



## CODE OF CONDUCT

Variety Child Learning Center (VCLC) is committed to providing a safe, dignified, and supportive school environment where all individuals are treated with respect and students may receive and VCLC may deliver quality educational service, including the management students' challenging behaviors. "Safe, Respectful and Responsible" behavior by students, teachers, other VCLC personnel, parents/persons in parental relation and visitors (hereinafter "School Community Members") is essential to achieving this goal.

### **Students Rights and Responsibilities**

VCLC is committed to safeguarding the rights given to all students under state and federal law. In addition to fostering a safe, healthy and supportive school environment, all students have the right to:

1. participate in all VCLC activities regardless of their actual or perceived race, weight, color, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, gender, sex, sexual orientation or disability.
2. be respected as an individual and treated fairly and with dignity by other students and school staff.
3. access school policies, regulations and rules and, when necessary, receive an explanation of those rules from school personnel.

Each VCLC student has the responsibility to:

1. Be familiar with and abide by all classroom rules and the Code of Conduct.
2. Work to the best of their abilities in all developmental and academic areas.
3. Conduct themselves in accordance with VCLC's motto "Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible"
4. Learn respectful communication (i.e., take turn as "speaker" and listener) allowing opportunity for all to be heard.
5. Come to school ready to learn, make friends, and challenge themselves.
6. Take care of the classroom environment and show due respect to other persons and property.
7. Seek a teacher when they do not know what to do, have a problem, and/or feel upset, angry, frustrated or scared.
8. Learn and practice strategies to support negative emotions such as frustration, sadness, boredom, stress, etc.
9. Wear clothes and shoes that are safe for all activities in school and are respectful to self and others.
10. Tell and/or show a teacher when someone needs help in learning the classroom rules or Code of Conduct.

### **Essential Partners**

All essential partners are expected to:

- promote a safe, healthy and stimulating school environment, supporting active teaching and learning for all students regardless of actual or perceived race, color, weight, creed, national origin, ethnic group, religion, religious practice, disability, sexual orientation, gender, or sex.

**"Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible"**

- address issues of discrimination and harassment or any situation that threatens the emotional or physical health or safety of any student, school employee or any person who is lawfully on school property or at a school function.
- address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students in the school or classroom setting.
- Report discrimination and harassment incidents that are witnessed or brought to an essential partner's attention promptly. For staff, report promptly to the human resources department. For students, report promptly to the school principal.

**Parents** are expected to:

- recognize that the education of their child(ren) is a joint responsibility of the parents and the school.
- send their children to school ready to participate and learn.
- ensure their children attend school regularly and on time.
- ensure children are dressed and groomed consistent with the student dress code.
- help their children understand that appropriate rules are required to maintain a safe learning environment.
- support the school motto and help their children understand it.
- convey to their children a supportive attitude toward education.
- build good relationships with teachers, other parents, and their children's friends.
- inform school officials of changes in the home situation that may affect student conduct or performance.
- provide a place for study and ensure that homework assignments are completed, when applicable.

**Teachers** are expected to maintain a climate of mutual respect and dignity which will strengthen students' self-concept and promote confidence to learn, and to:

- know school policies and rules and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- communicate to students the classroom rules, expected behaviors and, when appropriate, the consequences not following classroom rules.
- promote a proactive, positive, and dignified multi-tiered system of support for students.

**Principals/Administrators** are responsible to:

- inform VCLC about educational trends relating to student discipline.
- be responsible for enforcing the Code of Conduct, ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.

**CEO** is responsible to:

- review with VCLC administrators the policies of VCLC and federal and state laws relating to school operations and management.
- work to create instructional programs that minimize problems of misconduct and are sensitive to student and teacher needs.
- work with VCLC administrators in enforcing the code of conduct and ensuring that all cases are resolved promptly and fairly.

**Board of Trustees** is responsible to:

- lead by example by conducting Board meetings in a professional, respectful, and courteous manner.

**Other School Personnel including Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, Psychologists, Social Workers, School Nurse, Support Staff and Maintenance Staff** are responsible to:

- know school policies and rules and enforce them in a fair and consistent manner.
- address personal biases that may prevent equal treatment of all students in the school or classroom setting.
- report incidents of discrimination and harassment that are witnessed or otherwise brought to their attention in a timely manner.

**Visitors** are expected to behave in a socially appropriate manner, be safe, be responsible, be respectful.

### **Student Dress Code**

All students are expected to give proper attention to personal cleanliness and to dress appropriately for school and school functions. Students and their parents have the primary responsibility for acceptable student dress and appearance. Teachers and all other district personnel should exemplify and reinforce acceptable student dress and help students develop an understanding of appropriate appearance in the school setting. A student's dress, grooming and appearance, including hair style/color, jewelry, and nails, shall:

- A. be safe, appropriate and not disrupt or interfere with the educational process.
- B. ensure that underwear is completely covered with outer clothing.
- C. include footwear at all times. Footwear that is a safety hazard will not be allowed.
- D. not include the wearing of headgear in any building except for a medical or religious purpose.
- E. not include items that are offensive or denigrate others on account of actual or perceived race, weight, color, religion, religious practice, creed, national origin, ethnic group, gender, sexual orientation or disability.
- F. not promote and/or endorse the use of alcohol, tobacco or illegal drugs and/or encourage other illegal or violent activities.

### **Prohibited Student Conduct**

VCLC expects all students to conduct themselves in a safe, respectful and responsible manner appropriate to the developmental skills of the child. To maintain the safety, welfare and dignity of all school community members, prohibited student conduct include:

- using offensive language (i.e., discriminative slurs, cursing, etc.) is unacceptable.
- engaging or permitting bullying, harassment and/or discrimination of any kind.
- any retaliation for reporting a violation of the code of conduct is not tolerated.
- bringing harmful items such as illegal substances or weapons to any VCLC school community function.
- using physically aggressive and/or violent behavior(s) that results in serious bodily injury to themselves or others.
- persistent disruptions to the learning and work of others.

**“Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be Responsible”**

## **Reporting and Notifications**

To support VCLC's goal of making a safe, dignified and learning environment where we strive for a school community free of violence, intimidation, bullying, harassment, and discrimination, all school community members are expected to promptly report challenging behaviors and violations of the code of conduct to a teacher, supervisor, building principal or an administrator.

Parents and persons in parental relations are key partners and are provided the opportunity to meet upon challenging behavior incidents or a breach of the code of conduct.

### **Code of Conduct Breach**

VCLC provides the same day notification to the parent/guardian following a violation of the code of conduct by a student or to the student. If no response from the person in parental relation is provided within 24 hours, a letter will be mailed to the student's residence.

The school district of the student is notified. Notification to the district of the breach of code of conduct or exhibition of challenging behavior may result in a Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA).

If the incident involves possession of a weapon, alcohol, tobacco, vapes, or illegal substance on school property or at a school function, any student, employee, or visitor shall report this information immediately to a teacher, supervisor, building principal, or administrator. Item found shall be confiscated immediately. Parent(s) and school district are notified immediately.

If the incident constitutes a crime, VCLC notifies the appropriate local law enforcement agency when warranted. This action will be followed by notification to the parents and school district of the student involved.

In addition, when reporting a crime committed by a student who has been classified as a student with a disability, VCLC transmits a copy of the student's special education and disciplinary records for consideration by the appropriate law enforcement authorities to whom it has reported the crime. Such transmittal must be consistent with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

VCLC shall use Family Court (for example, Family Case Management) to ensure compliance with compulsory education laws in cases of chronic truancy.

## **Disciplinary Consequences, Procedures and Referrals**

Any actions will be dealt with individually and appropriate to the child's level of functioning. Discipline is progressive and focused on corrective action teaching the students an appropriate behavior to replace the inappropriate behavior.

In situations where the nature of the violation is persistently disruptive and/or highly likely to harm themselves or others, VCLC maintains the right to consider disciplinary actions consistent with Article 89 of NYS Education Law and other applicable federal, state and local laws to ensure the safety and security of all students and personnel.

In accordance with NYSED Part 201 regulations, VCLC has strict policy and procedure regarding suspension of an elementary school student. (Important note: In accordance with NYSED 201 regulations, no preschool student may be suspended).

The school principal has the authority to suspend an elementary school student for up to five days if the elementary student has exhibited prohibitive conduct that cannot be safely managed in our schools.

Students in VCLC's UPK with Island Trees or Syosset school districts adhere to their respective district's Code of Conduct. Please refer to your district's website.

### **Dissemination**

VCLC complies with regulatory requirements to disseminate this Code of Conduct to the school community. The Code of Conduct, including any amendments, is

- mailed annually to all families in plain language at the start of the school year as part of the VCLC Family Handbook and upon request.
- posted on VCLC's website.
- provided to each current teacher and to new teachers upon their employment.

### **BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION**

VCLC addresses students' challenging behaviors using a positive, proactive, evidence-based multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) and crisis intervention, including, but not limited to, behavior data collection systems, incident reporting and documentation, proactive and reactive interventions, parent and regulatory agency notifications, and staff training.

The use of corporal punishment, seclusion, prone restraint, and aversive intervention are fully and always prohibited as an intervention and/or interaction with a student.

VCLC only uses a physical restraint in situations in which immediate intervention involving the use of reasonable physical force is necessary to prevent imminent danger of serious physical harm to the student or others.

Staff are trained in maintaining the safety, care, welfare and security of the child when a physical restraint must be used. The type of physical restraint used shall be the least restrictive technique necessary and be discontinued as soon as the imminent danger of serious physical harm has resolved.

Timeout is only used:

- in a situation that poses an unanticipated and/or immediate concern for the physical safety of the student or others, excluding the destruction of property unless the destruction of property would result in imminent harm to the student or others, and/or
- in conjunction with a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) that is designed to teach and reinforce alternative appropriate behaviors.

Parents or persons in parental relations receive same day notification following the use of timeout, including timeout used in conjunction with a student's behavioral intervention plan, or use of a physical restraint. Such notification offers the parents the opportunity to meet regarding the incident.

Within three (3) days, VCLC provides a copy of the Use of Timeout/Physical Restraint Report to the parent or person in parental relations.