

Child Safe Policy & Standards

V 1.5 October 2024

Purpose and Objective

This policy sets out the approach to be followed and commitment made by Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd, trading as La Trobe College Australia (herein referred to as LTCA) to create a child safe educational institution, in line with the Child Safe Victoria Standards.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff members and students of La Trobe College Australia as well as visitors to LTCA.

Policy Statement

LTCA is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, and it has zero tolerance for child abuse. LTCA also promotes diversity and tolerance. It values a cultural openness and engages only the most suitable people to work with children. LTCA follows proper procedures to report any breaches and it communicates regularly with the children in its care, their parents and carers.

All children, despite their cultural or linguistic background or disability, are given the opportunity to participate equally.

Related Policies and Procedures

The following LTCA policies, plans, frameworks and procedures support the LTCA Child Safe Policy:

- Child Safe Procedures
- Attendance Policies
- Care of International Students Under the Age of 18 Policy
- Underage Students' Enrolment Procedure
- Procedure for Placing Students in Homestay
- Access, Equity and Equal Opportunity Policy
- Critical Incident Policy and Procedure
- Disability Services Policy
- First Aid Procedure
- Student Safety Management Plan
- Student Support Services Policy
- Transfer Between Providers Policy and Procedure
- Student Grievance Policy
- Complaints Procedure
- Grievance Procedure Framework
- Staff capabilities, resources and premises policy
- Excursions Policy
- OH&S Policy
- LTCA Emergency Evacuation Procedure
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure
- Selection and Appointment Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Student Code of Conduct
- Staff Induction Procedure
- Child Safe Policy and related Procedures of Australian Homestay Network.

This document is current at 14/10/2024

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V1.5

Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd trading as La Trobe College Australia ABN 92 143 736 789 TEQSA PRV12186 – Institute of Higher Education, CRICOS Code 03312D; La Trobe University TEQSA PRV12132 – Australian University, CRICOS Code 00115M

- La Trobe University Child Safe Policy and Procedure.

Responsibility for Implementation

The LOPS Director and Principal and the LTCA Executive Management Team have the responsibility for overseeing the implementation of Child Safe Standards at LTCA.

Responsibility for monitoring and compliance

The Quality and Compliance Manager is to monitor the compliance to Child Safe Standards at LTCA.

Status of Policy

This is a policy approved by the Executive Management of LTCA, in January, 2017.

Key stake holders

Students and staff members of LTCA are the stakeholders.

Approval Body

LTCA Executive Management Team is the approval body.

Definition

Child safety refers to protecting all children at LTCA from abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, and immediate reporting of child abuse.

Related Legislation

Child Safe Standards, State of Victoria.

Date Effective

14 October 2024

Review Period

Biennially.

La Trobe College Australia

Standard 1

Strategies to embed
an organisational
culture of child safety,
including through
effective leadership
arrangements

Principles

- 1 Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd, trading as La Trobe College Australia (herein referred to as LTCA) values all children and puts efforts into protecting them from harm. This culture includes children with disability, indigenous children and children from diverse linguistic backgrounds.
- 2 LTCA is committed to a child-safe environment, at the institution and when students are on excursions. This is an on-going approach to child safety.
- 3 The staff recruitment processes of Navitas support children's safety.
- 4 LTCA expects all staff members, contract workers and adult students to meet the Child Safe Standards and to adhere to the standards of behaviour outlined in its Staff Code of Conduct and Student Code of Conduct.
- 5 LTCA commits to report immediately any observation or complaints of child abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 6 LTCA manages all allegations in a sensitive manner, observing privacy of children, their parents and carers.
- 7 Children and their safety is to be included in LTCA's Risk Management Plan.
- 8 Existing policies and procedures which are related to and support Child Safe Standards are reviewed and updated regularly.
- 10 A child safety review exercise is to be carried out annually. Staff and students are invited to provide feedback.

La Trobe College Australia

Standard 2

A statement of commitment to child safety

Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd, trading as La Trobe College Australia (herein referred to as LTCA) is committed to safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. This will be the primary focus of LTCA's care of students under 18 years of age, and any decisions made for their welfare.

LTCA has zero tolerance towards child abuse.

LTCA is committed to providing a child safe environment where children are safe and feel safe, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Every person involved in LTCA has a responsibility to understand the important and specific role he/she plays individually and collectively to ensure that the wellbeing and safety of all children and young people is at the forefront of all they do and every decision they make.

In its planning, decision-making and operations LTCA will:

- 1.0 Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety.
- 2.0 Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives.
- 3.0 Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children.
- 4.0 Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing policies while keeping child safety paramount.
- 5.0 Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children.
- 6.0 Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and professional development.
- 7.0 Ensure children know who to talk with if they are worried or are feeling unsafe, and that they are comfortable and encouraged to raise such issues.
- 8.0 Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities.
- 9.0 Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations involved where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk.
- 10.0 Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.
- 11.0 LTCA commits to the following in regard to its Child Safe Policy:
 - To consult all stakeholders
 - Seek approval from the LTCA Executive Management Committee
 - Communicate the policy by posting it on its website
 - Review and update the policy regularly.

La Trobe College Australia

Standard 3

Child Safety Code of Conduct

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All staff and students of Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd, trading as La Trobe College Australia (herein referred to as LTCA), as well as visitors to LTCA, are required to observe child safe principles and expectations for appropriate behaviour towards and in the company of children as noted below:

All personnel of LTCA are responsible for supporting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:

- adhering to LTCA's child safe policy at all times/ upholding LTCA's statement of commitment to child safety at all times
- taking all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse
- treating everyone with respect
- listening and responding to the views and concerns of children, particularly if they are telling you that they or another child has been abused and/or are worried about their safety or the safety of another
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child's self-identification)
- promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (for example, by having a zero tolerance of discrimination)
- promoting the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- ensuring as far as practicable that adults are not left alone with a child
- reporting any allegations of child abuse to LTCA Student and Academic Services Manager or the College Director and Principal, and ensure any children at immediate risk are reported to the police or child protection
- if an allegation of child abuse is made, ensure as quickly as possible that the child(ren) are safe
- encouraging children to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them

Staff and visitors to LTCA must not:

- develop any 'special' relationships with children that could be seen as favouritism (for example, the offering of gifts or special treatment for specific children)
- exhibit behaviours with children which may be construed as unnecessarily physical (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)
- put children at risk of abuse (for example, by locking doors)
- do things of a personal nature that a child 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 (for example, personal social activities)
- use inappropriate language in the presence of children
- express personal views on cultures, race or sexuality in the presence of children
- discriminate against any child, including because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- have any online contact with a child or their family (unless necessary, for example providing families with e-newsletters)

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- ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse.

By observing these standards you acknowledge your responsibility to immediately report any breach of this code to LTCA's Child Safety Officer (Student Counsellor)/ leadership of LTCA.

If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.

I agree to adhere to this Code of Conduct:

Name:

Signature:

Date:

La Trobe College Australia

Standard 4

Screening,
supervision, training
and other human
resources practices
that reduce the risk of
child abuse by new
and existing personnel

The following requirements satisfy the Ministerial Order NO.870 regarding Standard 4:

- 1 Each job or category of jobs at Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd, trading as La Trobe College Australia (herein referred to as LTCA) for staff members involved in work connected with children, must have a clear statement that sets out:
 - a. the job requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety
 - b. the essential or relevant qualifications, experience and attributes in relation to child safety.
- 2 All applicants for jobs that involve child-connected work must be informed about the child safety practices of LTCA (including the code of conduct).
- 3 Managers at LTCA engaged in recruitment of staff must verify and record the following information about a person whom they propose to engage to perform child-connected work:
 - a. Working with Children Check
 - b. proof of personal identity and any professional or other qualifications
 - c. the person's history of work involving children
 - d. references that address the person's suitability for the job and working with children.
- 4 LTCA must ensure that appropriate supervision or support arrangements are in place in relation to:
 - a. the induction of new school staff into the policies, codes, practices and procedures governing child safety and child-connected work
 - b. monitoring and assessing the incumbent's continuing suitability for child-connected work.
- 5 LTCA must implement practices that ensure that staff engaged in child-connected work perform appropriately in relation to child safety.
- 6 LTCA must develop a culture of reporting to line managers and other staff involved in recruitment of any information regarding the risk of child abuse by new and existing personnel.

La Trobe College Australia

Standard 5

Process for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse

Flowchart: Child safety reporting process

Who can report?

Parent

Child

Staff member or visitor

What to report?

Any child safety concerns, including:

- disclosure of abuse or harm
- allegation, suspicion or observation
- breach of Code of Conduct
- environmental safety issues

Call 000 if a child is in immediate danger

How?

Face-to-face verbal report, letter, email, telephone call, meeting

Who to?

Child Safety Person, manager, supervisor

What happens next?

The Child Safety Person, manager or supervisor will:

- offer support to the child, the parents, the person who reports and the accused staff member or volunteer
- initiate internal processes to ensure the safety of the child, clarify the nature of the complaint and commence disciplinary process (if required)
- decide, in accordance with legal requirements and duty of care, whether the matter should/must be reported to the police or Child Protection and report as soon as possible if required.

Outcome

Investigation; outcome decided; relevant staff, visitors, parents and child notified of outcome of investigation; policies, procedures updated where necessary.

La Trobe College Australia

Standard 6

Strategies to identify
and reduce or remove
risks of child abuse

Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd, trading as La Trobe College Australia (herein referred to as LTCA) is to ensure that risk management strategies are in place, to identify, assess and minimise child abuse risk, including risks posed by physical and online environments.

- LTCA will ensure a clear and accessible process for evaluating risks posed by situations and activities relevant to LTCA such as on excursions.
- LTCA will develop, record and communicate clear processes for removing risks to children (for example, not recruiting staff who may pose a risk).
- LTCA will provide staff with training in identifying children at risk of abuse and organisational child abuse risks, for example blocked off/out of sight spaces and rooms with doors that can be locked.
- LTCA is committed to continual improvement in how risks are managed, including policy review and staff training.
- The responsibility for risk management by each member of staff is to be endorsed by LTCA management by including this in position descriptions.
- Policies and processes at LTCA should include supervision requirements for children by a suitable, dedicated staff member.
- Discussions on topics of apparent risks are to be included in team meetings at LTCA.
- LTCA management is to encourage staff in early identification and in raising awareness of possible links.
- LTCA is to roster staff members with experience and qualifications to manage high risk environments, to detect and prevent child abuse.
- Prompt reporting of apparent or possible risks is to be made to line managers/supervisors.

La Trobe College Australia

Standard 7

Strategies to promote
the participation and
empowerment of
children

To empower children to participate fully, Navitas Bundoora Pty Ltd, trading as La Trobe College Australia (herein referred to as LTCA) will take the following steps:

- provide children of all backgrounds with accessible information about their rights and how they can raise concerns about abuse. This is to be done through discussions, in monthly meetings, with the Student Counsellor.
- assist children to understand their right to make decisions about their physical and mental selves and their privacy.
- gather feedback from children about whether they feel safe enough to raise concerns, and on child safe policies and processes.
- LTCA is to implement improvements based on feedback from children.
- LTCA will train staff on methods of empowering children and encouraging children's participation.
- LTCA will attempt to raise awareness in the organisation and community about children's rights.

Procedure Title	Child Safe Policy	
Procedure Owners	College Director/Principal Quality Risk and Compliance Manager	
Contact Persons	Student and Academic Services Staff	
Key Stakeholders	Students and staff of LTCA; Visitors to LTCA	
Approval Body	LTM Executive Management Team	Date approved February 1, 2017
	LTCA Senior Management Team	October 31 2018
	LTCA Senior Management Team	June 12 2019
	LTCA Senior Management Team	March 4 2024
	LTCA Senior Management Team	October 7 2022
	LTCA Senior Management Team	October 14 2024
Relevant Legislation	Child Safe Standards, State of Victoria	
Related Policies		
Related Guidelines		
File information	File number	Version number V1.5
Date Effective	January 1, 2017	Next Review Date October 12 2026
Amendment History		
Date	Version	Summary of Changes
31/10/18	1.0	College name change to LTCA
12/6/2019	1.1	Status of Policy to the present time. Key stakeholders and Approval Body stated in complete sentences Standard 1: numbers 9 and 11 have been combined to form number 10 under Principles. Standard 2: punctuation revised. Standard 3: all names of persons removed.
05/07/2019	1.2	Updated Child safe standards process
04/03/2021	1.3	Updated Stakeholders within relevant teams and updated references to digital communication
07/10/2022	1.4	Updated header and footer details in line with HESF requirements
14/10/2024	1.5	Review update after meeting with SAS Team

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