



**Brothers of  
the Christian  
Schools**



# Code of Ethics and Conduct

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GENERALATE, ROME





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The background is a solid dark blue color. In the center, there is a large, intricate, light blue floral emblem. The emblem features a central five-pointed star with radiating lines, surrounded by ornate, symmetrical floral and scrollwork patterns. A small red square is positioned to the left of the text 'PRESENTATION OF THE'.

**PRESENTATION OF THE**

# **Ethics Code of Conduct**

OF THE GENERALATE

During its Plenary Session in September 2018, the General Council reviewed the Institute's Child Protection Policies. It was decided to organize in 2019 a formation session for all personnel in the Generalate.

In June 2019, the General Council requested Brother Nestor Anaya, Secretary for the Association and Mission Secretariat and Mrs. Angela Matulli, Associate Director of the Secretariat for Solidarity and Development, to establish a team, charging it with two tasks:

- 1. To produce an Ethics Code of Conduct for the Generalate and Child Protection policies.**
- 2. To ensure the creation of the permanent Ethics Committee responsible for promoting the implementation and periodic review of the Code of Ethics and the Child Protection policies of the Generalate.**

Over the next two years, in the midst of the pandemic, the team continued its work in an intense and collaborative manner. Several drafts were written, and further refined by the contributions of the General Council, Secretariats and Services.

On October 8th, 2021, a formal presentation of the Ethics Code of Conduct was made at a meeting attended by all personnel. A keynote presentation by Mr. Acaymo San Nicolás, from Spain, helped attendees to deepen their understanding of the text and to realize

its importance. The assembly broke into small groups for discussion and appropriation.

It is my pleasure to present to you the *Ethics Code of Conduct* which will guide our relationships and interactions with each other and with all visitors and guests to the Generalate.

This adopted Ethics Code of Conduct allows us to align with an extended practice observed by organizations led by the values of respect for every individual and social responsibility.

This document is of special importance to us for several other specific reasons.

- 1. In the first place, it is an act of creative fidelity to a mission that, from its origins, has been characterized by the value of fraternity, that is, mutual respect and care for each other, especially the young and the vulnerable.**
- 2. It is an act of consistency, since the center of the Institute has promoted and required that each administrative unit (Districts and Delegations) prepare and put into effect a similar document.**
- 3. It is a specific response to Pope Francis' insistent call to live universal fraternity.**

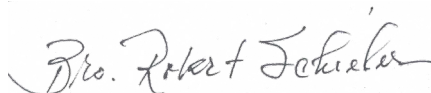
I am aware that putting this document in your hands has been possible thanks to the intense work carried out by a team not only competent in administrative matters but, above all, committed to the values that the text proposes. I take the opportunity to express my appreciation to the team and to all those who helped bring this Code to completion.

It is now up to each one of us to capture the spirit that substantiates and animates this Code and translate it into our daily actions and gestures; particularly in our encounters with one another and with those who we serve in the global Lasallian Family committed to a single mission: *to give a human and Christian education to children, youth, and adults, especially the most vulnerable or disadvantaged.*

I take this opportunity to reiterate my appreciation for your daily contributions to the mission.

In De La Salle,

**Br. Robert Schieler**  
***Superior General***

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bro. Robert Schieler". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'B' and 'S'.

Rome, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2022

# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. In order to provide an ethical guide for the conduct of all those who work in the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and, at the same time, to respond to the Church's request to incorporate the necessary mechanisms to promote a culture of peace and to avoid any kind of abuse, the General Council<sup>1</sup> invites all those who work in the Generalate to embrace the following Code of Ethics as an opportunity for respect as well as human and professional development.
- 1.2. The Code of Ethics is part of the institutional principles and provides guidance in the following areas: interpersonal relations between employees<sup>2</sup>, relations with third parties or suppliers, issues of intellectual property, respect for minors and vulnerable adults, together with respect for the law.
- 1.3. The document promotes respect for persons, Gospel values and adheres to the guidelines of the Catholic Church and the norms of national and international law on the protection of minors and vulnerable persons.<sup>3</sup> It also promotes a good

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lasalle.org/en/animacion-y-gobierno/>

<sup>2</sup> Or collaborators.

<sup>3</sup> a. Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter "Vos estis lux mundi" in the form of Motu Proprio on 1 June 2019. b. Pope Francis' Apostolic Letter "On the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons" in the form of a Motu Proprio on June 1, 2019. c. Pope Francis'



working environment, mutual trust and overall well-being.

- 1.4. Aware that the risk of child abuse, in its various forms, exists in all places and in all contexts, the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools considers it essential to make explicit its commitment to the protection of children, young people and vulnerable adults and the prevention of their abuse. To this end, the following principles, guidelines and common standards are offered to prevent and respond effectively to suspicions and violations that may occur.

## **2. Scope of application**

- 2.1. This document is intended for those who live and work in the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools:
  - a. The community of Brothers (General Council, Central Community),
  - b. Persons living at the Generalate (chaplain and other priests),
  - c. Persons providing professional service in Lasallian or non-Lasallian organizations based at the Generalate,

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address at the end of the Eucharistic celebration, February 24, 2019, during the meeting “The Protection of Minors in the Church” (Vatican, February 21–24, 2019). d. Law No. CCXCVII on the Protection of Minors and Vulnerable Persons of the Vatican City State.

- d. People staying at the Generalate for a long period of time.
- 2.2.** The commitment to adhere to the indications of this document is acquired by the signature of the addressees and by the reference to it in the contracts with the organizations housed in the Generalate.
- 2.3.** The guidelines contained in this Code cover all areas of the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, from the selection of personnel to the application of procedures for an effective response to alleged or actual cases of non-compliance.
- 2.4.** The guidelines contained in this Code represent an internal regulation, complementary to all binding provisions contained in Italian legislation (both in law and in collective bargaining) and in universal and particular canon law, compliance with which is a requirement of conduct for all employees of the Generalate.
- 2.5.** The pursuit of the institution's interest<sup>4</sup>, real or perceived, such as the defence of its reputation, the need to avoid a media scandal or legal consequences, can never be an acceptable reason for breaching regulatory provisions and

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<sup>4</sup> In this case, by the Generalate of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools.

these guidelines, especially when dealing with minors and vulnerable adults.

### 3. Institutional charism

- 3.1. Guided by the spirituality inherited from Saint John Baptist de La Salle, all collaborators of the Generalate commit themselves to care for, *and watch over the minors*,<sup>5</sup> to form a community in which the exercise of virtues and interpersonal relationships allow them to embrace and contribute to the project of fraternity undertaken by the Holy Founder and the first Brothers. In this way they recognize themselves as children of the same Father and equal in dignity.
- 3.2. This Code also responds to the Institute's call to "safeguard the rights of children and the young".<sup>6</sup> This call is expressed on a number of occasions, including in General Chapters and in documents of the Institute.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Meditations 6, 85, 110 of St. John Baptist de La Salle referring to St. Joseph show great teachings for the care and vigilance of the little ones indicating a path to follow.

<sup>6</sup> Page 33, Circular 470, FSC General Council, March 24, 2015, "Towards 2021: Living together the joy of our mission"..

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Acts of the 43rd General Chapter. P.37. Bulletin 253 Children and young people at risk. Meeting towards the Declaration. No. 3. Opening the Frontiers of the Lasallian School in the 21st Century. In Digital Journal of Lasallian Research.

## 4. Institutional organization

- 4.1. Those to whom this Code is addressed commit themselves to carry out their functions in a professional manner and according to the general norms and organizational culture of the Lasallian tradition.
- 4.2. Respecting religious and cultural diversity, each person is called to take care of his or her person and personal cleanliness, according to the customs of the country, of the Generalate and of the particular context of collaboration in a religious institution.
- 4.3. All staff are committed to the correct use of materials, tools and available spaces; to avoid damage and to work together for the common good.
- 4.4. The use of institutional communication tools (computers, digital platforms, e-mail, website, social networks of the Institute and the Generalate, among others) is permitted exclusively for work activities, excluding their use for any other purpose.
- 4.5. The use of the Generalate's devices - and in particular those with Internet access - must comply with the instructions of the IT system and the personal data protection management

system, in accordance with the European Privacy Regulation 679/2016.<sup>8</sup>

## 5. Interpersonal relations

### 5.1. Recommendations

- 5.1.1. All employees of the Generalate must behave in a respectful and welcoming manner, using affable language, avoiding shouting and vulgarity, as well as discriminatory expressions of any kind. In this sense, all personnel are invited to develop positive attitudes of mutual support and solidarity, always opting for assertive communication.
- 5.1.2. Expressions of affection and appreciation should be sincere and should not lend themselves to ambiguity, misinterpretation or disrespect for others. In any case, any judgement of physical appearance in terms of flattery, contempt or mockery should be avoided.
- 5.1.3. Without prejudice to the right to speak one's mind, criticism that discredits individuals should be avoided.

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<sup>8</sup> [https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/consumers/internet-telecoms/data-protection-online-privacy/index\\_en.htm](https://europa.eu/youreurope/citizens/consumers/internet-telecoms/data-protection-online-privacy/index_en.htm)

- 5.1.4. Minors and vulnerable adults shall be respected in all situations to ensure their well-being and protection.
- 5.1.5. Ambiguous situations that may lead to misunderstandings in relationships with people, especially minors and vulnerable adults, should be avoided.

## 5.2. Violations

- 5.2.1. Any verbal assault is considered a serious violation of this Code. Physical assaults, whether against a minor or an adult, are considered very serious infringements.
- 5.2.2. It is prohibited to discuss sexual matters with a minor, unless it is for educational purposes and with the prior agreement of the persons exercising parental responsibility over the minor.
- 5.2.3. Correspondence with minors in social networks is prohibited without the consent of their guardian.
- 5.2.4. It is strictly forbidden, and therefore considered a very serious infringement, to invite minors to personal rooms. It is also forbidden to offer them personal transport, except in extraordinary cases and expressly authorised by the minor's guardian.

- 5.2.5. Any harassment (including workplace harassment) in the form of physical contact, gestures or language that causes discomfort, pain, moral or physical harm, or lowers the self-esteem of others is considered a very serious violation and is therefore strictly prohibited.
- 5.2.6. It is considered a very serious transgression, and therefore strictly prohibited, to view, possess and/or distribute child pornographic material within the Generalate.
- 5.2.7. Offering drugs, alcohol or tobacco to minors is considered a very serious offence and is therefore strictly prohibited.
- 5.2.8. It is forbidden to possess, traffic, consume or promote any type of drug. It is also prohibited to work under the influence of these substances.
- 5.2.9. It is considered a serious offence, and therefore prohibited, to consume alcohol during working hours and on the premises of the Generalate, outside of social contexts.
- 5.2.10. Activities in which the safety of participants is not guaranteed or in which the good reputation of the Generalate may be compromised are strictly prohibited.

5.2.11. It is considered a very serious offence, and therefore strictly prohibited, to carry any type of weapon inside the Generalate.

## **6. Relations with third parties**

- 6.1. Relations with suppliers are regulated according to the conditions established in the contracts signed by the parties.
- 6.2. Those responsible for supplier relations shall not accept gifts that influence decisions in favour of a supplier.
- 6.3. Relations with guests and visitors will be cordial and welcoming, avoiding any violent, or discriminatory, verbal or physical expression.

## **7. Intellectual Property**

- 7.1. All intellectual production carried out in the Lasallian context, including posts and images published on the social networks of the Institute and the Generalate, must respect the values and principles of this Code of Ethics, in order to ensure the safety and dignity of the person, with special attention to minors and vulnerable adults.
- 7.2. The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is the owner of, and responsible for,



its own publications produced in the work environment of the Generalate, and the rights to these productions belong to the Institute.

- 7.3. The Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools is also responsible for the distribution, sale or donation of its material produced or exhibited in the Generalate.

## 8. Protection of personal data

- 8.1. Privacy and data protection at the Generalate complies with the current legislation and is described in the Privacy Policy: <https://www.lasalle.org/en/privacy-policy/>
- 8.2. The addressees of this code, within the scope of their obligations, must respect national and international laws, in particular those relating to the protection of minors, as well as the provisions contained in their national collective agreements, where applicable.

## 9. Ethics Committee

- 9.1. The President of the Ethics Committee is the legal representative of the Generalate. The rest of the members of the Committee (at least 4) are appointed each year, in September, by the

President, representing the different areas of the Generalate.<sup>9</sup>

**9.2.** Meetings of the Ethics Committee are held every six months or more frequently if necessary.

**9.3.** The responsibilities of the Ethics Committee are:

- a. To encourage the training of the addressees on the subjects of this Code of Ethics and to promote a culture of prevention and protection of minors within the Generalate.
- b. To ensure the distribution and regular review of this Code of Ethics.
- c. To act in accordance with the procedure established for suspected violations of the Code.
- d. To resolve allegations of non-compliance with this Code in accordance with applicable law.
- e. To ensure that this Code of Ethics is updated in the event of regulatory changes and that it reflects new circumstances.

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<sup>9</sup> By way of example, the following areas are considered part of the Generalate: Secretariats (e.g., Association and Mission, Formation, Onlus), General Services (e.g., Secretary General, Translations, Personnel Office, Communications, Research and Resources, Postulation, Procurator, Mail), Administrative Services (e.g., Bursar, Accounting Office, Administrator), Service Personnel (e.g., Concierge, Cleaning, Maintenance)

## 10. Procedure in case of suspicion and/or violation of the Code

- 10.1. Alleged violations of the provisions of this Code of Ethics must be promptly reported by those who witness them only to the members of the Ethics Committee at the following e-mail address: [comitatoetico@lasalle.org](mailto:comitatoetico@lasalle.org)
- 10.2. It is important that the reporting of an alleged violation is not preceded by an investigation or action that may contaminate the evidence. The acquisition of such evidence and the assessment of the reliability of sources of information is the sole responsibility of the Ethics Committee and/or the competent judicial authority, as appropriate.
- 10.3. Any unfounded or false accusations are punishable by law.
- 10.4. Failure to comply with this Code may result in disciplinary action, including expulsion from the institution.
- 10.5. The Ethics Committee must react promptly to any notification or complaint of a violation of the Code of Ethics.

- 10.6.** The Ethics Committee establishes its own internal regulations governing its operation and functions, such as, for example:
- a. The dissemination of the Code of Ethics .
  - b. The protection of the confidentiality of information
  - c. The protection of the anonymity of reports of suspected and/or actual violations of the Code
  - d. The assessment of the veracity of the accusation
  - e. The communication of irregularities to the competent judicial authority

# ANNEX

## 1. Physical abuse and mistreatment

It is defined by the presence of physical harm due to physical assault, ill-treatment, corporal punishment or serious attempts on bodily integrity and life. This includes, for example, hitting, beating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning and suffocation.

## 2. Psychological and emotional abuse of children

It refers to the repetition of behaviours or relational models that transmit to the child the idea that he/she is worth little, that he/she is not wanted or desirable because of criticism, preferences between siblings, verbal threats or conflicts/aggressions between parents. The affective relationship is thus characterized by repeated and continuous psychological pressure, emotional blackmail, indifference, rejection, denigration and devaluation.

## 3. Sexual Abuse

Any act with a minor, with or without physical contact, that is intended for the sexual gratification of an adult or much older minor is considered sexual abuse. This includes coercion or inducement into sexual activity, as well as exploitation in the

exercise of prostitution, pornography, or other sexual practices.

#### **4. Child Abuse**

In the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or educational power, any form of physical and/or psychological mistreatment, sexual abuse, neglect or abandonment of a person under the age of 18, and commercial or other exploitation, which causes, or is likely to cause, harm to their health, survival and development, shall be considered abuse.

#### **5. Minor**

“Every human being below the age of eighteen years, unless, under the law applicable to the minor, majority is attained earlier.”

(Convention on the Rights of the Child, 1989, Art. 1).

#### **6. Ethics**

A basic consensus on a set of binding values, immovable criteria and fundamental, indeed self-evident, ethical attitudes that must shape the conviction of the individual and of human society.

(Rojas Claros, Armando. (2008). Küng, Hans. World Ethics in Latin America. Ideas y Valores, 57(137), 149-151).

## **7. Sexual Harassment**

It is repeated, unwanted and unacceptable conduct and practices of a sexual nature, such as invitations, demands, requests for sexual favours, verbal or physical conduct or gestures, which may reasonably be perceived as offensive or humiliating.

This includes, therefore, requests - implicit or explicit - for unwanted sexual services; sexual attentions that are indecent and offensive to the person concerned; unwanted physical contact; derogatory and/or offensive attitudes, writings and verbal expressions directed at the person because of their membership of a particular sex or different ways of expressing their sexuality; the display of pornographic material in the workplace, including in electronic form, and the extortion of sexual services in exchange for benefits, privileges, career advancement; threats or retaliation following refusal of sexual attention; offensive and disreputable gestures or winks of a sexual nature.

## **8. Vulnerable person**

A vulnerable person is one who has a weakened personal, family or relational and socio-economic context and, as a consequence, presents a situation of risk that can trigger a process of social exclusion.

## **9. Child protection**

An institution-specific system/framework of measures to promote good treatment and prevent child abuse.

An internal child protection document of an institution:

- a. Supports the organization's duties and responsibilities to the children in its care;
- b. Identifies the measures the organisation should take to protect children from abuse within or outside the organisation;
- c. Defines the preventive actions to be taken to minimize the risk of abuse within the organization;
- d. Describes the protocol to be followed if abuse is suspected or identified;
- e. Lists the elements that contribute to the creation of an increasingly protective and supportive environment.

(BICE: [www.bice.org](http://www.bice.org))

## **10. Intellectual Property**

Intellectual property refers to works of the mind, which includes not only works of art and inventions, but also software, trademarks and other commercial products.



Intellectual property is divided into two broad categories:

- a. Industrial property, including patents, industrial designs, trademarks and geographical indications.
- b. Copyright and related rights cover literary, artistic and scientific works, including translations and broadcasts.

(World Intellectual Property Organization

<https://www.wipo.int/publications/en/details.jsp?id=4528>)

## **11. Workplace harassment**

A set of unacceptable practices and behaviours, or the threat of such practices and behaviours, whether occurring on a single occasion or repeatedly, that are intended to, or likely to, cause physical, psychological, sexual or economic harm.

(International Labour Organization, Convention No. 190.

[https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100\\_INSTRUMENT\\_ID:3999810](https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=NORMLEXPUB:12100:0::NO::P12100_INSTRUMENT_ID:3999810)

The definition refers to behaviour in the workplace, directed at an individual worker or a group, and is not limited to sexual harassment, but can include offensive jokes, insults, physical aggression, threats, intimidation, taunting, teasing, etc.



ACCEPTING THE PRINCIPLES,  
GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS I SIGN THE

# Code of Ethics and Conduct

GENERALATE, ROME

Rome, \_\_\_\_\_

(date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name and signature



ROME, ITALY

FRATRES SCHOLARVM CHRISTIANARVM

**THE GENERALATE**

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00165 Rome, Italy