

Visitor Code of Conduct

A Code of Conduct for Parents, Visitors, Students on Placement, Guest Speakers, Facilitators, Workshop Presenters, Intervention Therapists, Tutors and Coaches

Columba Cottage Early Learning Centre and Outside School Hours Care aims to develop and maintain a safe and secure learning environment for all children, visitors and staff. The Cottage expects all staff and visitors to act in the best personal and educational interests of every child and to treat all children equally with appropriate courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration and humility. This Code of Conduct has been developed to help achieve this goal.

Please read this Code of Conduct thoroughly and observe all Columba Cottage policies and directives when fulfilling the visitor's role.

General Principles

Visitors need to be aware of the limitations of the capacity in which they interact with Columba Cottage, e.g. unless notice has been given and approved by the Cottage, a volunteer should not offer advice or assistance to children in an area outside the area in which they volunteered to work. Columba Cottage visitors will:

- Observe normal procedures regarding the day-to-day running of the Centre.
- Refer all discipline matters to the staff member responsible for their assigned activity in the first instance.
- Not implement any significant departures from the prescribed activity for which they have volunteered.
- Will conduct themselves in a manner and use language that is always appropriate and of a high standard.
- Dress in presentable clothes (or those suitable for the activity) that reflect the staff level of dress.
- Will not attend the site if under the influence of alcohol or non-prescription drugs.
- Encourage and provide support to all children equally.
- Share their time equitably with the children according to their needs and in a way which reflects the educator's preferred organisation of the room/area.
- Not counsel children on personal issues.
- Discuss information relating to the wellbeing of a child only with the staff member responsible for that child or activity, or Columba Cottage Director, always observing the child's right to confidentiality.
- Avoid discussing any aspect of personal information relating to a child, staff member or another visitor with any third party, including family members of either the visitor or the child concerned.
- Observe principles of confidentiality in relation to all aspects of the Cottage's operation – no documents or processes should be shared with or discussed with any third party, including family members.
- Only to undertake the tasks requested of the visitor.

Visitors are welcome to make suggestions and recommendations about the processes in which they are involved to the staff member in charge of the activity.

Child Protection

All Columba Cottage visitors will:

- wear or show appropriate identification;
- use only staff bathroom facilities;
- maintain confidentiality outside of the Centre;
- share concerns about child welfare or safety with the staff member responsible for the activity, or if this is not possible, with the Educational Leader or Centre Director;
- always provide a safe environment where all participants can be sure that boundaries will not be violated;
- report cases of suspected child abuse directly and only to the educator in charge of the activity for which they have volunteered. The law requires all cases of suspected child abuse to be reported.

Practical Tips

- Avoid being alone with individual children in any circumstance. At least two adults should be present when there is only one minor.
- Ensure any one-on-one work with a child is conducted in a public area or in a visible area such as in an office with an interior window or an open door so that another adult or youth can be present outside the room as a witness.
- Maintain suitable sight lines, leaving doors and blinds open if working in a withdrawal room or other confined space.
- Do not accept expensive gifts from a child or give expensive gifts to a child.
- Avoid, during excursions or sports activities, being the only adult in a bathroom, shower room, locker room or other dressing areas whenever children are using such facilities. If visitors need to monitor the area or deal with discipline, they must take care to leave the door ajar and call for another staff member to assist.
- Avoid comments of a sexual nature and refer any questions of this type from a child to the staff member in charge.
- Never touch a child other than to provide first aid.
- Do not administer any medication to children.
- Avoid contacting children out of hours by telephone, email or any other means.
- Do not seek the telephone numbers, home addresses, e-mail addresses, personal webpage, social media contact or any other contact information of children for any purpose unless required as part of your role as a visitor, and then only with direct approval from the Centre and the appropriate parent/s.
- Do not use or distribute in print or electronic form any child photographs or personal information about children.
- Should a child with whom you are working disclose any information that may indicate a case of child abuse, refrain from asking leading questions. Do not attempt to investigate. Report the matter directly and only to the staff member in charge of the activity for which you are undertaking. If he/she is not available see the Educational Leader or Centre Director.
- Co-operate fully with all appropriate authorities in any investigation of abuse of any student.

General

All Columba Cottage visitors will:

Communication

- Sign in immediately upon arrival at the Centre Reception and sign out on departure.
- Wear appropriate identification badges.
- Participate in effective two-way communication and give clear instructions wherever appropriate.
- Practice effective listening and respect constructive feedback.
- Seek advice from the staff member responsible for the activity whenever appropriate.
- Give honest, constructive feedback to, and value the input of, children, staff and other visitors.

Health Guidelines

It is vital that we take all steps possible to ensure the health and safety of our children, staff and wider Columba Cottage community.

The following guidelines are in place for all members of our community:

- Visitors who are unwell with any cold or flu symptoms (e.g. fever 37.9 or higher, sore throat, congested or runny nose, cough or acute respiratory symptoms, muscle or body aches, nausea or vomiting, diarrhoea) must stay home until they are completely symptom-free without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom altering medications (e.g. cough suppressants, analgesics or cold and flu medication). If you have any of these symptoms, please do not come on to the campus.

Equity and Diversity

- Value others irrespective of race, religion, colour, age, gender or belief.
- Respect the cultures, beliefs, opinions and decisions of others.
- Treat all children, staff and visitors as unique individuals and respond to their beliefs, opinions, knowledge and experiences with appropriate courtesy, sensitivity, tact, consideration and humility.
- Use appropriate language that will not offend children, staff and other visitors.
- Actively discourage bullying, victimisation or demeaning humour by reporting to the responsible staff member.

Leadership and Discipline

- Act in a responsible manner that always observes the visitor's duty of care, taking pride in all tasks undertaken.
- Refer all matters of concern to the supervisor of the activity. If the immediate supervisor is not available please refer the matter to the Educational Leader or Centre Director.

Safety

- Put the safety of all children, other visitors and staff first in all their activities.
- Observe their duty of care to themselves and others.

- Always follow all procedures to the best of their ability.
- Promote healthy and safe work practices.
- Visitors are required to wear appropriate footwear when on the site. Footwear which is suitable for the general environment means enclosed shoes, which are flat with a minimal heel, that have a good grip and fit well.
- Report all injuries, illnesses, accidents and near misses immediately to the staff member responsible for the activity.
- Recognise, that in the use of specialised equipment, training is fundamental to its safe operation.
- Make themselves aware of the Centre’s emergency evacuation and lockdown/lockout procedures.

Interaction with others

- Recognise and congratulate achievement.
- Exercise self-control in their individual behaviour.
- Avoid the use of profanity or antisocial humour.
- Seek advice from the staff member in charge of the activity whenever needed.
- Recognise their limitations and those of others.
- Believe in doing a job the right way and with appropriate enthusiasm that models and nurtures enthusiasm.
- Visitors are asked to put mobile telephones in “silent/vibrate” mode so as not to disrupt or distract from activities.
- Please note that tobacco, alcohol, illegal drugs, weapons and inappropriate videos, reading materials or other objects are not permitted at Columba Cottage.

Welfare

- Value our role in ensuring the safety, privacy and confidentiality of all children, staff and other visitors.
- Use positive reinforcement rather than criticism, competition or comparison when working with children.
- Take care of, respect and support each other.

Review and Circulation

Responsible Area	Centre Director
Version	1
Approved by	Centre Director
Effective Date	24/07/24
Review Date (every 2 years)	24/07/26
Publication	Columba Cottage Website