

Child Safe Standards

Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

- The institution publicly commits to child safety and leaders champion a child safe culture.
- Child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels of the institution.
- Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children.
- Staff and volunteers comply with a code of conduct that sets clear behavioural standards towards children.
- Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and recordkeeping.

Children participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

- Children are able to express their views and are provided opportunities to participate in decisions that affect their lives.
- The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, helping children feel safe and be less isolated.
- Children can access sexual abuse prevention programs and information.
- Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children to communicate and raise their concerns.

Families and communities are informed and involved

- Families have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of their child and participate in decisions affecting their child.
- The institution engages in open, two-way communication with families and communities about its child safety approach and relevant information is accessible.
- Families and communities have a say in the institution's policies and practices.
- Families and communities are informed about the institution's operations and governance.

Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are taken in to account

- The institution actively anticipates children's diverse circumstances and responds effectively to those with additional vulnerabilities.
- All children have access to information, support and complaints processes.
- The institution pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

People working with children are suitable and supported

- Recruitment, including advertising and screening, emphasises child safety.
- Relevant staff and volunteers have Working With Children Checks.
- All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their child safety responsibilities, including reporting obligations.
- Supervision and people management have a child safety focus.

Processes to respond to complaints of child abuse are child focused

- The institution has a child-focused complaint-handling system that is understood by children, staff, volunteers and families.
- The institution has an effective complaint-handling policy and procedure which clearly outline role and responsibilities, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints and obligations to act and report.
- Complaints are taken seriously, responded to promptly and thoroughly, and reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met.

Staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through continual education and training

- Relevant staff and volunteers receive training on the nature and indicators of child maltreatment, particularly institutional child sexual abuse.
- Staff and volunteers receive training on the institution's child safe practices and child protection.
- Relevant staff and volunteers are supported to develop practical skills in protecting children and responding to disclosures.

Physical and online environments minimise the opportunity for abuse to occur

- Risks in the online and physical environments are identified and mitigated without compromising a child's right to privacy and healthy development.
- The online environment is used in accordance with the institution's code of conduct and relevant policies.

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is continuously reviewed and improved

- The institution regularly reviews and improves child safe practices
- The institution analyses complaints to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.

Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

- Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.
- Policies and procedures are accessible and easy to understand.
- Best practice models and stakeholder consultation inform the development of policies and procedures.
- Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures.
- Staff understand and implement the policies and procedures.

For more information about the child safe standards contact:

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