

# Child Safe Environment/Child Safety & Wellbeing/Child Safe Standards Sep 2025

## Purpose

All early childhood services operating in Victoria are required to comply with the Child Safe Standards as set out under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015. Child Safe Standards raise awareness and help early childhood services become child safe environments.

Young Adventurers Child Safe Environment/Child Safety & Wellbeing/Child Safe Standards Policy sets out our commitment and approach to creating and maintaining a child safe organization where children and young people are safe and feel safe. Our Educational Leaders are also our nominated Child Safe Champions, monitoring and ensuring compliance with the National Model Code.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy and Confidentiality/Privacy/Sharing Information Policy which sets out to identify the appropriate procedure to follow when sharing information, requesting information or receiving a request for information about a child, group of children or families to reduce or identify a risk of abuse or family violence – refer to the Confidentiality/Privacy/Sharing Information Policy for more information.

The Child Safe Standards work by ensuring a consistent organizational culture where child safety is embedded in everyday thinking and practice thus protecting children and young people from child abuse, providing cultural safety for all children including Aboriginal children and young people, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children in Out of Home Care, LGBTIA+ children and children who are vulnerable, thus ensuring any type of abuse, discrimination, racism or bias within the organisation is identified, confronted and not tolerated.

Our Service adopts and aligns with the National Model Code for taking images or videos of children. (See Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy.) We provide children, staff, educators and visitors with an environment free from the use of tobacco (including vaping) alcohol and illicit drugs.

This policy applies to all staff, educators, students, volunteers and contractors who work in our environment, whether or not they work in direct contact with children or young people and whether or not they work in a paid or unpaid role.

This policy also applies to all company persons or personnel who act in management or control of the company on behalf of the company.  
NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.

2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
2.2.3	Child Protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child safety, including the need to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect
QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S.162A	Child protection training
S.165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S.166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S.167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
82	Environment to be free from tobacco, vaping devices, vaping substances, drugs and alcohol
83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
84	Awareness of child protection law
97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102AAB	Safe arrival of children policies and procedures
102AAC	Risk assessment for the purposes of safe arrival of children policies and procedures
102B	Transport risk assessment must be conducted before service transports child
102C	Conduct of risk assessment for transporting of children by the education and care service
102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
102E	Children embarking a means of transport—centre-based service
102F	Children disembarking a means of transport—centre-based service
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities

109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
115	Premises designed to facilitate supervision
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
123	Educator to child ratios- centre based services
136	First aid qualifications
145	Staff record
149	Volunteers and students
155	Interactions with children
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
167	Record of service's compliance
168 (2)(h)	Education and care services must have policies and procedures - Providing a child safe environment
168(2)(ha)	The safe use of digital technologies and online environments at the service
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedure
175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
358	Working with children check to be read

#### RELEVANT LAWS

Education and Training Reform Act 2006- Child safe standards- Managing the risk of child abuse in schools. Ministerial Order No.1359
The Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012
Failure to Disclose 2014
Failure to Protect 2015
The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
Family Law Act 1975
Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015
Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

## Definitions

- Code of Conduct** Together with a code of ethics, the code of conduct helps guide interactions between management, educators and staff, as well as informing the service decision-making processes relating to professional standards
- Disclosure** The process where a child or young person conveys or attempts to convey that they are being or have been abused.
- Information sharing** Refers to the *Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS)*- sharing or exchanging information, including personal information about or related to, abuse in organisational contexts. The terms refer to sharing information between (or within) organisations, as well as sharing information with professionals who provide key services for children.
- Mandatory reporter** A person who is required to report to Child Protection if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been abused or is at risk of being abused.
- Mandatory reporting** Legislative requirement for selected classes of people to report their concerns to Child Protection if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection
- National Model Code** The National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care (National Model Code) addresses child safe practices for the use of electronic devices while providing early education and care (ECEC).
- Reportable conduct** Certain organisations or entities have legal obligations under the *Reportable Conduct Scheme* to notify and investigate certain allegations of abuse involving a child, when the allegation is against someone they employ, engage or contract in circumstances outlined in the legislation.
- Rights of the Child** Human rights belonging to all children, as specified in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.
- Victoria's Child Safe Standards**  
The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) are a compulsory framework that support organisations to promote the safety of children, prevent, respond to and report allegations of child abuse and harm. There are 11 Child Safe Standards.
- Wellbeing** Sound wellbeing results from the satisfaction of basic needs. It includes happiness and satisfaction, effective social functioning and the dispositions of optimism, openness, curiosity, and resilience.
- Working with Children / working with vulnerable people check (WWCC)**  
A notice, certificate or other document granted to, or with respect to a person under a working with children law. The person has been assessed as suitable to work with children; there has been no information that if the person worked with children the person would pose a risk to the children; or the person is not prohibited from attempting to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment.

Definitions sourced from ACECQA. (2023). Policy and procedure guidelines. *Providing a Child Safe Environment*. Commission for Children and Young People- Child Protection Manual

## **Statement of commitment to Child Safety and Child Safety Principles**

Young Adventurers is fully committed to maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all children and young people in our care. We recognise our responsibility to uphold the National Child Safe Principles and to implement the Child Safe Standards to enhance our ability to prevent and address any allegations of child abuse within our service and the wider community.

Child protection is our main priority. We ensure that all staff members undergo thorough checks prior to commencement of employment including Working with Children Checks & Police record checks. We also ensure there is a thorough induction process including covering service policies and procedures, ensuring all employees have adequate training and knowledge in relation to interactions with children, child protection and mandatory reporting obligations, to ensure their suitability to work with children and young people.

We have clear guidelines in place regarding acceptable and unacceptable behaviour between adults and children, ensuring strict boundaries are maintained to safeguard children's well-being. This approach extends to staff, volunteers, and the broader community Refer Code of Conduct.

Our service has developed and follows a Child Safe Environment/Child Safety & Wellbeing/Child Safe Standards Policy which aligns with the Child Safe Standards and reinforces our strong commitment to zero tolerance for child abuse. We are dedicated to promoting the safety and well-being of every child within our service and the wider community and providing cultural safety for all children including Aboriginal children and young people, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children living in Out of Home Care, LGBTQIA+ children and families, and children who are vulnerable.

Our Child Protection Policy outlines our mandatory reporting responsibilities, ensuring prompt and correct action is taken to address any incidents of physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological abuse or neglect. We are also committed to sharing information appropriately and lawfully with other relevant organisations to ensure the safety of children.

In line with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, we work to educate children about their right to safety and encourage them to speak up if they feel unsafe. We empower children to express their views and concerns, ensuring their voices are heard and valued.

As part of our ongoing commitment to child safety, we listen to children, families, and carers, addressing any concerns they may have. We also commit to regularly reviewing and updating our policies and procedures in line with the Child Safe Standards, ensuring continuous improvement in our child protection practices.

## What are the Standards?

### There are 11 Child Safe Standards:

#### **Child Safe Standard 1 – Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 1, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 1.1 A child's ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.
- 1.2 Strategies are embedded within the organisation which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.
- 1.3 Measures are adopted by the organisation to ensure racism within the organisation is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.
- 1.4 The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.
- 1.5 All of the organisation's policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and

#### **Child Safe Standard 2 – Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 2, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 2.1 The organisation makes a public commitment to child safety.
- 2.2 A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation from the top down and bottom up.
- 2.3 Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the child safety and wellbeing policy at all levels.
- 2.4 A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.
- 2.5 Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.
- 2.6 Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping.

#### **Child Safe Standard 3 – Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 3, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 3.1 Children and young people are informed about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation.
- 3.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated.
- 3.3 Where relevant to the setting or context, children and young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.
- 3.4 Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.
- 3.5 Organisations have strategies in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people.
- 3.6 Organisations provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement.

#### **Child Safe Standard 4 – Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 4, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 4.1 Families participate in decisions affecting their child.
- 4.2 The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.
- 4.3 Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation's policies and practices.
- 4.4 Families, carers and the community are informed about the organisation's operations and governance.

#### **Child Safe Standard 5 – Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 5, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 5.1 The organisation, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people's diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.
- 5.2 Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.
- 5.3 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.
- 5.4 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them.

**Child Safe Standard 6 – People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice** in complying with Child Safe Standard 6, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 6.1 Recruitment, including advertising, referees checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasise child safety and wellbeing.
- 6.2 Relevant staff and volunteers have current working with children checks or equivalent background checks.
- 6.3 All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.
- 6.4 Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing.

**Child Safe Standard 7 – Processes for complaints and concerns are child focused**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 7, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 7.1 The organisation has an accessible, child focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report.
- 7.2 Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, staff and volunteers, and are culturally safe.
- 7.3 Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly.
- 7.4 The organisation has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.
- 7.5 Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

**Child Safe Standard 8 – Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 8, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 8.1 Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policy.
- 8.2 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people.
- 8.3 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.
- 8.4 Staff and volunteers receive training and information on how to build culturally safe environments for children and young people.

**Child Safe Standard 9 – Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 9, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 9.1 Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
- 9.2 The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation's Code of Conduct and child safety and wellbeing policy and practices.
- 9.3 Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational settings, activities, and the physical environment.
- 9.4 Organisations that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people.

**Child Safe Standard 10 – Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 10, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 10.1 The organisation regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.
- 10.2 Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.
- 10.3 The organisation reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and children and young people.

**Child Safe Standard 11 – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people**

In complying with Child Safe Standard 11, an organisation must, at a minimum, ensure:

- 11.1 Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.
- 11.2 Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.
- 11.3 Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures.
- 11.4 Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
- 11.5 Staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures.

## **Child Safety Principles**

In its planning, decision-making and operations, Young Adventurers Early Childhood Education Services Pty Ltd will:

1. Take a preventative, proactive and participatory approach to child safety.
2. Value and empower children to participate in decisions which affect their lives.
3. Foster a culture of openness that supports all persons to safely disclose risks of harm to children.
4. Respect diversity in cultures and child rearing practices while keeping child safety paramount.
5. Provide written guidance on appropriate conduct and behaviour towards children – refer Behaviour management policy.
6. Engage only the most suitable people to work with children and have high quality staff and volunteer supervision and professional development – refer Staffing Policy – Recruitment, induction & monitoring and Students and Volunteers Policy.
7. 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 concerns.
8. Report suspected abuse, neglect or mistreatment promptly to the appropriate authorities – refer Child Protection Policy.
9. Share information appropriately and lawfully with other organisations where the safety and wellbeing of children is at risk (refer Confidentiality/Privacy/Sharing Information Policy for more information).
10. Value the input of and communicate regularly with families and carers.
11. Adhere to all company policies and procedures to ensure a safe, secure and supported environment.

## **Policy**

### **Strategies to embed a child safe culture**

Our culture encourages educators, staff, students, parents and the school and early childhood community to raise, discuss and scrutinise child safety concerns. This makes it more difficult for abuse to occur and remain hidden.

All child safety documents, including this policy, the Code of Conduct, the Child Protection Policy and Procedures are readily available in hard copy in the foyer, staff room and all children's rooms of the service for all educators, staff, students and parents to read at any time and is now available online in the parent app OWNA.

Child safety is everyone's responsibility.

### **All educators and staff are required to:**

- Act in accordance with the Code of Conduct, which clearly sets out the difference between appropriate and inappropriate or unsafe behaviours.
- Act in accordance with the Child Protection Policy and procedures at all times reporting any concerns immediately to the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor.
- Act in accordance with the National Model Code for Early Childhood Education and care, Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy and Technology and Online Safety Policy at all times by not using personal electronic devices that can take images or videos and personal storage and file transfer media at any time when working directly with children. Exception: the Approved Provider may approve in writing the use of personal devices for limited essential purposes only including but not limited to being used during an emergency on an excursion, for a child or person with a

disability to be able to communicate, for a child or person to manage a medical condition only as stated in the National Model Code for Early Childhood Education and Care. Refer to the National Model Code for Early Childhood Education and Care Services for a full list of essential purposes for which an exemption may be given.

- Personal devices must be kept in the staff room.
- Only service issued devices can be used and must only be used within the service location not outside of the service.
- Images and videos of children must only be taken for the purpose of communicating development and learning to families. All images and videos are to be shared to families via the OWNA app only. All images and videos are to be removed from service issued devices every six months.
- The identify of other children must not be shared with parents/guardians in any images or videos including in group stories.
- The service keeps a register of service issued devices with each device being checked by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor regularly to ensure it is being used for its intended purpose.  
Children are not forced to sleep or rest or forced to stay in a designated area as a form of discipline.
- Children should not be fully covered and must be able to see and be seen by others.
- Children sleeping in cots need to be supervised by ensuring an educator can see and hear any child sleeping including recording 5 minute sleep checks after physically checking on a sleeping or resting child.
- Educators model positive behaviour and be role models for children, demonstrating kindness, inclusion & respect including demonstrating at all times safe use of furniture and equipment such as adults only sitting on adult sized chairs, adults not laying on floors in children's rooms or sitting in or on children's furniture.
- To maintain active supervision and a child safe environment a minimum of two educators or an educator and another employee must be able to assist each other if a child requires bathing or showering whilst ensuring an educator is still able to supervise the remaining children in the group.
- Educators are in view of others from the bathroom when assisting with nappy changing or toileting children in case, they need help and to ensure good child safe practices in line with providing a child safe environment.
- Children who display unsafe behaviours including harming themselves, continuing to harm others such as hurting, biting, kicking, punching other children and/or educators, breaking or attempting to break windows, furniture or resources, attempting to exit the Service by climbing over fencing or opening gates/doors to external areas such as non-play areas or car park, or continuing to display unsafe protective behaviours such as sexualised play involving self or others after intervention may have their enrolment temporarily cancelled.
- Parent permission must be given for the taking and use of children's photos or videos using service issued devices only and only whilst at the service location.
- All educators and staff to undertake annual guidance and training on child safety.
- Act in accordance with their legal obligations, including:
  - Failure to disclose offence (applies to all adults)

- Duty of care (applies to all educator & staff)
- Mandatory reporting obligations (applies to all mandatory reporters, including teachers, principals, registered psychologists, and registered doctors and nurses)
- Organisational duty of care (applies to the organisation as a whole)

As part of our child safe culture, **our Management team** (including the Nominated Supervisor, Educational Leader and Approved Provider) will:

- Consider the diversity of all children, including (but not limited to) the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children with disabilities, children in Out of Home Care, LGBTI+ children & families and children who are vulnerable, when implementing the Child Safe Standards.
- Ensure that child safety is a regular agenda item at leadership meetings and staff meetings.
- Encourage and enable staff professional learning and training to build deeper understandings of child safety and prevention of abuse.
- Ensure that no one is prohibited or discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to a person external to the company or from making records of any allegation.
- Ensure records are kept in line with the Service's Confidentiality and Storage of Records policy.
- Regularly communicate the service's commitment to its Child Safe Environment/Child Safety & Wellbeing/Child Safe Standards Policy to children and through meetings, newsletters, text and media.
- Services are equipped with motion activated alarm sensors and CCTV for security purposes only to monitor external boundaries and car parks after hours. All footage is recorded not viewed live and is automatically deleted and recorded over every 7 days and not used or intended to be used to monitor children's play areas.

### **Training**

Training and education is important to ensure that everyone understands that child safety is everyone's responsibility.

Our culture aims for those working with children to feel confident and comfortable in coming forward with any allegations or suspicions of child abuse or child safety concerns. Educators and staff are trained to identify, assess, and minimise risks of child abuse and to detect potential signs of child abuse. This training occurs annually or more often as required.

We also support our educators and staff through ongoing supervision to develop their skills to protect children from abuse, to promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from linguistically and/or diverse backgrounds, children with a disability, children in Out of Home Care, LGBTI+ children and families and vulnerable children.

As part of our child safe culture, **all educators and staff** are required to:

- Complete the [Protecting Children – Mandatory reporting and other obligations](#) online module every year.
- Read the Young Adventurers Early Childhood Education & Care Services Pty Ltd policies and procedures and maintain familiarity with that document.

Management will maintain records of the above processes.

Child safety will be communicated to children and through literature, child appropriate books, newsletters and displays.

### **Recruitment**

Our Service maintains a rigorous and consistent recruitment, screening and selection process to ensure the best staff members and educators are employed based on skills, qualifications, experience and suitability for the position available. All staff and educators participate in robust interviews and have reference checks completed to ensure the applicant's suitability to the role, previous experiences and their commitment to child safe values and practices. All prospective applicants must declare that they do not hold any prohibition notices preventing them from working with children (Reg 188). The approved provider will verify prohibition notices using the NQA ITS register search tool. Existing employees are encouraged to disclose any enforcement actions taken against them.

All staff and educators are provided with a comprehensive induction process which outlines our Code of Conduct and key policies including Child Protection Policy, Child Safe Environment/Child Safety & Wellbeing/Child Safe Standards Policy, Supervision and Safety of the Environment Policy, Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy, Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy, Work Health and Safety Policy, and other related policies, to ensure a child safe environment. New employees (including the nominated supervisor and staff members), students and volunteers are to familiarise themselves with the Child Protection Policy to understand child protection laws and their obligations and mandatory reporting duties to ensure the safety and well-being of children at the Service.

[Primary policy – Child Protection; Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy; Probation Induction and Orientation; Recruitment]

### **Working with Children Check**

Working in conjunction with the *Working with Children Act (2005)* and National Regulations, the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is paramount within our Service and community. A Working with Children Check (WWCC) is a requirement for people who work in child-related work.

It involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct and child protection concerns. The result of a WWCC is either a clearance to work with children and is valid for five years, or a bar against working with children. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring and relevant new records may lead to the clearance being revoked and they will be prohibited from working with children.

The approved provider or nominated supervisor will ensure they have read each person's WWCC before engaging educators, staff or volunteers in the Service. The WWCC will be placed in the individual's file and continue to be updated as required.

Management is responsible for the periodic review and maintenance of up-to-date records of employees' WWCC, including the WWCC number and the date on which each clearance expires. Staff and educators are reminded to renew their WWCC prior to expiry. Staff members or educators are not permitted to provide education and care to children unless they have a current and verified WWCC.

Management will verify all student and volunteer WWCCs prior to placement. Any visitor who has direct contact with children will be required to provide a WWCC for verification prior to coming into contact with children (*best practice*). The approved provider will keep a

record for each day a student or volunteer participates in the Service including date and hours of participation.

[Primary policy – Child Protection; Recruitment; Staffing Arrangements; Student, Volunteer and Visitor]

### **Child Protection**

Children and young people always have a right to be safe and protected. To comply with legislation and ensure a child safe environment, all educators, staff, volunteers and students are advised of current child protection law and understand any obligations under the law. Supervision is effective to ensure they understand that *child safety is everyone's responsibility*.

Approved providers, nominated supervisors, educators and staff are mandatory reporters and have a legal obligation to make reports if they suspect on reasonable grounds, a child is at risk of significant harm. Neglecting these obligations could potentially be deemed a criminal offence. All educators, staff and volunteers are provided with up-to-date training and development about child protection law, and their obligations under this law, to ensure they are confident in following the reporting guidelines within Victoria and adhere to our *Child Protection Policy*. (Reg. 84).

Through continual education and training, educators and staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe. Training gives educators and staff confidence to identify, respond and report child abuse. Nominated supervisors and persons in day-to-day charge must complete a mandatory child protection course approved by the regulatory authority and refresher training on an annual basis.

To protect children and young people and ensure their safety, welfare and wellbeing, management is legally required to report allegations or convictions of harm or risk of harm to a child or young person and child related misconduct by any staff member, educator, volunteer or contractor.

Our Service will ensure to register all employees who have direct contact with children as part of their usual duties on the Workforce Register through Arrival. [Mandatory for services who receive Kindergarten Funding]

Students and visitors are never alone with children whilst at the Service. The physical environment including toilets and nappy change facilities is designed and maintained to facilitate clear supervision of children whilst maintaining their rights and dignity.

### **Reportable Conduct Scheme**

The Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organisation's responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their employees and volunteers. The approved provider must notify the Commission for Children and Young People (the Commission) about any allegations of misconduct involving a child.

Reportable conduct applies to all employees, volunteers, students (over the age of 18) and contractors at our Service.

Our Service will ensure an appropriate level of confidentiality of information relating to the reportable allegations as per the Children's Guardian Act 2019. We take our legislative responsibilities as part of the Reportable Conduct Scheme seriously and will respond to any reportable allegation or conviction against employees or volunteers that may arise.

As an Information Sharing Entity our Service is obligated to share confidential or sensitive information about a person with other ISEs to support safety and wellbeing as part of the Child Information Sharing Scheme and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and MARAM reforms.

### **Supervision & Practice**

- Educators and staff, students and volunteers are not rostered to work alone with children.
- All children should be appropriately supervised following the service's Supervision & safety of the environment policy.
- Educators and staff, students & volunteers should refrain from using 'pet names' for children that may be considered condescending or grooming such as 'love', 'darl', 'honey'. Use children's names.
- Educators, staff, students & volunteers should refrain from lifting or carrying children or sitting children on their laps unless the child is not yet independent to be able to do these things for themselves.
- Children should be supervised around bathroom/toileting areas.
- Educators should position themselves in a manner that enables them to see or hear children and to be seen and heard by others.
- Indoor and outdoor safety checks are conducted regularly with any hazards both physical or potential are identified and rectified.
- Emergency drills are conducted every 2-3 months
- A maintenance book is provided to ensure furniture, toys and equipment are maintained.
- Medication and first aid storage areas are checked by educators regularly to ensure they are well maintained and in date.
- Risk assessments are conducted prior to all excursions, when providing food based activities such as special celebrations and if needed to ensure safety of new equipment.
- Device use is checked and monitored regularly by the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor to ensure content is safe and appropriate – Refer Technology and Online Safety Policy and Mobile Phone and Personal Device Policy.
- Head checks are conducted by educators both physically and using the electronic sign in and out system OWNA throughout the day to ensure all children attendance records are correct.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

The Approved Provider will ensure each person understands their role, responsibilities and behaviour expected in protecting children and young people from abuse and neglect. Educators and staff will comply with the company's Code of Conduct; Behaviour Management Policy; Child Safe Environment/Child Safety & Wellbeing/Child Safe Standards Policy; Child Protection Policy and Confidentiality/Privacy/Sharing Information Policy, which sets out clearly the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and how these can be addressed.

Specific child safety responsibilities:

- Approved Provider is responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safe Environment/Child Safety & Wellbeing/Child Safe Standards Policy every 2 years.
- Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor is responsible for monitoring compliance with the Child Safe Environment/Child Safety & Wellbeing/Child Safe

**Standards Policy Policy.** The school and early childhood community should approach the Nominated Supervisor or Approved Provider if they have any concerns about compliance with the Child Safe Environment/Child Safety & Wellbeing/Child Safe Standards Policy.

- Approved Provider is responsible for informing the school and early childhood community about this policy and making it publicly available.

**Policy evaluation and review**

To ensure ongoing relevance and continuous improvement, this policy will be reviewed every 2 years.

Approved Provider: Marg Hartshorn

Date of last review: 19/09/2025

Date of next review: 19/09/2027