

Purpose and scope

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to establish a clear standard of behaviour which is expected of Ardoch directors, employees, volunteers, partners, students on placement, casuals, contractors and consultants (all stakeholders).

The purpose of the Code of Conduct is to:

- provide guidelines about professional behaviours, expectations, and obligations
- outline appropriate and inappropriate behaviours
- outline the consequences of inappropriate conduct.

The Code of Conduct reinforces Ardoch's commitment to respect, fairness and high social and ethical standards within the workplace. It is designed to provide a clear understanding of what are acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, including a strong focus on child safety. It provides examples of child abuse and harm and outlines the expected response to them.

The Code is a broad framework to help our employees and volunteers use good judgement. It is not intended to cover all situations and should be used as a guide on positive behaviours to enhance working relationships, including interactions with one another and members of the community, when representing Ardoch. This extends to partners, children and young people, visitors, contractors, and members of the general public. The Code of Conduct applies regardless of location, including online environments and digital and telecommunication platforms.

Some employees, by nature of their roles, may also have additional obligations with respect to child safety. This may include a requirement to maintain a superior level of knowledge on child safety matters, or the management, supervision, training or performance management of other staff or volunteers in respect of Ardoch's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures.

Ardoch's commitment to child safety

Ardoch is committed to protecting children's and young people's right to safety and wellbeing. We know children have a right to be kept safe at all times, and have a zero-tolerance approach to all forms of child abuse or harm.

We know that some children are more vulnerable than others. That's why we actively promote the safety and well-being of children and young people who:

- are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
- are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- are living with disability
- identify as LGBTIQ+
- have experienced trauma.

Everyone who works with or represents Ardoch is responsible for ensuring that children are safe, feel safe, and are involved in decisions that affect their lives.

Expected behaviours

General responsibilities

- Perform your role with professionalism, care and responsibility, including contributing to a harmonious, safe, and productive team environment and culture
- Treat each other, as well as our stakeholders, supporters and suppliers, with courtesy, honesty, and fairness, and have proper regard for each person's interests, rights, safety, and welfare
- Communicate with respect and professionalism
- Uphold the principles of equal opportunity
- Be accountable for your own actions and decisions
- Raise any concerns, directly and early with the person involved, when safe and appropriate to do so, in a genuine effort to resolve such concerns in a respectful and understanding manner
- Act in accordance with legislation, policies, procedures and your contractual agreement
- Show proper regard for your own welfare, health, and safety, as well as of others
- Maintain confidentiality, not disclosing or misusing the organisation's information
- Work together as a team, positively promoting the organisation, its work, direction, and each other
- Actively promote, and align behaviour and actions with, Ardoch's vision, purpose and values
- Follow lawful and reasonable instructions from management

Child safety responsibilities

- Adhere to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures
- Uphold Ardoch's Commitment to Child Safety through all your actions
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from abuse and harm
- Participate in child safety training and related professional development sessions
- Participate in supervision and performance review discussions as required

Interactions with children and young people

- Contribute to an overall culture of child safety by listening and responding appropriately to concerns of children and young people, and being alert to and advising Ardoch if you notice any child safety risks
- Support a culturally safe environment for children at Ardoch, including supporting children and young people to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights.
- Treat all children and young people with respect and take notice of their reactions to your tone of voice and manner to ensure a positive experience for them
- Maintain appropriate professional boundaries with children and young people; if in doubt as to what is appropriate, seek guidance from Ardoch or school leadership
- Only communicate with children and young people within the parameters of Ardoch's programs
- Ensure all contact with children and young people is in an area supervised by school staff, when on school sites, or by school staff or Ardoch employees when offsite
- Following the e-safety rules noted below

Being a positive role model

- Dress and conduct yourself in a manner consistent with your position as a positive role model to children and young people, and as a representative of Ardoch and our partner schools

Reporting obligations

- Report any disclosure, suspicion, concern, or identified risks, relating to a child or young person's safety and wellbeing to Ardoch (and if applicable the school) as soon as possible
- Ensure all suspicions or allegations of child abuse or neglect are reported to police and/or child protection authorities) in accordance with state legislative requirements. This especially applies to sexual abuse for which there are very strong laws regarding mandatory reporting to police in most states and territories
- Make and maintain appropriate records regarding child safety incidents or concerns in timely way, in line with procedures

Unacceptable behaviours

For the avoidance of doubt, the following behaviours are not acceptable under any circumstances:

Failing to uphold professional standards

- Partaking in bullying, sexual harassment, racism, discrimination, victimisation or any other anti-social or inappropriate behaviours towards children, young people or adults
- Failing to call out or report to Ardoch leadership any misconduct or inappropriate behaviour (such as bullying, sexual harassment, racism, discrimination or victimisation)
- Attending any Ardoch workplace, program or official event, while under the effects of alcohol or illicit drugs
- Failing to disclose or actively participating in activities or roles that conflict with Ardoch's interests
- Breaching confidentiality by sharing private information about students, school staff, volunteers or anyone else whose information Ardoch holds
- Engaging in disrespectful communication or using inappropriate language

Breaching commitment to child safety

- Breaching professional boundaries
- Being alone with a child or young person, unsupervised
- Failing to participate in mandatory training and supervision sessions required by Ardoch
- Failing to comply with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Procedures

Sexual misconduct or inappropriate physical contact

- Engaging in sexual misconduct, including any sexual activity (touching, fondling, oral, anal, or vaginal penetration, voyeurism, exhibitionism), exploitation, inappropriate

conversations of a sexual nature, making sexually suggestive comments, and grooming

- Engaging in inappropriate physical contact, including holding, kissing, hugging, cuddling, tickling, or touching a child or young person in an inappropriate or culturally insensitive way, or engaging in rough physical games
- Doing things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as going to the toilet or changing clothes (accompanying children to the toilet)

Inappropriate communication or gift giving to children

- Providing gifts to children or young people (unless for a whole class and approved by Ardoch)
- Developing friendships with the children, young people or their families outside of the Ardoch program, including undertaking any 'babysitting' duties for families of children in the education provider where you volunteer
- Exchanging personal contact details or having unauthorised communication with children or young people outside of the Ardoch programs, including via social media (even if initiated by a child or young person)
- Disclosing personal information or discussing topics that are not age appropriate for children
- Taking photographs or videos (including screenshots) of students, or sharing their details on social media, without Ardoch's explicit written permission

Not meeting reporting obligations

- Ignoring children and young people who raise concerns, or disregarding any suspicions of child abuse or inappropriate conduct towards children or young people
- Failing to comply with mandatory reporting requirements

E-Safety rules

When volunteering or working with children and young people virtually, in addition to the above expected behaviours, please also:

- Change your display name to your first name only (no surname)
- Make sure your background and surroundings are clean and professional
- Ensure you speak to a supervising adult who is physically with the students prior to commencing your session, to ensure they are in the room and will be there for the duration of the session
- Request that the supervising adult ensures the device is located so that your face can be always seen
- Do not have anyone else in the room with you who can be seen or overhear your conversations
- Do not text or communicate directly with students in the chat function of the virtual platform.

Breaches of the Code of Conduct

All breaches or alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct are taken seriously. If an alleged breach is identified, you may be stood down or re-assigned to other duties while the breach

is investigated and, if a breach is found to have occurred, any disciplinary action is determined.

The disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, additional training, additional supervision requirements, suspension, or termination as an Ardoch employee or volunteer. If applicable, incidents will be referred to the police or relevant authorities for further investigation.

Ardoch's responsibilities to you

Training and support

Ardoch will provide you with relevant training to assist your knowledge and understanding of the Code of Conduct and support you in providing a safe environment for children and young people.

Communication

Ardoch will provide you with information about any changes to the Code of Conduct and any new requirements with which you may need to comply to support the safety of children and young people.

Investigation of alleged breaches

Ardoch will respond to, and act promptly, to investigate any alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct and address them in a timely manner.

Reporting

Ardoch will support you to make any reports to relevant authorities (for example, police or child protection) that may be required during your employment or volunteering.