

CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

Our Service is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe environment where children's safety, rights, wellbeing and best interests are prioritised in all aspects of our operations. We recognise that child safety is a shared responsibility and are committed to embedding child safe practices through our leadership, policies, relationships, environments and everyday interactions.

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, practiced and implemented.
2.2.3	Child safety and 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.
QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service that is child safe.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
S. 2A	Paramount consideration—safety, rights and best interests of children
S. 3A	Paramount consideration [NSW]
S. 162A	Child protection training
S. 162B	Child safety training
S.165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S.166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S. 166A	Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct [NSW] Offences relating to inappropriate conduct

S. 167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
Part 6A	Devices in education and care services
S. 188	Offence to engage person to whom prohibition notice applies
Part 4.2	Children's health and safety
Part 4.3	Physical environment
Part 4.4	Staffing arrangements
Part 4.5	Relationships with children
Part 4.6	Collaborative partnerships with families and communities
Part 4.7	Governance and leadership

RELATED POLICIES

Additional Needs Policy Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy Behaviour Guidance: Bullying Policy Child Protection Policy Code of Conduct Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy ECIP Management Policy Emergency and Evacuation Policy Family Communication Policy Governance Policy Health and Safety Policy Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy Multicultural Policy Physical Environment Policy	Performance Management Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Probation, Induction and Orientation Policy Professional Development Policy Protected Disclosures (Whistleblower) Policy Record Keeping and Retention Policy Recruitment Policy Respect for Children Policy Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy Student, Volunteer and Visitors Policy Supervision Policy Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Policy Writing, Reviewing and Maintaining Policies Policy
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PURPOSE

This policy outlines how our Service implements the [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#) and meets its obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations. It provides an overview of our approach to creating a child safe culture, empowering children, involving families and communities, supporting educators and staff, managing risks, responding to concerns, and continuously improving child safety practices.

This policy provides a high-level overview of key requirements, practices and responsibilities. More detailed information can be found in related policies, procedures and supporting documents.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our approach is guided by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the principle that children's safety, rights, wellbeing and best interests are the paramount consideration in all decisions and practices. We promote a culture where children are valued, heard and supported, and where educators, staff, families and the broader community work together to uphold children's rights and protect them from harm. Consistent with this commitment, our Service has zero tolerance for child abuse, neglect, harm and inappropriate conduct or discipline towards children.

For definitions and key terms used within this policy, refer to *Key Terms – Policies and Procedures*.

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING ARE EMBEDDED IN GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP (PRINCIPLE 1)

The approved provider and management promote a child safe culture by embedding child safety within our leadership, governance, policies and everyday practices. Our *Statement of Commitment to Child Safety* reflects our commitment to protecting children, upholding their rights and embedding a child safe culture across all aspects of our Service. We communicate child safety expectations through policies, procedures, induction, training and ongoing support to ensure educators, staff, volunteers and students understand their roles.

Our Service prioritises children's safety, rights, wellbeing and best interests through clear governance arrangements, effective leadership, risk management, reflective practice, record keeping systems, information sharing practices and clearly defined responsibilities, including the identification of the responsible person present at the Service. Approved providers, nominated supervisors, educators and other staff meet their legislative obligations to protect children from harm and hazards and take reasonable steps to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. This includes recognising their role in identifying and responding to children who may be at risk of abuse, neglect or harm.

We promote openness and respect, so that children, families and staff feel safe to raise concerns, provide feedback and contribute to continuous improvement. See *Child Protection Policy*, *Code of Conduct Policy*, *Governance Policy*, and *Writing, Reviewing and Maintaining Policies Policy* for more information.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS, VOICE AND PARTICIPATION ARE VALUED AND RESPECTED (PRINCIPLE 2)

Our Service recognises children as capable and active participants in their own lives. We support children to understand their rights, express their views, make choices, and participate in decisions that affect them in ways that are appropriate to their age and development. Educators create environments where children feel heard, respected, valued and included, and where their ideas, feedback and concerns help shape our practice. Educators respect children's autonomy, dignity and consent during daily routines, activities and interactions, including their right to express preferences and say no.

Our Service supports children to develop positive relationships, empathy, inclusion and conflict resolution skills through respectful interactions and behaviour guidance practices. Educators encourage children to speak up when they feel unsafe or worried, listen to their concerns and respond appropriately. We also provide age and developmentally appropriate learning about personal safety, protective behaviours and how to seek help from trusted adults. See *Behaviour Guidance: Bullying Policy*, *Child Protection Policy*, *Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy* and *Respect for Children Policy* for more information.

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES ARE INFORMED AND INVOLVED (PRINCIPLE 3)

Our Service recognises families and communities as important partners in promoting child safety and wellbeing. We welcome and respect families and encourage their participation in discussions, decision-making, and activities that support children's rights, safety and best interests.

We provide families and communities with accessible information about child safe practices, policies, procedures, and processes, and ways to provide feedback or raise concerns. We encourage families to share their views and use their feedback to strengthen our child safe practices, policies and continuous improvement processes. See the *Enrolment Policy*, *Child Protection Policy*, *Dealing with Complaints Policy*, *Family Communication Policy* and *Governance Policy* for more information.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ARE RECOGNISED IN POLICY AND PRACTICE (PRINCIPLE 4)

Our Service recognises that every child has the right to feel safe, valued, included and respected, regardless of their abilities, culture, identity, background, family circumstances or individual needs. We

are committed to creating inclusive and culturally safe environments that recognise children's diverse circumstances, support equitable participation, and respond to their needs.

We promote the safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and children with diverse identities, abilities and circumstances. Educators work in partnership with families and, where appropriate, other professionals to understand children's strengths, interests, needs and experiences and provide appropriate support and reasonable adjustments.

We support educators, staff, volunteers and students to challenge discrimination, bias and exclusion through inclusive practices, professional learning and reflective practice. Our Service promotes respect, equality and belonging, and does not tolerate racism, discrimination or behaviours that may impact a child's dignity, safety or wellbeing. Our Service ensures child safety information and support are accessible and responsive to children's diverse needs. See the *Additional Needs Policy*, *Anti-Bias and Inclusion Policy*, *ECIP Management Policy*, *Multicultural Policy* and *Respect for Children Policy* for more information.

PEOPLE WORKING WITH CHILDREN ARE SUITABLE, SUPPORTED AND COMMITTED TO CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING (PRINCIPLE 5)

Our Service ensures educators, staff, volunteers and students are suitable, supported and understand their responsibilities for protecting children, promote child safety and wellbeing, and respond appropriately and in a timely manner to child safety concerns in accordance with legislative obligations and Service procedures.

Our recruitment, including advertising, screening and selection, emphasises child safety and wellbeing. We assess applicants' suitability to work with children through selection criteria, interviews and referee checks, including their understanding of child safe practices, children's rights, professional boundaries and culturally safe practices. We verify required checks, including Working with Children Checks (WWCC)/Vulnerable Person Checks (WWVP), qualifications and other relevant suitability requirements. We also make reasonable enquiries to determine whether prospective or current educators, staff, volunteers or students are subject to any relevant suspension notice, prohibition notice, supervision notice or enforceable undertaking, where applicable. We monitor ongoing suitability requirements and maintain current records of required checks, including WWCC/WWVP, to ensure all WWCC/WWVP checks are valid and have not expired.

Our Service responds to allegations or convictions relating to child abuse or inappropriate conduct involving educators, staff, volunteers, students or contractors in accordance with relevant reportable conduct obligations and legislation. We maintain appropriate confidentiality when managing reportable allegations as per NSW Reportable Conduct Scheme and take action to protect children's safety, wellbeing and rights.

We provide educators, staff, volunteers and students with induction, information and ongoing support to understand their child safety responsibilities, professional expectations, code of conduct requirements, record keeping responsibilities, information sharing obligations, reporting requirements and relevant policies. Through supervision, guidance and performance management, we support people working with children to uphold child safety values, maintain professional boundaries and contribute to a safe and respectful environment. See *Child Protection Policy, Code of Conduct Policy, Performance Management Policy, Probation, Induction and Orientation Policy, Recruitment Policy and Student, Volunteer and Visitors Policy* for more information.

CONCERNS ARE RESPONDED TO THROUGH CHILD-FOCUSED PROCESSES (PRINCIPLE 6)

Our complaints and grievance processes are child-focused, transparent, and accessible. We support children, families, and staff to raise concerns safely. We take all concerns seriously and manage them promptly, fairly and respectfully in accordance with relevant policies and procedures.

We support educators, staff, volunteers and students to recognise signs of harm or distress, understand children's developmentally appropriate behaviours, respond appropriately to concerns and disclosures, including concerns related to harmful sexual behaviours, and meet their reporting responsibilities. Concerns about inappropriate behaviour by any educator, staff member, volunteer, or student are raised with management and addressed promptly and appropriately to maintain a safe environment. We document complaints and child safety concerns in accordance with legislative requirements, privacy requirements, and relevant policies and procedures. We maintain child protection records through appropriate systems, including a child protection concern register, and ensure educators, staff, volunteers and students have access to reporting processes, including the NSW Early Learning Commission [Reporting Guide: Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse](#). We review complaints, concerns and grievances to identify trends and opportunities for improvement to strengthen our child safe culture. We ensure people involved in a complaint are treated respectfully and receive appropriate information, support and communication throughout the process. See *Child*

Protection Policy, Dealing with Complaints Policy, Privacy and Confidentiality Policy, Protected Disclosures (Whistleblower) Policy and Record Keeping and Retention Policy for more information.

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

(PRINCIPLE 7)

Our Service provides educators, staff, volunteers and students with information, training and support to understand and implement their child safety responsibilities, including this *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* and related procedures. This includes recognising indicators of harm (including harm caused by other children and young people), responding appropriately to concerns and disclosures, understanding reporting obligations, promoting children's rights, cultural safety and inclusion, and implementing child safe practices.

We support ongoing professional development, guidance and reflection to strengthen the knowledge, skills and awareness needed to promote children's safety and wellbeing. This may include trauma-informed practice, protective behaviours, child development, cultural safety, inclusion, record keeping practices, information sharing responsibilities and strategies to support children's safety and wellbeing.

The approved provider ensures all prescribed personnel, i.e., all persons with management or control, nominated supervisors, persons in day-to-day charge, other staff, volunteers, and students complete [national child safety training](#) (before or within 14 days of commencing work at the Service or working directly with children, including the foundation training and advanced training (where applicable), and renew training every 2 years. In addition to the national child safety training, persons required under applicable state or territory legislation or regulatory requirements must complete additional child protection training. [child safety and protection training requirements](#)]. All staff engage in reflective practice and continuous improvement to strengthen our child safe culture. See the *Child Protection Policy, Performance Management Policy, Probation, Induction and Orientation Policy, Professional Development Policy, Recruitment Policy and Staffing Arrangements Policy* for more information.

PHYSICAL AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS PROMOTE SAFETY AND WELLBEING AND MINIMISE HARM (PRINCIPLE 8)

Our Service identifies and manages risks across physical and online environments to promote children's safety, wellbeing, privacy and participation. We use risk assessments, including child protection risk assessments, to identify potential risks of harm across our environments, activities, and interactions, and

to implement strategies to minimise these risks while supporting children's learning and access to safe experiences.

Physical environments

We maintain safe premises, equipment and learning environments through routine safety checks, supervision, maintenance and risk management practices. We design and arrange environments to support visibility and effective supervision while respecting children's privacy, dignity and cultural safety.

Our Service provides a smoke-free, vape-free environment, with tobacco, vaping products and alcohol not permitted on Service premises or during Service activities. Hazardous substances, chemicals, medications and potentially dangerous items are stored, handled and disposed of safely to prevent children's access and minimise risks. We identify and manage risks associated with environments, activities and interactions. Risk assessments consider relevant risks across all Service settings and activities, including water hazards, excursions, transportation, emergency situations, arrival and departure procedures, and other Service-specific risks.

Our Service has procedures in place to effectively manage incidents and emergencies, including regular rehearsals and reviews to ensure educators, staff and children understand their roles and responsibilities. We plan supervision strategies that consider children's ages, abilities, developmental stages and individual needs, recognising that younger children may require closer support while older children are supported to develop independence while remaining safe.

We maintain required educator-to-child ratios and position educators to effectively supervise children across all environments. Where children access indoor and outdoor environments at the same time, educators implement supervision practices to ensure children remain visible, supported and safe in both areas. Supervision practices also consider children's movement throughout the Service, routines, transitions and other activities where additional support may be required, including toileting and personal care routines, while respecting children's privacy, dignity and developing autonomy.

We ensure children are accounted for throughout the day through accurate attendance records, regular checks and procedures for children's arrival, departure and movement throughout the Service. We maintain records to support effective supervision and accountability and keep a record of educators working with specific groups of children at different times throughout the day. Visitors, contractors and other third parties are managed through child safe procedures, including appropriate supervision, visitor

records where applicable and ensuring children are not left alone with visitors.

Digital technologies and online environments

Our Service promotes the safe and responsible use of digital technologies and online environments by identifying and managing risks and protecting children's privacy, safety and wellbeing. Educators, staff, students and visitors follow our code of conduct and safe digital technology practices to protect children from risks such as cyberbullying, grooming, inappropriate content and misuse of personal information.

We obtain appropriate authorisations from parents/guardians or authorised nominees for the collection, use, storage and sharing of children's images, videos and personal information. We only use service-issued electronic devices and approved platforms for capturing, accessing and storing children's information. Personal electronic devices are not used while educators are working with children, except in limited circumstances approved by the Service. We store electronic devices securely, limit access to authorised users, and manage digital records in accordance with privacy and record keeping requirements. Expectations for the use of digital platforms, electronic devices and technologies, including surveillance (where applicable) are communicated to relevant stakeholders.

Educators actively supervise children's use of digital technologies and online environments to support safe participation and minimise risks such as exposure to inappropriate content, cyberbullying or unsafe interactions. We help children develop an understanding of safe and responsible online practices, including recognising unsafe online experiences and seeking help when needed. We provide families with information about children's use of digital technologies and the strategies used to support children's safety and privacy online. See *Child Protection Policy*, *Code of Conduct Policy*, *Emergency and Evacuation Policy*, *Health and Safety Policy*, *Physical Environment Policy*, *Record Keeping and Retention Policy*, *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy*, *Staffing Arrangements Policy* and *Supervision Policy* for more information.

CHILD SAFETY PRACTICES ARE REVIEWED AND IMPROVED (PRINCIPLE 9)

Our Service regularly reviews child safety practices, policies and procedures to ensure they remain effective and responsive to children's needs. Feedback and participation from children, families, educators, staff and the broader community, together with reflections, incidents, complaints and concerns, inform the ongoing review and improvement of child safe practices.

We review complaints, concerns and safety incidents to identify trends, contributing factors and

opportunities to improve our policies, procedures and practices. We communicate relevant findings, changes and improvements to educators, staff, children, families and the Service community where appropriate. See *Dealing with Complaints Policy*, *Governance Policy* and *Writing, Reviewing and Maintaining Policies Policy* for more information.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES EMBED CHILD SAFETY (PRINCIPLE 10)

Our Service develops, implements and reviews policies and procedures that embed child safety and wellbeing across all aspects of our operations. This *Child Safe Environment Policy* reflects the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and is supported by related policies and procedures that address child safety responsibilities, risk management, complaints, recruitment, reporting obligations and culturally safe practices. Policies are developed in accordance with legislative requirements. We write policies and procedures in clear, accessible language and formats to support understanding and consistent implementation across the Service. Our policies and procedures are readily available at the Service (e.g., located at the foyer areas and front of centre).

Management promotes and monitors the implementation of child safety policies and procedures. We support educators, staff, volunteers and students through induction, training and ongoing guidance to understand their responsibilities. We regularly review policies and procedures through consultation, feedback, reflective practice, audits and continuous improvement processes to ensure they remain effective and support our child safe culture. See *Governance Policy*, *Health and Safety Policy* and *Writing, Reviewing and Maintaining Policies Policy* for more information.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Child Safe Environment Policy* will be evaluated and reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management. All families will be notified 14 days before any policy change that may have a significant impact on the provision of education and care to any child enrolled at the Service or the family's ability to utilise the Service.

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [NQF Child Safe Culture Guide](#).
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2026). [Providing a child safe environment](#).
 Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [Safe use of devices in education and care services](#)
 Australian Human Rights Commission. (2016). [Building belonging: A toolkit for early childhood educators](#).

Australian Human Rights Commission. (n.d.). [Child Safe Organisations: Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Template](#).
 Australian Human Rights Commission. (2018). [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#).
 Australian Institute of Family Studies (AIFS). (2025). [Mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect](#).
 Early Childhood Australia. (2016). *Code of Ethics*
[Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010](#)
[Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011](#)
 eSafety Commissioner. (n.d.). [Key topics](#).
 NSW Government. Early Learning Commission. (2026). [Reporting Guide: Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	ALISHA FALANGA		DIRECTOR	03.08.2026
POLICY REVIEWED	AUGUST 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE		AUGUST 2027
VERSION NUMBER	V11.08.26			
MODIFICATIONS	• rewrite of policy to summarise key child safe practices aligned with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations • significantly reduced duplication of requirements addressed in specific related policies and procedures • sources checked for currency			
PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS				
JANUARY 2026	• major review of policy to ensure its accuracy and relevance. Content has been refined to clarify responsibilities and ensure alignment with legislative changes and current best practices in child safety and professional conduct • edits to policy to comply with amendments to National Law (NSW) and Regulations • updated policy to include amendments to the Education and Care Services National Law • revised wording around electronic devices following National Law amendments			