ELC POLICY

Early Learning Centre
Child Safe Environment Policy and Procedure

Approved by the School Principal: 13 September 2024

Child Safe Environment Policy and Procedure

1   Purpose and Background

1.1.1   To set out how we provide a child safe environment. That is, how we: promote a culture of child safety and wellbeing; ensure the children at our service are cared for in a safe environment (online and physical); protect children from any harm and hazard likely to cause injury; and ensure that harm or risk of harm to children is identified and responded to properly

1.1.2   This policy is a requirement under the Education and Care Services National Regulations. The approved provider must ensure that policies and procedures are in place for providing a child safe environment and take reasonable steps to ensure those policies and procedures are followed (s 168)

1.1.3   This policy is required under the Victorian Child Safe Standards. It also helps us to meet our obligation under the Reportable Conduct Scheme to have systems in place to prevent and respond to child abuse

1.1.4   This policy aligns with the ECEC Code of Ethics and the National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children in ECEC's

2   Scope

2.1.1   This policy applies to:

a)   The approved provider, paid workers, volunteers and work placement students, referred to as 'staff' throughout this policy

b)   Third parties who carry out child-related work at our service, including contractors, subcontractors, self-employed persons, employees of a labour hire company, referred to as 'staff' throughout this policy

c)   Children who are in our care, their parents, families and care providers

d)   Visitors to our service who carry out child-related work, including allied health support workers

3   Definitions

3.1.1   The following definitions apply to this policy and related procedures:

a)   'Child-related work' is used in this policy to refer to the work of our service (an education and care service for children). It does not apply where contact with children is incidental or would not reasonably be expected to occur (e.g. a plumber or delivery driver)

b)   'Harm' and 'risk of harm' are used in this policy as overarching terms that cover neglect and various forms of abuse. It includes physical, sexual and psychological abuse; neglect; ill-treatment; grooming; exposure to family violence; commercial child sexual exploitation; online child sexual abuse; and sexual abuse that is perpetrated by other children and young people

c)   'Harmful sexual behaviours' - a general term to describe behaviour in children that falls across a spectrum of sexual behaviour problems, including those that are problematic to the child's own development, as well as those that are coercive, sexually aggressive and predatory towards others

d)   'Parents' includes guardians and persons who have parental responsibilities for the child under a decision or order of court

e)   'Staff' refers to paid employees, volunteers, students, and third parties who are covered in the scope of this policy

4   Policy Statement

4.1   Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

4.1.1   Bacchus Marsh Grammar Early Learning Centre is committed to the safety and well-being of all children and young people. We understand our responsibilities and statutory duty of care to comply with both the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme to build our capacity as an organisation to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

4.1.2   Our Service is committed to implementing and abiding by our Child Safe Policy based on Child Safe Standards in Victoria (2022), accentuating our zero tolerance for child abuse and raising awareness about the importance of child safety in our Service and the community. We are dedicated to

protecting children from abuse and neglect and, promoting a child-safe environment, maintaining children's well-being.

4.1.3   We adhere to our comprehensive Child Protection Policy, following our mandatory reporting responsibilities to protect children from physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse and neglect.

4.1.4   We are dedicated to promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and providing a safe environment for children with a disability. We are committed to ongoing professional development for employees to maintain their ability to distinguish and respond to situations of abuse and neglect, ensuring employees are responsive to their responsibilities in keeping children safe.

4.1.5   We work in collaboration with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and have confidence in educating children about their right to be safe. At Bacchus Marsh Grammar Early Learning Centre, we know that children learn best when they feel safe and are safe. We believe in teaching children what to do if they feel unsafe and encouraging them to express their views and thoughts on matters that directly affect them. As educators, we listen to and empower children to act on any concerns they or others may raise, which is reflected in our policies and procedures for keeping children safe.

4.1.6   This Statement of Commitment forms part of our statement of philosophy and we publicly display it in our foyer, on our website, family and staff handbooks, staff room and policies.

4.2   A culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children

4.2.1   Our service is a culturally safe and secure environment that acknowledges the histories, cultures, language, traditions, religions, spiritual beliefs, child rearing practices and lifestyle choices of families

4.2.2   Educators learn about/are trained in cultural safety for children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds

4.2.3   Staff encourage and support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights

4.2.4   Staff follow our inclusion policies and procedures, which set out how we respect and support the diverse and unique identities and experiences of all children and families, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

4.2.5   Our education program and practice (based on the Early Years Learning Framework 2.0/My Time, Our Place 2.0) embeds Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, regardless of whether Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander children are enrolled at the time. We make sure that every child learns about our First Nation's histories, knowledge, culture and languages

4.2.6   We mark <NAIDOC Week, Reconciliation Week, National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day, Indigenous Literacy Day, National Sorry Day, other> every year and invite members of our local Aboriginal community (if available) to be part of our events

4.2.7   We display positive Aboriginal symbols, including <plaques/posters that acknowledge the Traditional Owner/acknowledgements /the Aboriginal flag/Aboriginal artworks/

4.2.8   We have information available in flyers in our foyer for our families and communities on cultural rights, the strengths of Aboriginal cultures and the importance of culture to the safety and well-being of Aboriginal children; and about the connection between cultural safety and preventing harm to Aboriginal children. We also share with them opportunities to learn and appreciate Aboriginal cultures and histories

4.2.9   We ask Aboriginal children and their families what works for them and how we can improve cultural safety at our service.

4.3   Leadership, governance and culture

4.3.1   Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the leadership, governance and culture of our service

4.3.2   The approved provider and nominated supervisor oversee the policies, procedures, risk management, supervision, HR processes, training, communication and monitoring systems that keep children safe from harm and hazards at our service

4.3.3   Staff understand their responsibilities and obligations. At induction, they are given access to/a copy of our Child Safe Environment Policy and related policies and procedures. Child safety and child protection topics are covered extensively in their ongoing program of training and professional development

4.3.4   Staff must abide by our Child Safe Code of Conduct, which sets out the behaviour we expect from staff towards the children in our care. It describes acceptable and unacceptable (physical and online) interactions with children, and each staff member's obligation to report any suspected breaches of the Code. Breaches are taken seriously, and staff are held to account

4.3.5   We share the responsibility of identifying and responding to harm or risk of harm to children. Our obligations and processes for responding are described in our Child Protection Policy and Procedures

4.3.6   Risk management is a shared responsibility that is overseen by the approved provider and nominated supervisor

4.3.7   Staff at all levels are involved in creating, reviewing and updating our child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures

4.3.8   The approved provider and nominated supervisor regularly review and report on our performance in child safety matters. Child safety is a standing agenda item at staff management, staff, meetings

4.3.9   We may plan activities to mark National Child Protection Week, Safer Internet Day and other events that promote child safety

4.4   Taking child participation seriously

4.4.1   Children at our service are informed of their rights, participate in decisions that affect them and are taken seriously

4.4.2   Staff listen to and respond to children, respect children's bodily integrity and their right to refuse or say no (either with their voice or through non-verbal cues). Educators are trained to give children the confidence and ability to ask for help and to take part in decisions that affect them

4.4.3   Educators follow our policies and procedures for ensuring positive interactions with children, which affirm our commitment to upholding the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the ECEC Code of Ethics. Educators understand children's rights and teach children to understand and exercise their own rights, including the right to information, to feel and be safe, and to be listened to and taken seriously

4.4.4   Educators deliver our education program (based on the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework and the Early Years Learning Framework), which observes and responds to each child's identity, perspective, ideas, interests and needs

4.4.5   Educators are trained to recognise and respond to signs of harm in both verbal and non-verbal children

4.4.6   We run programs (e.g. Body Safety/ROAR) engaging edcuators, children and families/carers in body safety education as an essential component in the prevention of child sexual abuse.

4.4.7   Educators teach children about personal safety and protective behaviour, how adults and other children should behave towards them, and what to do if they are concerned about their own or someone else's safety. Educators incorporate these lessons into daily routines, the education program and resources, and special activities (such as excursions, travel) [for more information about protective behaviour and teaching about child protection see our Resource – Educating children about protective behaviour at Appendix B and Bravehearts resources]

4.4.8   We display age-appropriate posters that tell children about their rights and our complaints process, including how they can raise a concern with us. We have information about support services that are aimed at children <displayed on our walls/in leaflets in our foyer/on our website/in our newsletters/ in

our email communication> [examples include the eSafety Commissioner (eSafety), Police, Kids Helpline, Headspace and Parentline]

4.4.9   We include children in making decisions about safety and wellbeing. For example, we ask for children's views on the safety of our physical and online environment, daily routines and special activities. Their ideas are incorporated into our risk assessments, policies and procedures. We report back to them on how we have acted on their feedback

4.4.10   Our educators encourage all children to participate by helping them to build connections and friendships with each other, and by acting quickly to stop bullying, discriminatory or isolating behaviour in groups. Educators follow our policies and procedures for encouraging positive relationships between children

4.5   Involving families and communities

4.5.1   Families, carers and communities are involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing at our service

4.5.2   Staff follow our policy and procedures for parental interactions and involvement, which set out how we partner with families and communities

4.5.3   We communicate with parents, carers, families and communities regularly and openly about children's safety and wellbeing. Families and communities know they can contact us via phone, email or face to face. We use questionnaires, information sessions, face to face conversations to collect their views, and use this information to assess and make decisions about child safety.

4.5.4   We use plain language when we communicate. If families need one, we can arrange a translation service. We can provide information various formats, so it is accessible to people with disability. We use language is relevant, welcoming and respectful to everyone

4.5.5   When a child is enrolled, we give their family information about our people, programs, policies and procedures. We tell them how they can be involved in making decisions about matters that affect them and/or their children, their rights and responsibilities, and how they can raise any concerns

4.5.6   Staff follow our Acceptance and Refusal of Authorisations Policy, which gives clear guidance on gaining parents/authorised nominees' permission for certain activities at our service

4.5.7   Families know they can locate our policies and procedures on the BMG Web site and in the foyer. At enrolment, information evening and family handbook they are given access to> our Child Safe Environment Policy and other related policies and procedures, including our Child Safe Code of Conduct and Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure

4.5.8   Families are notified when our policies and procedures are changed, and we invite their feedback when we review our documents (including our Quality Improvement Plan) and practices

4.5.9   We promote child protection and safety, and provide links to resources, through our <website, and newsletters >

4.6   Respecting equity and diversity

4.6.1   Our service upholds equity and diverse needs are respected

4.6.2   Staff follow our inclusion policies and procedures, which set out our rules for respecting and supporting the diverse and unique identities and experiences of all children and families, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people with disability, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children who are unable to live at home, and LGBTQI people

4.6.3   Staff follow our Child Safe Code of Conduct, which prohibits any form of bullying, unlawful discrimination or harassment towards children, families or other staff members. Through our workplace training, they understand that there are laws in place that make it unlawful to discriminate against or vilify children in certain contexts (for example because of race, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation)

4.6.4   When a child is enrolled, we invite their family to share information about the child's unique characteristics and circumstances, such as their cultural and religious background, family structure, disability, medical conditions, the languages that are spoken at home, and any individual needs.

Families update this information routinely every year and throughout the year if any changes are needed. We use the information to tailor our approach to the safety and wellbeing of each child - that is, to provide for each child's individual needs, including their individual risk of harm. More broadly, the information informs our risk management, education program and practices, policies and procedures, daily routines, and the way we communicate with children, their families and communities. We record and store this information according to our privacy and record keeping policies

4.6.5   We give children and families child safety and wellbeing information in plain language and in ways they can understand, including child-friendly versions, in different languages, and formats that people with disability can access

4.6.6   As part of their program of professional development, educators learn about/are trained in cultural safety for children from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Our culturally safe practices are the embedded across the service, including in our education program, in the excursions and special events we run, in our play and daily routines, children's cooking and so on

4.6.7   We celebrate diversity and various cultural festivals in partnership, including Harmony Week, International Day of Persons with Disability, National Apology Day, NAIDOC and Reconciliation Week, Chinese New Year, Ramadan, Rosh Hashanah. We see these as part of our education program and ask members of our local community to come to our service and teach our children about the meaning of the event

4.6.8   Our rooms and spaces display posters that represents a range of cultures and abilities, and the staff we employ represent the diversity we see in our community

4.6.9   When we develop policies and procedures, we seek a range of perspectives from people who have diverse backgrounds, experience and the necessary expertise

4.6.10 We ask children with disability and their families to give us feedback about how we can improve our physical and online environment, programs and procedures.

4.7   Ensuring that staff are suitable and supported

4.7.1   Our staff are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

4.7.2   Our recruitment practices meet the requirements of the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic.)

4.7.3   The approved provider, nominated supervisor and anyone else who is making decisions about recruitment or bringing in visitors (such as performers, specialists) follow our child safe Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy and Procedures

4.7.4   Our job advertising includes a statement of commitment to child safety and wellbeing

4.7.5   Advertisements state what qualifications, experience and attributes are needed to be eligible for the role, our screening and WWCC requirements, training and supervision requirements, and the role's duties and responsibilities for children

4.7.6   Job descriptions set clear expectations about child safety

4.7.7   We only employ people who are suitable to work with children. We do thorough pre-employment screens (interviews, referee checks, WWCC and other registration or background checking) and continue to monitor our staff member's suitability to work with children and whether they are following our child safe policies and procedures. We have probationary periods for all new staff

4.7.8   Our induction process requires all staff to review, understand and acknowledge in writing our Child Safe Environment Policy and related policies and procedures

4.7.9   The approved provider and nominated supervisor follow our policies and procedures for managing and supervising staff, including acting on breaches to our Child Safe Code of Conduct and child safety policies and procedures

4.7.10 We tell children and families through our newsletter, email, in person when there are personnel changes

4.8 Child focused complaint systems

4.8.1 Our system to respond to complaints and concerns is child focused (National Regulations s 168)

4.8.2 We have complaint handling policies and procedures put children's safety, needs and interests at the forefront. They are easy to understand, accessible, and culturally safe. As with all our policies and procedures, they can be translated into different languages, and put into different formats for people with disability

4.8.3 Educators are trained to respond to children verbally and non-verbally communicating that something is wrong

4.8.4 At enrolment, information evening and family handbook, families are given copies of/given access to our Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure. It explains how to raise a concern or complaint with us, and how we will respond in a prompt and fair manner

4.8.5 We have a child-friendly poster version of our Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure displayed in each room,

4.8.6 We display the name and contact details of the person to whom complaints should be made in in foyer which is clearly visible from the entrance (National Regulations s 173)

4.8.7 Staff respond to concerns about harm or risk of harm to a child (either by adults or by other children) or that a child is exhibiting harmful sexual behaviour, by following our Child Protection Policy and Procedures. It sets out our service's obligations and procedures related to child protection, including: managing incidents, disclosures, and suspicions of harm or risk of harm to a child; responding to allegations of harmful sexual behaviour in children; and making reports to external authorities

4.8.8 Our complaint and child protection policies and procedures include information on how we will support the child or adult who is making the complaint or allegation, how we manage risks and protect the children in our care, and the rules for record keeping, privacy, employment, and exchanging information

4.8.9 At their induction, all staff must review, understand and formally acknowledge our Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure and Child Protection Policy and Procedures

4.8.10 If the outcome of an investigation into a complaint calls for disciplinary action against a staff member, our approved provider and nominated supervisor follow our staff discipline policies and procedures

4.9 Staff knowledge, skills and awareness

4.9.1 Our staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe

4.9.2 We have an ordered and structured approach to training and sharing knowledge on child safety and wellbeing, including cultural safety, which is set out in our child safe Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy and Procedures

4.9.3 We formally induct all staff (including volunteers and students) when they first start at our service. They are given copies of/access to, review, understand and formally acknowledge our child safe and child protection policies and procedures

4.9.4 The approved provider runs a professional development program (Complispace Learning) for each staff member. The programs are tailored to the needs and aspirations of the individual staff member, which are identified during supervision and in half-yearly/yearly scheduled one-on-one performance appraisal meetings

4.9.5 The approved provider makes sure that staff (including volunteers and students) are aware of current child protection laws and their obligations under them (National Regulations s 84), and that all mandatory child protection training is completed in line with the law (National Law s 162A) (For more detail about child protection training, see our Child Protection Policy and Procedures)

4.9.6 We regularly discuss child safety and wellbeing in a trauma-informed way and encourage a culture of reporting. Child safety and wellbeing (including child protection) is a standing agenda item at staff meetings and in staff emails. Staff review one or two of our policies and procedures every week as part of their professional development program

4.10   Safe physical and online environments

4.10.1   Our physical and online environments promote safety while minimising the opportunity for children to be harmed

Risk Management

4.10.2   We protect children from hazards and harm by identifying and managing risks in our online and physical environments

4.10.3   We balance our duty to protect children with their right to privacy, access to information, social connections and opportunities to learn

4.10.4   Our Child Safe Risk Management Plan is available in the Administration office, One Drive staff files and Risk Management Folder in the Gallery space. The risk management plan identifies, analyses and plans to control risks of harm to children in physical and online environments, including high risk activities and special events the Child Safe Risk Management Plan is concerned with protecting children from harm (e.g., physical, emotional and sexual abuse, lack of appropriate care and supervision), and is distinct from a work health and safety plan, which has a focus on the risk of accidents, omissions, slips, trips and falls etc.

4.10.5   The plan covers the types of risks identified by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse

4.10.6   Our other risk assessment and management documents concerning, for example: our physical environment, work health and safety, children's sleep and rest, excursions, transport, the safe arrival of children, emergencies and evacuations, and incidents, injuries, trauma and illness are available in the Administration office, One Drive staff files and Risk Management Folder in the Gallery space as an attachment to the relevant policy

4.10.7   Our risk management strategies inform our policies, procedures, Quality Improvement Plan and action plans for individual children

4.10.8   The Child Safe Risk Management Plan and our other risk assessment and management documents are updated and reviewed every year and when there are changes that could affect the safety and wellbeing of children in our care, including after any breaches, or incidents, disclosures or suspicions of harm or risk of harm. It is a 'living document' that we update according to the changing profile of our children, environment, activities and staff

4.10.9   Records of risk assessments and plans are kept and made available for inspection

4.10.10 Staff contribute to risk management. They are trained to identify and report any risks of harm and hazards they observe in their day-to-day work, and to conduct risk assessments before introducing new activities or practices

4.10.11 We ask children and families to contribute to our risk assessment and management process. We may seek feedback from families and communities via newsletters or survey forms, or during parent information sessions. We discuss online and physical safety and wellbeing matters with children as part of our educational program and ask for children's views when we are conducting risk assessments.

Supervision and staff interactions with children

4.10.12 Staff follow our procedures for active supervision (information about supervision is currently located in our Staffing Arrangements Policy) to ensure they adequately supervise the children in our care (National Law s 165)

4.10.13 We meet the set educator-to-child ratios at all times (National Regulations ss 122, 123)

4.10.14 We have flexible supervision arrangements and adjust the level of supervision according to our activities, and the ages, stages and individual needs of the children in our care

4.10.15 The physical design of our service allows for 'natural lines of sight', including in our toilet and nappy changing facilities (while still allowing children to have privacy and autonomy) (National Regulations s 115)

4.10.16   Staff follow our procedures for visitors (information about visitors is currently located in our Educator and Management Policy). We keep a record of all visitors and children are not allowed to be left alone with visitors, volunteers or students. Volunteers do not change nappies or help children with toileting

4.10.17   Two staff members are always present at the service at any time and there is a 'responsible person' present at all times when children are in attendance. Their name and position are displayed so as to be clearly visible from the main entrance of our service (National Regulations s 173)

4.10.18   We do not allow anyone who is unauthorised to be at our service unless they are being directly supervised by an educator or another staff member (National Law s 170)

4.10.19   Educators who are under 18 are never left alone with children and they are properly supervised at all times by another educator who is over 18 years old (National Regulations s 120)

4.10.20   Our Child Safe Code of Conduct and policies and procedures about interactions between educators and children set out our rules about: inappropriate conversations, gifts and benefits, personal and intimate care, physical contact with children, out of hours contact and professional boundaries and secondary employment

Alcohol, drugs, cigarettes, vapes and pornography

4.10.21   We have a Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Environment Policy (National Regulations s 82) in place for staff and family and community members. Staff are not allowed to be affected by alcohol or drugs while they are on duty (National Regulations s 83)

4.10.22   Staff are aware that smoking and using e-cigarettes are banned within 4 metres of the pedestrian entrances/exits from public buildings, including childcare facilities in Victoria

4.10.23   Our Child Safe Code of Conduct prohibits staff from accessing, retrieving, displaying, viewing, forwarding and/or storing pornographic or inappropriate material in the workplace

Incidents, illness and emergencies

4.10.24   Staff follow our risk management plans, policies and procedures for managing emergencies and evacuations, including our Emergency Plan that we rehearse every 3 months. We display our emergency and evacuation floor plan and instructions near each exit (National Regulations ss 97, 98, 168)

4.10.25   Staff have access to operating telephone at all times so they can contact parents and emergency services during an emergency (National Regulations s 98)

4.10.26   A minimum of one person with an approved and current first aid qualification that covers CPR, anaphylaxis and emergency asthma management is rostered on at all times, including during excursions and travel outside the service (National Regulations s 136)

4.10.27   Our first aid kits are signposted, easy to access, and regularly audited to ensure they are appropriately stocked (National Regulations s 89)

4.10.28   We follow our Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy and Procedures if a child is injured, ill or suffers a trauma. We notify parents/emergency contacts as soon as practicable, complete an incident report, notify the regulatory authority according to their requirements and keep the report until the child is 25 years old (or, in the case of a report concerning sexual abuse, for a minimum of 45 years) (National Regulations ss 85, 86, 87, 168)

4.10.29   Staff follow our policy and procedures to help prevent the spread of infectious diseases. We follow the recommended exclusion periods for infectious diseases and notify families when there is an occurrence of an infectious disease at our service (National Regulations s 88)

Health and hygiene

4.10.30   Staff follow our policies and procedures for good health, hygiene and safe food handling practices (National Regulations s 77) and show the children how to do the same

4.10.31   Children have access to safe drinking water and are offered water regularly throughout the day (National Regulations s 78)

4.10.32 Staff follow the safe food practices set out in our Food Safety Program for buying, preparing, storing and serving food (cooking with the children and placing lunch boxes in the refrigerator

4.10.33 We have handwashing basins next to/in our nappy changing area and nappy changing benches are well made and maintained (National Regulations s112)

4.10.34 We have posters on the wall that remind staff to follow good hygiene practices when helping children with toileting and changing children's nappies

4.10.35 We have a well-equipped laundry at the service. Our laundry door, washer and dryer are kept locked when not in use/hygienic facilities are kept in a room that children cannot not access, staff empty water from containers when they are finished using them, and dangerous chemicals are stored in locked cupboards (National Regulations s 106)

4.10.36 We have adequate, age/stage appropriate toilet, washing and drying facilities for children

4.10.37 Staff follow our procedures for managing sun protection and heat stress (National Regulations s 168). We have adequate shaded areas outside that protect children from the sun (National Regulations s 114)

Medical conditions

4.10.38 Staff follow our policy and procedures for managing medical conditions, including allergies/anaphylaxis, asthma and diabetes. Medical management plans, risk minimisation plans, and communication plans are in place for all children who need them (National Regulations s 90)

4.10.39 Staff follow our procedures for the administration of medication, including for children over pre-school age who are self-administrating medicine (National Regulations ss 90, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96)

Physical and online environments

4.10.40 We keep the physical environment, furniture and equipment safe, clean and in good repair (National Regulations s 103) by following our physical environment policies and procedures, and by using checklists, such as for cleaning, daily safety checks, building and equipment maintenance, and inspections of the physical environment

4.10.41 We check that furniture and equipment meet the relevant Australian safety standard

4.10.42 Indoor spaces are ventilated, have adequate natural light and maintained at a temperature that ensures the safety and wellbeing of children (National Regulations s 110)

4.10.43 Our outdoor space is enclosed by a fence/barrier that prevents children preschool age and under from going through it, over it or under it (National Regulations s 104)

4.10.44 We store hazardous chemicals and items so that children cannot access them e.g., in locked cupboards or rooms

Staff follow our procedures for water safety (National Regulations s 168)

4.10.45 We have policies and procedures for online safety, including for photographing and recording children, use of images, social media and technology/devise use for children and staff (National Regulations s 168) (see our Technology and Device Use Policy, Photography and Video Policy and Social Media Policy)

4.10.46 Our practices align with the National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children:
   • Only service-issued devices are used to take photos or videos of children, and we have secure storage practices and systems in place
   • Staff are not allowed to have personal devices that can take photos/videos or personal storage and file transfer media on their person while they are with children, except in limited circumstances
   • Our policies and practices ensure that we capture, store and retain images/videos of children securely and according to the Australian Privacy Principles

4.10.47 Educators learn about online safety as part of their professional development, and we teach children about online privacy and safety in our educational program

Excursions, transport and travelling between services

4.10.48 Staff follow our Excursions Policy and Procedure, Transport Policy and Procedure, Safe Arrival of Children Policy and Procedure, which sets out the specific risk assessment areas to be covered and our practices that keep children safe and accounted for during these higher risk activities (National Regulations ss 102A, 102B, 102C, 102E, 102AA, 102AAB, 102AAC, 168).

4.10.49 Parents/other authorised people must give us written authorisations for excursions, transport and travel between our service and any other education and care service (National Regulations ss 99, 102, 102D)

Collection and delivery of children

4.10.50 Staff follow our Delivery and Collection of Children Policy and Procedure, which only allows children to be released to the care of people who are authorised to collect them (and who are not intoxicated) (National Regulations s 99)

4.10.51 Staff make sure that children are signed in and out of our service each day

Lock up

4.10.52 Staff follow our Lock Up Procedure at the end of each day. They physically check every area at the service, including sheds, in containers, bathrooms, gardens, outdoor play equipment, sleep and rest rooms, and make sure that every child has been signed out

Sleep and Rest

4.10.53 Staff follow our Sleep, Rest and Relaxation policy, which is based on best practice guidelines. It sets out the specific risk assessment areas to be covered for sleeping and resting children and how we make sure that we are meeting their individual needs, with regards to their age, development and cultural preferences (National Regulations s 84A, 84B, 84C, 168)

4.10.54 Our bedding equipment meets the relevant Australian Standard, and we carry out regular safety and maintenance checks on them

4.10.55 Bassinets are banned from our service at all times (National Regulations s 84D)

Review of child safe policies and practices

4.10.56 We regularly review and make improvements to our child safety policies and procedures

4.10.57 Our Child Safe Environment Policy and related policies and procedures are reviewed annually to ensure they meet current child safety and protection laws and best practice guidelines

4.10.58 The approved provider and nominated supervisor follow our Policy and Procedure Review Policy, which sets out how our policies and procedures are reviewed and evaluated

4.10.59 We record and examine complaints, concerns, incidents, suspicions, disclosures, reports about child safety and wellbeing to understand and address any flaws or shortcoming in our infrastructure, governance and operations

4.10.60 We ask for feedback from our staff, children, families and communities about our child safe policies and procedures. We also share with them reports on any child safety and wellbeing reviews we conduct

Documenting policies and procedures

4.10.61 We document how we are a safe organisation for children through our policies and procedures. The Victorian Child Safe Standards are embedded in our governance, policies and procedures. They are not siloed

4.10.62 Our Child Safe Environment Policy and related policies and procedures tells our staff, children, families and communities how our service implements each of the 11 Victorian Child Safe Standards and meets our responsibility under the Reportable Conduct Scheme to have systems in place to prevent and respond to child abuse

4.10.63 Our Child Safe Code of Conduct describes what is acceptable and what is unacceptable behaviour towards children. All staff, including volunteers, students, and third-party contractors who are working

with children, must agree in writing to upholding the Code of Conduct and all our policies and procedures

4.10.64 We document all risk assessments and plans. We update them regularly, as required by law, and when there are changes that could affect the safety and wellbeing of children in our care

4.10.65 Our complaint handling and child protection policies and procedures describe how we respond to complaints and concerns, and our reporting obligations for harm or risk of harm to a child

4.10.66 Our recruitment and HR policies and procedures ensure that only people who are suitable to work with children are employed by our service, including third party contractors, volunteers and students

4.10.67 Our policies and procedures are available for staff, families and communities to access at any time on our Web Page, in the pOlicy folder in the Gallery and on the staff One Drive

4.10.68 Families are notified within 14 days when policies and procedures are changed if they:

4.10.69 Affect the fees the charged or the way they are collected; or

4.10.70 Significantly impact the service's education and care of children; or

4.10.71 Significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service (National Regulations s 168)

4.10.72 We ask for feedback when we review our child safe documents and practices.

Breaches of our child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures

4.10.73 We act on breaches to our Child Safe Environment Policy and related documents

4.10.74 A breach means any action or inaction by anyone to whom our Child Safe Environment Policy applies who fails to comply with any part of our child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, including (but not limited to) our:

   a) Child Safe Environment Policy
   b) Child Safe Code of Conduct
   c) Child Safe Risk Management Plan
   d) Child Protection Policy and Procedures
   e) Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure
   f) Family Violence Safety Policy
   g) Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Environment Policy
   h) Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy and Procedure

4.10.75 Breaches and suspected breaches of our child safety policies and procedures must be reported as soon as practicable

4.10.76 If the breach relates to a child protection matter, staff must follow our Child Protection Policy and Procedures

4.10.77 Staff must report other breaches to the <nominated supervisor and/or approved provider> either in person, by telephone on 5366 4999 or via email woodleaelc@bmg.vic.edu.au Staff should complete the Child Safety and Wellbeing Breach – Incident Report Form which is available attached to this policy. this template is included in this policy at Appendix A

4.10.78 Breaches or suspected breaches will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly, transparently, and in line with our policies and legal obligations

4.10.79 Depending on the severity of the breach (minor, moderate, major or extreme), outcomes may include: emphasising the relevant component of the policies and procedures; increased supervision; professional development and training; mediating between those involved in the incident (where appropriate); formal warnings (verbal and/or written); being transferred to another role; suspension or termination of employment; reports to external authorities

4.10.80 Breaches or suspected breaches will trigger us to review our current policies and procedures

5   Principles

5.1.1   We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and to implementing the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the National Quality Framework across all levels of our service

5.1.2   We comply with all relevant legislation, regulations and standards at all times

5.1.3   We are committed to implementing the VEYLDF/EYLF

5.1.4   We act in line with our Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing, Child Safe Code of Conduct and the ECEC Code of Ethics

5.1.5   Children at our service know and can exercise their rights. Children, families and communities are involved in making decisions about matters that concern them

5.1.6   Children's diverse and unique abilities, identities backgrounds and perspectives are valued

5.1.7   Our interactions with children are respectful, equitable and supportive. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated

5.1.8   Only staff who are suitable to work with children will be employed

5.1.9   Our complaint systems prioritise the safety of children

5.1.10   We always act on harm or risk of harm to children

5.1.11   Staff are given the training, resources and support to provide a child safe environment that is culturally safe and inclusive

5.1.12   Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and hazards in our physical and online environments

5.1.13   Our governance, operations policies, risk management plans, procedures, systems and practices are best-practice and up-to-date

6   Policy Communication, Training and Monitoring

6.1.1   This policy and related documents can be found on the Web site, Policy folder in the gallery and the staff One Drive

6.1.2   The approved provider and nominated supervisor provide information, training and other resources and support regarding the Child Safe Environment and related documents

6.1.3   All staff (including volunteers and students) are formally inducted. They are given copies of/access to, review, understand and formally acknowledge this Child Safe Environment Policy and related documents

6.1.4   The approved provider runs a professional development program (Complispace) for each staff member, which covers this policy

6.1.5   Roles and responsibilities and clearly defined in this policy and in individual position descriptions. They are communicated during staff inductions and in ongoing training

6.1.6   The approved provider and nominated supervisor monitor and audit staff practices through spot checks, performance reviews, supervision sessions, compliance visits, regular performance appraisal staff meetings, annual staff week Policy and procedure reviews, Philosophy review, and address non-compliance. Breaches to this policy are taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action against a staff member

6.1.7   At enrolment, information evenings and through our family handbook, families are < /given access to our Child Safe Environment Policy and related documents

6.1.8   Families are notified in line with our obligations under the National Regulations when changes are made to our policies and procedures

7   Roles and Responsibilities

7.1   Approved Provider Responsibilities (not limited to)

7.1.1   Ensure our service meets its obligations under the *Education and Care Services National Law* and *Regulations,* including to take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury, ensure that children in our care are adequately supervised at all times, and that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable

7.1.2   Ensure that our service's governance, management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for child safety matters are appropriate in practice, best practice, align with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and comply with all relevant legislation, including the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.), the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic.), Worker Screening Regulations 2021, and Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

7.1.3   Provide a child safe environment (physical and online) that is inclusive and culturally safe

7.1.4   Provide a child safe culture - uphold, model and champion our service's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

7.1.5   Ensure this Child Safe Environment Policy is in place and available for inspection

7.1.6   Take reasonable steps to ensure our Child Safe Environment Policy is followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

7.1.7   Uphold our Child Safe Code of Conduct and empower and support staff to report breaches. Take breaches to the Code seriously

7.1.8   Ensure that systems are in place to identify and minimise or eliminate risks of harm to a child in line with our policies/procedures (including our Child Safe Risk Management Plan) and our legal requirements. Ensure staff can, and do, use the risk assessments/plans, including children's individual action plans

7.1.9   Promote a culture of reporting. Act on any incidents, disclosures, or suspicions of harm or risk of harm to a child, and report to the relevant authorities in line with our procedures and legal obligations. Act on allegations of harmful sexual behaviour in children and reportable conduct of staff

7.1.10 Ensure we have a child-focused complaint management system that responds properly to any complaints or concerns about harm or the risk of harm to a child and any allegations of harmful sexual behaviour in children

7.1.11 Successfully complete approved child protection training and other relevant professional development activities. Renew WWCC when required

7.1.12 Ensure that all staff have completed the training and professional development they need to provide a child safe environment (e.g. first aid, cultural competency, child protection). Ensure that the nominated supervisor / persons day-to-day charge have completed their child protection training. Ensure that all staff, including volunteers and students, are aware of current child protection laws, how they apply and any obligations they have under them. Keep evidence of child protection training and evidence of current valid WWCCs on record and make available for inspection

7.1.13 Ensure we make and store records according to our policies and legal obligations

7.1.14 Regularly review this Child Safe Environment Policy in consultation with children, families, communities and staff.

7.1.15 Notify families at least 14 days before changing this Child Safe Environment if the changes will: affect the fees the charged or the way they are collected; or significantly impact the service's education and care of children; or significantly impact the family's ability to utilise the service.

7.2   Nominated Supervisor / Persons in Day-today- Charge Responsibilities (not limited to)

7.2.1   Ensure our service meets its obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations, including to take every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm and hazards likely to cause injury, ensure that children in our care are adequately supervised at all times, and that no child is subjected to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable

7.2.2   Support the approved provider to ensure that our service's management, operations, policies, plans, (including risk management/action plans), systems, practices and procedures for child safety matters are appropriate in practice, best practice, align with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, and comply with all relevant legislation, including the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.), the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic.), Worker Screening Regulations 2021, and Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)

7.2.3   Provide a child safe environment (physical and online) that is inclusive and culturally safe

7.2.4   Provide a child safe culture - uphold, model and champion our service's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

7.2.5   Implement this Child Safe Environment Policy

7.2.6   Take reasonable steps to ensure our Child Safe Environment Policy is followed (e.g. through clear and accessible communication, and systemised inductions, training and monitoring of all staff – including volunteers, students)

7.2.7   Uphold our Child Safe Code of Conduct and empower and support staff to report breaches. Take breaches to the Code seriously

7.2.8   Identify and minimise or eliminate risks of harm to a child in line with our policies/procedures (including our Child Safe Risk Management Plan) and our legal requirements. Ensure staff can and do use the risk assessments/plans, including children's individual action plans

7.2.9   Promote a culture of reporting. Act on any incidents, disclosures, or suspicions of harm or risk of harm to a child, and report to the relevant authorities in line with our procedures and legal obligations. Act on allegations of harmful sexual behaviour in children. Notify the approved provider of any reportable conduct you are aware of

7.2.10 Implement our child-focused complaint management system to respond properly to any complaints or concerns about harm or the risk of harm to a child and any allegations of harmful sexual behaviour in children

7.2.11 Successfully complete approved child protection training and other relevant professional development activities. Renew WWCC when required

7.2.12 Support the approved provider to ensure that all staff have completed the training and professional development they need to provide a child safe environment (e.g. first aid, cultural competency). Support the approved provider to ensure that all staff, including volunteers and students, are aware of current child protection laws, how they apply and any obligations they have under them. Keep evidence of child protection training and evidence of current valid WWCCs and make it available for inspection

7.2.13 Ensure we make and store records according to our policies and legal obligations

7.2.14 Contribute to policies and procedure reviews and risk assessments and plans in consultation with children, families, communities and staff. Support the approved provider to notify families of reviews and changes according to legislation and our policies and procedures

7.2.15 Work collaboratively with services and or/professionals to support children's and families' access, inclusion and participation; and children, families and staff members who have been impacted by harm or the risk of harm

7.3   Educator /Other Staff Responsibilities (not limited to)

7.3.1   Follow this Child Safe Environment Policy and other related child safety policies and plans. Provide a child safe and culturally safe environment (physical and online) and discharge your duty of care (e.g. by supervising children in line with our policies and procedures and taking every reasonable precaution to protect children from harm or hazards likely to cause injury)

7.3.2   Abide by our Child Safe Code of Conduct. Report breaches to the Code. Do no subject children to any form of corporal punishment or any discipline that is unreasonable

7.3.3   Promote a child safe culture - uphold, model and champion our service's Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

7.3.4   Act on incidents, disclosures, or suspicions of harm or risk of harm to a child, and report to the relevant authorities in line with our procedures and legal obligations. Act on allegations of harmful sexual behaviour in children

7.3.5   Report any issues with our child safety policies and procedures to the appropriate person (e.g. approved provider, nominated supervisor, lead educator)

7.3.6   Identify and minimise or eliminate risks of harm to a child in line with our policies/procedures (including our Child Safe Risk Management Plan and other risk assessments/plans such as children's individual action plans)

7.3.7   Undertake all necessary training and professional development activities. Be aware of current child protection laws, how they apply and any obligations you have under them. Renew WWCC when required

7.3.8   Follow our child-focused complaint management system to respond properly to any complaints or concerns about harm or the risk of harm to a child and any allegations of harmful sexual behaviour in children

7.3.9   Ensure we make and store records according to our policies and legal obligations

7.3.10   Contribute to policy and procedure reviews and risk assessments and plans

7.4   Families Responsibilities (not limited to)

7.4.1   Follow all policies and procedures, where they apply to you

7.4.2   Share relevant information about your child's unique characteristics and circumstances, including matters relating to the child's health and safety, at enrolment and throughout the year through formal and informal communication

7.4.3   Where possible, contribute to our child safe policies and procedures, risk assessments and risk management plans. Report any risks of harm or hazards to the service and contribute to the plans for minimising or eliminating them

7.4.4   Where possible, be involved, e.g., participate in surveys, questionnaires, feedback sessions, cultural events and other special activities

7.4.5   Raise any concerns or complaints and report any concerns about children's safety and wellbeing

8   Legislation (Overview)

Law	Description
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
s 169	Offence relating to staffing arrangements
s 170	Offence relating to unauthorised persons on premises
s 174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
s 175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents
Regulations	
s 73	Educational program
s 77	Health, safety and safe food practices
s 78	Food and beverages
s 79	Service providing food and beverages
s 82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
s 83	Staff members not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
s 84	Awareness of child protection law
ss 84A - 84D	Sleep and rest
ss 85 - 89	Incidents, injury, trauma and illness
ss 90 - 91	Medical conditions policy
ss 92 - 96	Administration of medication
ss 97 - 98	Emergencies and communication
ss 99 - 102	Collection of children from premises and excursions
ss 102AA – 102AAC	Safe arrival of children
ss 102A – 102F	Transportation of children other than as part of an excursion
ss 103 - 110	Physical environment – Centre-based services and family day care services
ss 111 – 115	Physical environment - Additional requirements for centre-based services
ss 117A – 117C	Minimum requirements for persons in day-to-day charge and nominated supervisors

s 120	Educators who are under 18 to be supervised
s 122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
s 123	Educator to child rations – centre-based services
s 126A	Illness or absence of a qualified educator who is required to meet the relevant educator to child ratio
s 136	First aid qualifications
ss 145 – 152B	Staff and educator records – centre-based services
s 155	Interactions with children
s 156	Relationships in groups
s 157	Access for parents
s 158	Children's attendance record to be kept by approved provider
s 160	Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider and family day care educator
s 161	Authorisations to be kept in enrolment record
s 162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
s 168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
s 170	Policies and procedures to be followed
s 171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
s 172	Notification of change to policies or procedures
s 173	Prescribed information to be displayed
s 175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
s 176	Time to notify certain information to the Regulatory Authority
s 177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by the approved provider
ss 181 ,183 - 184	Confidentiality and storage of records
s 358	Working with children check to be read (VIC)
s 359	Criminal history record check to be read and considered (VIC)

9   Other Applicable Laws and Regulations

Act / Regulation	Description
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic.) *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (Public Authorities) Regulations 2013* *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (General) Regulations 2017* *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)* *Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)*	Provides guidance on how to uphold the principles in the [Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (OHS Act)	Describes the primary duty of care to people in the workplace
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic.) *Children, Youth and Families Regulations 2017*	Principal relevant Act and Regulations to child protection
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Child Wellbeing and Safety Act	Child safe organisation laws
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic.) *Child Wellbeing and Safety Regulations 2017* *Child Wellbeing and Safety (Information Sharing) Regulations 2018* *Child Wellbeing and Safety (Child Link) Regulations 2019* *Children's Services Act 1996 (Vic.)* *Children's Services Regulations 2020*	Child care services law (state/territory specific)
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic.) *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (Public Authorities) Regulations 2013* *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities (General) Regulations 2017* *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)*	Human rights, including children's rights Includes provisions for child-related criminal offences

Crimes Act 1958 (Vic.)	
Sex Offenders Registration Act 2004 (Vic.) Sex Offenders Registration Regulations 2014	Registration and reporting of child sexual abuse offenders
Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic.) Worker Screening Regulations 2021	Working with Children check
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)	Reportable Conduct Scheme
Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012(Vic.)	Commissioners, guardians and advocates laws
Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code	Covers mandatory food handling training requirements
Privacy Act 1988	Principal act protecting the handling of personal information
Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic.)	Family violence and information sharing

10   National Quality Standard

10.1.1   All elements of National Quality Standard apply to this Child Safe Environment Policy

11   Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) v2.0 / Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (VEYLDF)

YEYLDF / EYLF Outcome	Key Component
1: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF IDENTITY	• Children feel safe, secure and supported • Children develop their emerging autonomy, inter-dependence, resilience and agency • Children develop knowledgeable, confident self-identities and a positive sense of self-worth • Children learn to interact in relation to others with care, empathy and respect
2: CHILDREN ARE CONNECTED WITH AND CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR WORLD	• Children develop a sense of connectedness to groups and communities and an understanding of their reciprocal rights and responsibilities as active and informed citizens • Children respond to diversity with respect • Children become aware of fairness • Children become socially responsible and show respect for the environment
3: CHILDREN HAVE A STRONG SENSE OF WELLBEING	• Children become strong in their social, emotional and mental wellbeing • Children become strong in their physical learning and wellbeing • Children are aware of and develop strategies to support their own mental and physical health and personal safety
5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS	• Children interact verbally and non-verbally with others for a range of purposes

12   National Principles for Safe Organisations

12.1.1   All Principles apply to this Child Safe Environment Policy

13   Related Documents

13.1   Key Policies

All of our policies and procedures relate to this Child Safe Environment Policy. Key related policies include (not limited to):

Child Protection Policy | Child Safe Code of Conduct | Child Safe Risk Management Plan | Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy | Complaint Handling Policy | Excursions Policy | Family Violence Safety Policy (VIC) | Tobacco, drug and Alcohol-Free Environment Policy | Animal and Pet Policy | Safe Arrival of Children Policy | Transport Policy | Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy| Managing Emergencies and Evacuations Policy | Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy | ECEC Code of Ethics | Physical Environment Policy | Educator and Management Policy | Staffing Arrangement Policy | Health, Hygiene and Safe Food Policy | Emergency Management and Evacuation Policy| Social Media Policy | Technology and Device Policy | Photography and Video Policy | Work Health and Safety Policy | Relationships with Children Policy | Infectious Diseases Policy | Orientation for Children Policy | Parental Interaction and Involvement Policy | Governance Policy | Privacy and Confidentiality Policy | Delivery and Collection of Children Policy | Lock Up Policy | Collection and Delivery of Children Policy

13.2   Procedures / Plans

Child Safe Environment Procedures (attached)

13.3   Tools

ACECQA Risk Assessment and Management Tool
Active Supervision Guidelines (ACECQA)
Child Safety and Wellbeing Breach – Incident Report Form (attached at Appendix A)
Educating children about protective behaviour (attached at Appendix B)
Centre Support resources available on Karla Resources at centresupport.com.au

14   Authorisation

ELC Document Name	Child Safe Environment Policy and Procedure	
Name of Reviewer: Approved Provider	**Principal Andrew Neal**	**Signature:**
Name of Reviewer: Nominated Supervisor	**Kerry Osborn**	**Signature**:
Date Revised	**September 2024** Reviewed annually and when there are changes that may affect child safety, including after any responses to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of harm or risk of harm. The review will include checks to ensure the document reflects current legislation, continues to be effective, or whether any changes and additional training are required	

15   History

Date	Amendment
July 2024	1. New policy and procedure to replace the previous Child Safe Environment Policy
September 2024	1. Updated to include reference to the new National Model Code 2. Privacy Act in legislation table made to apply to all services 3. Updated policy titles in Related Policies section

16   Child Safe Environment Procedures

16.1   Policy Links

These procedures apply to our:
- Child Safe Environment Policy

16.2   Procedures

Key procedures (include – not limited to):
- Child Protection Procedures (in Child Protection Policy)
- Recruitment, Induction and Training Procedures (in Recruitment, Induction and Training Policy)
- Child Safe Risk Management Plan (in Child Safe Risk Management Plan)
- Complaint Handling Procedure (in Complaint Handling Policy)
- Excursions Procedure (in Excursion Policy)
- Safe Arrival of Children Procedure (in Safe Arrival of Children Policy)
- Transport Procedure (in Transport Policy)
- Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Procedure (in Sleep, Rest and Relaxation Policy)
- Managing Emergencies and Evacuations Procedures (in Managing Emergencies and Evacuations Policy)
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Procedure (in Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy)

Tools and resources (include):

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Breach – Incident Report Form template (attached)
- Educating children about protective behaviour resource (attached)

17   Appendix A

TEMPLATE - Child safety and wellbeing breach - incident report

Date of breach	
Time of breach	
Location of breach	
Name of person(s) involved in the breach	
Description of breach	
Immediate action taken	
If no action taken - reason	
Name of the authority the breach has been reported to (if relevant)	
Name of the person reported to	
Name of person completing form	
Signature of person completing form	
Date	
Time	AM/PM

18   Appendix B

RESOURCE - Educating children about protective behaviour

Educators regularly include child protection issues in the curriculum. For example, they intentionally teach children:

- about acceptable/unacceptable behaviour, and appropriate/inappropriate contact in a manner suitable to their age and level of understanding
- that they have a right to feel safe at all times
- to say 'no' to anything that makes them feel unsafe
- the difference between 'fun' scared that is appropriate risk taking and dangerous scared that is not ok
- to use their own skills to feel safe
- to recognise signs that they do not feel safe and need to be alert and think clearly
- that there is no secret too awful, no story too terrible, that they can't share with someone they trust
- that educators are available for them if they have any concerns
- to tell educators of any suspicious activities or people
- to recognise and express their feelings verbally and non-verbally
- that they can choose to change the way they are feeling.

Educators believe that:

- children are capable of the same range of emotions as adults
- children's emotions are real and need to be accepted by adults
- an adult's response to a child during their early emotional development can be hugely positive or detrimental depending on the adult's reaction
- children are very in touch with their bodies' reactions to their emotions
- children who better understand their body's response to an emotion are more able to foresee the outcome of a situation and avoid them or ask for help.