

PADEA EDUCATION

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

1. Purpose

Padea Education Pty Ltd (**Padea**) is committed to the safety and wellbeing of every child in our care. This includes complying with all applicable laws that protect children from abuse and harm. Padea's Policy is clear: there is no place for child abuse or harm of any kind at Padea.

Child abuse and harm is bad for the world and hurts our business. You can be held personally responsible for offences and/or expose the company to massive fines and reputational damage.

Padea's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy explains the responsibilities and reporting lines of every Padea worker, the principles and practices Padea has in place to prevent, identify and respond to abuse and harm, and how Padea meets the Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle.

This policy replaces all other pre-existing Padea child safety and wellbeing policies.

2. Scope

This Policy applies to every Padea worker, as well as anyone acting on Padea's behalf.

3. The Policy

a. Responsibilities

The table below summarises each role's child safety and wellbeing responsibilities. Full responsibilities and reporting lines are in the Child Safety Governance document.

Role	Responsibility
Director	Padea's Child Safety Officer, with ultimate accountability for child safety. Approves all child safety policies and procedures. Responsible for training, compliance, complaints handling and incident management. Reports to the relevant authorities on Padea's behalf and gives written confirmation of each report to the person who raised the matter.
Coordinator	Padea's Deputy Child Safety Officer. Acts as Padea's point of contact for guardians, students and partner schools on all matters. Reports all incidents, including any complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation, to the Director without delay. Acts for the Director during any absence, and takes carriage of any matter involving the Director.
Manager	Responsible and accountable for student safety and wellbeing on-site during sessions. Acts as the first point of contact for any complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation on-site during sessions, and reports to the Director without delay.
Tutor	Maintains professional boundaries and a safe environment. Prevents and identifies abuse and harm. Reports any complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation to the Manager or the Director without delay. Does not investigate and does not promise confidentiality to any student who raises a complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation.

All Other Workers	Upholds Padea's commitment to child safety, complies with all policies and procedures, and completes all required training. Reports any complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation to the Director without delay.
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b. Reporting

Anyone can raise anything. Every worker reports every complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation, however it arises; this internal reporting is Padea policy for every worker, whatever their age, and it does not replace any legal duty a worker holds personally. The adult criminal duties to report and to protect (Criminal Code (Qld) sections 229BC and 229BB) bind adults only, from the beginning of a worker's 18th birthday, and the Code of Conduct (the Code) sets them out in full.

The process for raising and handling any matter is set out in the Complaints Handling Policy. The Incident Reporting Form is online at <https://padea.fillout.com/incident-reporting-form> and can be submitted by anyone, at any time. Nothing in this document, or in any Padea document, prevents or delays any person reporting directly to the authorities at any time; no one needs permission to report externally, and Padea does not need, and will not seek, anyone's consent before reporting a child-safety concern. Where the law requires more than this document, the law prevails, and certainty is never required before reporting. Every report comes back, in writing, to the person who raised it.

c. The Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle

The Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld) establishes ten Child Safe Standards and a Universal Principle. This section sets out how Padea gives effect to each.

The Universal Principle

A child safe entity must provide an environment that promotes and upholds the right to cultural safety of children who are Aboriginal persons or Torres Strait Islander persons.

Cultural safety is more than the absence of racism. It is an environment in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families feel welcome, safe, valued, included and respected, and in which their culture, identity, language and connection to Country are recognised and affirmed. A strong connection to culture is a protective factor for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and is therefore a child safety matter. Cultural safety is determined by the experience of the child and their family, not by the intentions of the organisation, and what makes a child or family feel culturally safe differs between communities and individuals.

The Universal Principle is not a separate standard. It is a lens through which every Standard is read and applied. Padea embeds cultural safety across all aspects of its work, expects every worker to be culturally sensitive and racially aware at all times, and maintains zero tolerance for racism, discrimination and cultural abuse. Padea welcomes feedback from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and considers this feedback in policy reviews. If we are not culturally safe, we are not child safe.

Standard 1 – Leadership, Governance and Culture

Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity's organisational leadership, governance and culture.

Child safety is embedded in everything Padea does, and Padea makes this public in its Public Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing. The Director is Padea's Child Safety Officer and is ultimately responsible and accountable for child safety. Compliance with Padea's child safety policies and procedures is a condition of engagement for every worker. Each role's child safety responsibilities and reporting requirements are set out in the Child Safety Governance document. Padea maintains a culture in which any person can raise a complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation without fear, and acts on each one.

Standard 2 – Children's Participation and Empowerment

Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Padea informs students of their rights in age-appropriate, accessible ways, so every student understands what conduct is and is not acceptable. Every student knows how to raise a complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation, who to raise it with and that it will be taken seriously (see the Complaints Handling Policy). Students participate in decisions that affect them. Padea seeks and listens to student feedback, acts on it and tells them what changed.

Standard 3 – Families and Communities

Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

Padea informs families, communities and partner schools of its child safety policies and procedures. Every family has a named point of contact, the Coordinator (families@padea.com.au), for all matters, including incidents. Padea seeks and listens to feedback from families and partner schools, and acts on it to improve child safety and wellbeing.

Standard 4 – Equity and Diversity

Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

Padea upholds equity and respects the diverse needs of every student in policy and practice. Padea takes particular care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students with disability and LGBTIQ+ students and students living in out-of-home care. Padea removes barriers so that every student, whatever their background, language, ability or identity, can understand their rights and raise a complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation.

Standard 5 – Suitable and Supported People

People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

Padea selects its workers with child safety in mind; job advertisements set out Padea's commitment to child safety, job descriptions set out each role's child safety responsibilities and reporting lines, referee checks and a values-based assessment test each candidate's suitability to work with children. No person starts work without a current Blue Card (Working with Children Check) verified and linked to Padea. Padea verifies each worker's identity, maintains and audits an employee register, monitors the ongoing validity of every worker's Blue Card, and acts without delay on any suspension, cancellation or negative notice. Workers are inducted before they commence and receive ongoing supervision and support from their Manager and the Director to keep child-safe practice under review. Any concern about a worker's suitability can be raised safely, and Padea acts on it without delay (see the Complaints Handling Policy and the Code of Conduct).

Standard 6 – Complaints and Concerns

Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused.

Padea's processes to respond to complaints and concerns, set out in full in the Complaints Handling Policy, are child-focused and accessible. Anyone can raise a complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation, including where no individual child can be identified. Padea acknowledges and acts on each one without delay, explains outcomes, keeps records and reviews them for patterns. Where a child may be at risk of abuse or harm, Padea reports to the relevant authority without delay, regardless of any internal process; the external reporting channels are listed in the Complaints Handling Policy. No person is penalised for raising a complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation in good faith.

Standard 7 – Training, Knowledge and Skills

Staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training.

Every worker completes child safety training before working with students. The training includes recognising and responding to abuse, harm, grooming and disclosures; peer-on-peer harm and harmful sexual behaviours; physical safety; online safety; cultural safety; professional boundaries; behaviour management; reporting obligations; record keeping and information sharing; and Padea's own policies, procedures and the Code of Conduct. Every training completion is recorded. Training is refreshed at least annually, and after any incident, policy change or change in law.

Standard 8 – Safe Physical and Online Environments

Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed.

Padea's physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children to be harmed. In the physical environment, every site is assessed before the service begins there, at least annually, after any incident, and after any material change (see the Risk Management Strategy and the Site Risk Assessment). Padea runs its sessions in small, actively supervised groups, in spaces with clear sightlines and no isolated areas, so no worker is ever alone with a student; arrival and departure are supervised, any non-Padea adult is received away from students, and each site is secured once the last student has left. In the online environment, worker-student communication occurs only through official Padea channels, never personal ones, and is recorded (see the Code of Conduct). No single control is sufficient: Padea applies overlapping controls, so that if one fails, another reduces the opportunity for abuse or harm.

Standard 9 – Continuous Improvement

Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

Padea reviews all child safety policies and procedures at least annually, and after any incident, complaint or change in law. Reviews are informed by feedback from workers, students, guardians and partner schools where appropriate, and by lessons learned from incidents. Every policy and policy update is reviewed and approved by the Director. Padea uses the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) Self-Assessment Tool as a benchmark in its annual review. After each review, Padea informs its workers, families and partner schools of any changes.

Standard 10 – Documented Policies and Procedures

Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.

Padea publishes The Padea Child Safety and Wellbeing Documents in full at www.padea.com.au/legal. Every document is version-controlled, with every version and the reason for each change recorded in Padea's central change register, available on request. Each document is communicated to workers, students, guardians, partner schools and others, as relevant to each audience.

d. Interactions Between Students

Padea sets clear expectations for how students treat one another, and makes them known to students and guardians at enrolment. Students treat one another with respect; bullying, intimidation, exclusion, physical aggression, and sexual behaviour or harassment are never acceptable between them, whether in person or online.

Where conduct between students falls short of these expectations, workers act without delay to separate those involved and keep every child safe; every child involved is protected and supported, and no child is treated as an offender. Harm between students is an incident like any other: it is handled under the Complaints Handling Policy, and the guardians of each child are informed separately.

4. Policy Ownership

The Director owns this Policy and approves every change to it. For any questions about this Policy, please contact Dylan Chern at dylan@padea.com.au.

The current version of this document, and of every Padea child safety document, is publicly available at www.padea.com.au/legal. A printed copy is available on request.

5. Definitions

This section defines the terms used across The Padea Child Safety and Wellbeing Documents; each carries the same meaning wherever it appears.

Abuse and Harm

Any of the following acts, committed against a child: a sexual offence or grooming; the infliction of physical violence; the infliction of serious emotional or psychological harm; or serious neglect. Any one of these, alone, is abuse or harm.

Allegation

A specific claim, not yet proven, that a person has abused or harmed or risked abusing or harming a child.

Child

A person under 18 years of age.

Child Safety and Wellbeing

Protecting children from abuse and harm, managing the risk of abuse and harm, supporting a child at risk of abuse and harm, and responding to incidents of abuse or harm.

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction with a Padea service, decision or worker.

Concern

A sense that something may be wrong for a child, where there is no specific event.

Cultural Safety

An environment in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families feel welcome, safe, valued, included and respected, and in which their culture, identity, language and connection to Country are recognised and affirmed.

Disclosure

When a child tells someone, directly or indirectly, that they or another child has been abused or harmed.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse occurs when:

A child's social, emotional, cognitive or intellectual development is impaired or threatened. It may include emotional deprivation due to persistent rejection, hostility, teasing, bullying, yelling, criticism or exposure to domestic violence.

Grooming occurs when:

A person's conduct towards a child, or towards persons close to a child, such as a guardian or friend, in person or online, creates or exploits opportunities for sexual conduct with the child, secures the child's compliance, or avoids detection. Sexual abuse can be, but is not always, preceded by grooming.

Incident

Any complaint, concern, disclosure or allegation relating to child safety or wellbeing.

Neglect occurs when:

A child's basic necessities of life are not met and the child's health and development are affected. Basic necessities of life include food, housing, health care, adequate clothing, personal hygiene, hygienic living conditions, timely provision of medical treatment and adequate supervision.

Physical Abuse occurs when:

A child has suffered, or is at risk of suffering, non-accidental physical trauma or injury. It may include hitting, shaking, throwing, burning, biting and poisoning.

Service Matters

Complaints, requests or feedback about Padea's services that do not concern a child's safety or wellbeing. A matter that involves any risk to a child is an incident, never only a service matter.

Sexual Abuse includes:

Sexual behaviour involving a child and another person where: the other person bribes, coerces, exploits, threatens or is violent towards the student; the student has less power than the other person; or there is a significant disparity between the student and the other person in intellectual capacity or maturity.

Student

A person, regardless of age, enrolled as a student with Padea. Under The Padea Child Safety and Wellbeing Documents, duties of conduct and care apply in relation to any child; provisions for service delivery apply to students.

The Padea Child Safety and Wellbeing Documents

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, Child Safety Governance, the Code of Conduct, the Public Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing, the Complaints Handling Policy, the Site Risk Assessment template and the Risk Management Strategy, together.

Worker

Anyone who performs work for or on behalf of Padea, whether paid or unpaid. This includes employees, contractors, consultants, trainees and volunteers.

