises the importance of, and has a responsibility for, ensuring a safe, supportive, and enriching environment which respects and fosters the dignity and self-esteem of children and young people, and enables them to thrive in their learning and development.

This Code of Conduct aims to protect children and young people and reduce any opportunities for child abuse or harm to occur. It also assists in understanding how to avoid or better manage risky behaviours and situations. This Code of Conduct complements ANH@E's Child Safety and Wellbeing policy, Child Safe Standards, and other ANH@E policies, codes, or ethics that apply to staff and volunteers.

The House Manager will support the implementation and monitoring of the Code of Conduct, and will plan, implement, and monitor arrangements to provide inclusive, safe, and orderly Early Learning and student learning environments. The House Manager will also provide information and support to enable the Code of Conduct to operate effectively.

All staff, contractors, volunteers, and any other member of ANH@E involved in child-related work are required to comply with the Code of Conduct by observing expectations for appropriate behaviour below. The Code of Conduct applies in all situations, including excursions and in the use of digital technology and social media.

Acceptable Behaviours

As a staff member, volunteer, contractor, or any other member of ANH@E involved in child-related work individually, I am responsible for supporting and promoting the safety of children by:

- Adhering to ANH@E's Child Safety and Wellbeing policy and upholding our Neighbourhood House' Statement of Commitment to child safety at all times.
- Treating children, students, and families with respect both within and outside the ANH@E environment.
- Listening and responding to the views and concerns of children and students, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child have been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another child.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation, inclusion and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.
- Encourage and support the expression of culture and enjoyment of cultural rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and students.
- Promoting the cultural safety, participation, and empowerment of children and students with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Promoting the safety, participation, and empowerment of children and students with a disability.
- Promoting the safety, participation, and empowerment of children and students who are unable to live at home
- Promoting the safety, participation, and empowerment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.

- Ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child or student.
- Reporting any allegations of child abuse or other child safety concerns to the House Manager and ensure any allegations are reported to the police or child protection authorities.
- Understanding and complying with all reporting or disclosure obligations (including mandatory reporting and reportable conduct) as they relate to protecting children from harm or abuse.
- Making reasonable efforts to ensure as quickly as possible that the child and/or student(s) are safe and protected from harm if abuse is suspected and/or an allegation of abuse is made.
- Encouraging children to ‘have a say’ and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them.
- Undertaking ongoing training and education in child safety responsibilities.

Unacceptable Behaviours

As a staff member, volunteer, contractor, or any other member of ANH@E involved in child-related work, **I must not:**

- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions, or disclosures of child abuse by any person, including a child or children under the care of ANH@E.
- Develop a relationship with any child or student that could be seen as favouritism or amount to ‘grooming’ behaviour (for example, offering gifts).
- Exhibit behaviours or engage in activities with a child or student which may be interpreted as unnecessarily physical and/or abusive, and not justified by the educational or service delivery context (for example inappropriate sitting on laps. Sitting on laps could be appropriate sometimes, for example while reading a storybook to a small child in an open plan area).
- Ignore behaviours by other adults towards a child or student when they appear to be overly familiar or inappropriate.
- Discuss content of an intimate nature or use sexual innuendo with children or students, except where it occurs relevantly in the context of parental guidance or delivering the education curriculum.
- Treat a child or student unfavourably because of their disability, age, gender, race, culture, vulnerability, sexuality, or ethnicity.
- Express personal views on cultures, race, or sexuality in the presence of children or students.
- Communicate directly with a child or student through personal or private contact channels (including by social media, email, instant messaging, texting etc) except where that communication is reasonable in all the circumstances related to school work or extra-curricular activities, or where there is a safety concern or other urgent matter.
- Photograph or video a child or student except in accordance with ANH@E policy or where required for duty of care purposes.
- Consume alcohol contrary to ANH@E policy or take illicit drugs under any circumstances whilst at ANH@E or at other events where children and/or students are present,
- Put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking or closing doors and being one-on-one with a child or student in this situation).
- Do things of a personal nature that a child or student can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children or students (for example, personal social activities).
- Use inappropriate language in the presence of children or students.

- Have contact with a child or their family outside of our organisation without our Child Safety Officer's knowledge and/or consent (for example, no babysitting). Accidental contact, such as seeing people in the street, is appropriate.

By observing this Code of Conduct you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach to the Manager, Avenue Neighbourhood House @ Eley – Catherine van Bronswijk, who can be contacted on 03 9808 2000 or manager@theavenue.org.au

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000 (Triple Zero).

Some breaches of this Code of Conduct may need to be reported to Victoria Police, or to the Commission for Children and Young People. 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 asking at the front desk. It is also available as 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. Detailed descriptions of breaches are found in our Child Safety and Wellbeing policy. This can be found by asking at reception. It is also available as a link on our website.

PLEASE NOTE:

If any person in a position of authority within our organisation becomes aware of a substantial risk that a child may become the victim of a sexual offence committed by an adult associated with the organisation (for example, an employee, contractor, or volunteer), and they have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, then they must take all reasonable steps to do so. A person in authority who negligently fails to take appropriate action to address the risk may be charged with the criminal offence of 'failing to protect' and may face a term of imprisonment.

If an adult reasonably believes a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of sixteen (16), they must report it to Victoria Police by calling 000 (Triple Zero) or going to their local police station. Failure to disclose the information may be a criminal offence.

This Code of Conduct must be acknowledged on commencement of employment and then annually during the re-induction process.

Code of Conduct Acknowledgement

I hereby acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Code of Conduct policy for Avenue Neighbourhood House@Eley.

I have read the policy and I understand its contents.

I commit to abiding by the Code of Conduct and fulfilling my responsibilities as outlined in this policy whilst working at Avenue Neighbourhood House@Eley.

I understand that the Avenue Neighbourhood House@Eley will address any breach of this policy, and that any serious breach could lead to disciplinary or legal action.

Staff, Volunteer, or Contractor Name:

Signature:

Date:

ANH@E House Manager Name:

Signature:

Date:

Status	Current
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Enquiries	9808 2000