CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY

This policy is guided by the paramount consideration that children's safety, rights and best interests are upheld above all other considerations in all decisions, actions and practices.

Our Service is committed to creating and maintaining a child safe environment where children and young people are protected, feel safe, respected and empowered, and where their rights, interests and wellbeing are central in all decisions and actions. We recognize that keeping children safe is a shared responsibility that requires strong leadership, a positive organizational culture and an ongoing commitment at every level of our service.

Embedding the NSW Child Safe Standards into everyday practice guides how we work, how we make decisions and how we interact with children, families, staff and the community. We actively promote children's participation, listen to their voices, and take their views seriously. We acknowledge that staff within an early childhood service are in a unique position to monitor behavioural and emotional changes, physical injuries, and the general wellbeing of a child due to the development of safe environments and trusting relationships with children and families. Our staff are trained to identify signs, risks and behaviours that may indicate child abuse and thoroughly understand their obligations and responsibilities to respond to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of child abuse including recording of observations and concerns in the child protection register, mandatory reporting when they suspect on reasonable grounds, a child is at risk of significant harm, completing risk assessments and through regular critical reflection of practice. We respond appropriately to concerns, and continually strengthen our policies, procedures and practices. Through clear expectations, continuous reflection, learning and accountability, we strive to ensure that child safety is not an isolated responsibility, but an integral part of how our service operates each day.

Our Service takes a 'zero' tolerance approach to child abuse and are committed to raise awareness about the importance of child safety in our environment and the community.

'Keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.'

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

2.2	Safety	Each child is protected
2.2.1	Supervision	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Incident and emergency management	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
2.2.3	Child protection	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1	Relationships between educators and children	Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child
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.
5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained

QUALITY AREA 7: GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP		
7.1	Governance	Governance supports the operation of a quality service

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS and NATIONAL LAW	
6A	Supply, Authorisation and Use of Devices Order 2026
82	Tobacco, vaping, drug and alcohol-free environment
84	Awareness of child protection law
102(A-D)	Transportation of children (risk assessments and authorisations)
103	Premises, furniture and equipment to be safe, clean and in good repair
104	Fencing
105	Furniture, materials and equipment
106	Laundry and hygiene facilities

109	Toilet and hygiene facilities
115	Facilities designed to facilitate supervision
122	Educators must be working directly with children to be included in ratios
123	Educator to child ratios- centre based services
136	First aid qualifications
155	Interactions with children
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
165 Regs	Record of visitors
165 Law	Offence to inadequately supervise children
166 Law	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
166A &5AA Law	Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct [NSW]
167	Record of service's compliance
168 (h)	Education and care services must have policies- Providing a child safe environment
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
S162 (A)	Persons in day-to-day charge and nominated supervisors to have child protection training
S165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
S166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
S167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
358	Working with children check to be read

OTHER RELEVANT LAWS and GOVERNING BODIES

NSW Child Safe Standards
Office of the Children's Guardian
The Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Amendment Act 2025
Education and Training Reform Act 2006- Child safe standards- Managing the risk of child abuse in schools. Ministerial Order No. 870
The Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Amendment Act 2025
The Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012
Failure to Disclose 2014
Failure to Protect 2015

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
Working with Children Act 2005
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
Family Law Act 1975
Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Act 2015
Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)

RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES RELATED TO CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT

Child Protection Policy Code of Conduct Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Delivery of Children to and Collection from an Education and Care Service Premises Excursion/Incursion Policy Furniture and Equipment Safety Policy Governance Policy Injury, Incident, Trauma and Illness Policy Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy Medical Conditions Policy Nutrition and Food Safety Policy	Physical Environment Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy (VIC) Safe storage of Hazardous Chemicals Policy Safe Transportation of Children Policy Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Staffing Arrangements Policy Sleep and Rest Policy Staffing Arrangements Policy Student and Volunteer Policy Sun Safe Policy Supervision Policy Technology Policy Unidentified Dog Policy Water Safety Policy Work Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

Our Service has a legal and ethical responsibility to provide and maintain a child safe organisation where all children are safe, respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. The safety, rights, wellbeing and best interests of children is paramount, and we aim to take all practical steps to protect children from harm, ensuring a healthy and child safe environment. The rights and best interests of children prevail over any other obligation or interest. This paramountcy principle in NSW, applies to every individual involved in the operation and delivery of ECEC, including the Commission and takes precedent over the financial interests of approved providers and any other fiduciary duties owed by persons with

management or control of services and extends to duties or obligations which arise from the *Corporations Act 2001*. Our Service provides children and staff with an environment free from the use of tobacco, vaping substances/ devices, alcohol and illicit drugs.

SCOPE

This policy applies to every individual involved in the operation and delivery of education and care at St Mark's including families, staff, educators, management committee, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, volunteers, students and visitors of the service.

IMPLEMENTATION

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. (Regulation 168, Regulation 170). The National Law requires management to ensure all children being educated and cared for are adequately supervised and every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury.

Our focus is to build a child safe environment which is reflected in our Service policies and procedures and understood and practiced by all educators and staff.

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

Our Service is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. Providing an emotionally, psychologically, and physically safe, welcoming and inclusive environment for all children to learn, develop and thrive. We understand our responsibilities and statutory duty of care to comply with the Child Safe Standards, sections 166A and 5AA of the Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW) and the Reportable Conduct Scheme to build our capacity as an organisation to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

Our Service has a zero tolerance to child abuse, and we are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We promote diversity and tolerance and aim to form equitable and positive relationships with children. We ensure children participate in decisions affecting them and listen and respect their suggestions and ideas. We respond to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm. We maintain the dignity and rights of each child, providing positive guidance and encouragement toward acceptable behaviour. All staff demonstrate a high regard and respect for the family and cultural values, age, physical and intellectual development and abilities of each child being

educated and cared for by the service. We refer to *ACECQA's NQF Child Safe Culture Guide* when seeking further guidance for supporting children's behaviour, building a child safe culture, supporting children's voices and cultural safety, ensuring child safe recruitment practices are adhered to and other practices that ensure that children's safety, rights and best interests are the paramount consideration in all decisions and actions related to the operation and delivery of education and care at St Mark's Preschool and Long Day Care Centre.

Our Service strongly opposes any type of abuse against a child and endorses high quality practices in relation to protecting children. All staff understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children from abuse and neglect and maintain up-to-date knowledge of child protection law (Reg 84). Staff complete the current Full Child Protection Training every 3 years and complete the child protection refresher training every 12 months, and whenever significant changes are made to the child protection law or reporting requirements. All staff and the approved provider, persons with management and control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge of the service, volunteers and students will complete the Mandatory National Child Safety Training – Foundations and Advanced Training of National Child Safety via Geccko. The foundations training will be completed by 27 August 2026 or 14 days from start of employment or before they work directly with children. Going forward, staff will complete foundation training once every two years. Staff will comply with our Staff Code of Conduct at all times.

RECRUITMENT

From the very beginning of the recruitment process, our centre clearly and transparently promotes that we are a centre that values child safety and actively ensures that all staff demonstrate child-safe behaviours and understand the role they play in creating and maintaining a child-safe environment. This is reflected in the way we advertise the position, the job description documents provided to applicants, the questions asked in interview process, robust reference checks and thorough induction processes.

Our Service will ensure a rigorous recruitment process is followed to select the best staff possible based on skills, qualifications, experience and suitability for the position available. Each role will refer to the appropriate position description during recruitment and the probation period to ensure applicants are suitable for the role and position.

All potential staff will participate in robust interviews and have reference checks completed before an offer of employment is presented. Reference checks will take into consideration the suitability of the applicant for the role, previous experience and their commitment to child safe practices. There must be at least 2 reference checks completed, one from the current supervisor and one from the most recent supervisor. Referees cannot be family or close friends. Referees should be asked:

- Whether or not the applicant has been the subject of a disciplinary action or has engaged in any concerning or unacceptable behaviour.
- How they know the applicant.
- What skills and characteristics the applicant is likely to bring to the position.
- The applicant's strengths and weaknesses.
- The applicant's response to supervision and direction.
- Whether the employer would employ the applicant again.

All potential staff are subject to a thorough screening process including:

- Obtaining and checking a copy of drivers license / other form of identification.
- Qualification verification - RTO checks through the National Training Register
- Checking and questioning of applicant's work history, including exploring any inconsistencies and gaps in employment.
- Teaching Accreditation (where relevant)
- Working With Children Check (WWCC) verification.
- Checking NQAITS to confirm whether an applicant is a prohibited person (section 188).
- National Criminal History Check
- Declaration of suitability.
- Checking validity of required qualifications e.g.: current first aid, asthma and anaphylaxis management, and safe food handling.

All new staff will undergo a probation period of three (3) months, during this time they will participate in an induction and orientation program and hold regular discussions regarding their performance with an appointed mentor.

Staff induction and onboarding includes provision of the Service's policies and procedures, code of conduct, Child Safe Standards, Child Safe Risk Management Plan, child protection, Work Health and Safety guidelines, behaviour guidance, service routines, human resource documentation, physical environment, communication with family's processes, Family Assistance Law, administration of Child Care Subsidy, Child Information Sharing Schemes and introduction to senior staff members and/or mentor. Applicant will review and sign the Child Safe Standards, the Code of Ethics and the St Mark's Staff Handbook philosophy statement.

[Primary policy – Staffing Arrangements]

Working with Children Clearance/Check

Employers have legal obligations around working with children. It is against the law to engage anyone who is 18 years or above in child-related work without a current Working with Children Check (WWCC) clearance, unless they are exempt from requiring one under the *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012*.

A Working With Children Check (WWCC) is a requirement for people who work or volunteer in child-related work. A WWCC is an assessment of a person's ability to work safely with children based on any known incidents that indicate the person poses a risk of harm to children. It involves a National Police Check(criminal history record check) and a review of any findings of misconduct under the Reportable Conduct Scheme. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring and relevant new records may lead to the clearance being revoked.

- To comply with National Regulations for those undertaking paid or voluntary child-related work all employees (18 years or above) of the Service will acquire a Working with Children Check

- Approved providers and Director will verify WWCC clearances before staff or volunteers (including agency staff) commence employment at their service, and every time the WWCC is renewed. The verification will be completed through the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian's (OCG) online portal. If an employee's WWCC clearance is suspended or barred, the approved provider will be notified by the OCG.
- The Director / Nominated Supervisor will keep a record of the expiry date of the Working With Children Check for all staff, volunteers and students and will update these on the Employment Record Management System, to receive reminders when renewal is due and will pass these reminders onto the relevant staff member.

- Management will ensure any notifications or concerns regarding a person's Working With Children Check/Clearance are recorded and steps taken immediately to ensure the person is not working directly with children in accordance with directions from the Office of the Children's Guardian (NSW) or relevant state/territory authority.
- Educators and staff employed or engaged at a service must notify their approved provider if they receive a negative notice or a change to their accreditation or registration, including if their WWCC clearance has been refused or cancelled. This notice must be provided in writing within 72 hours of the event occurring, or within 24 hours of becoming aware of the change.
- Approved providers must notify the NSW Early Learning Commission within 24 hours of becoming aware of the change by emailing information@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au.
- An individual under the age of 18 years are exempt from holding a WWCC. They must not however, work alone and must be adequately supervised by an educator over the age of 18 years of age.

[Primary policy – Child Protection, Staffing Arrangements]

CHILD PROTECTION

Children and young people always have a right to be safe and protected. To comply with legislation and ensure a child safe environment, educators are provided with training and ongoing supervision to ensure they understand that *child safety is everyone's responsibility.*

All educators and staff are mandatory reporters and must make reports if they suspect on reasonable grounds, a child is at risk of significant harm. All staff are provided with up-to-date training about child protection law and their obligations under this law and to ensure they are confident in following the reporting guidelines and adhere to our *Child Protection Policy*. (Reg 84). A Child Protection Register is maintained and updated regularly, recording reportable and other concerns pertaining to individual children. This register is referred to regularly to assess as certain ongoing situation to ensure children's safety and wellbeing is monitored and acted upon. This Register is kept in a locked filing cabinet in a keypad secured office to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Through continual education and training, educators and staff are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe. Training gives educators and staff confidence to identify, respond and report child abuse.

Nominated supervisors and persons in day-to-day charge must complete a course in child protection approved by the Regulatory Authority on an annual basis.

[Primary policies – Child Protection]

REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME

The Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organisation's responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their employees and volunteers. The Approved Provider and or the Director must notify the NSW Early Learning Commission, which is the independent regulator for ECEC in NSW within 24 hours of becoming aware of, observing, suspecting or receiving any allegations or disclosures that a staff member, employee, student or volunteer is engaging or has engaged in inappropriate conduct.

In the first instance, management Committee, staff, parents or carers must report any incidents, suspicions, allegations or disclosures of inappropriate conduct to the Director, documenting the disclosure or concern accurately and promptly and ensuring reports are made to the relevant authorities. Management Committee, staff, parents or carers can if they wish, report directly to the NSW Early Commission Information and Enquiries team on 1800 619113 or email information@earlylearningcommission.nsw.gov.au.

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

- As an Information Sharing Entity our Service is obligated to share confidential or sensitive information about a person with other ISEs to support safety and wellbeing as part of the Child Information Sharing Scheme and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme and MARAM reforms. It may also be necessary to notify other agencies including: NSW Department of

Communities and Justice (DCJ) via the Child Protection Helpline or NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide

- NSW Office of the Children's Guardian (OCG) under the Reportable Conduct Scheme .
- the NSW Police if what you observe or suspect may constitute a criminal offence.

Service leaders or management (such as the nominated supervisor / Director) will document the disclosure or concern accurately and promptly, and ensure all reports are made to the relevant authorities.

[Primary policy- Reportable Conduct Scheme]

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT – SUPERVISION AND SAFETY CHECKLISTS

Creating and maintaining Children's safety and a child safe physical environment is paramount in our centre and practices are embedded in our day-to-day to ensure we protect children from harm and abuse. Under sections 165 and 167 of the Children (Education and Care Services) National Law (NSW), We ensure effective and adequate supervision is provided to all children at all times. Educators will employ 'active supervision' strategies within the service environment and when participating in excursions or transporting children. Educators ensure that they position themselves to maintain clear lines of sight of all children, regularly scan indoor and outdoor areas, maintain appropriate child-to-educator ratios, and anticipate potential risks during transitions, routines or play. Consideration will be made for the different ages and abilities of children and the activities that may require different levels of supervision, the designing of spaces that allow for clear visibility of all educator-child and child-to-child interactions, support responsive staff practices, and enable timely interventions to address behaviours or risks to children's safety and wellbeing.

At our service we maintain high standards of supervision and environmental safety, building a strong safeguarding culture and demonstrating our commitment to prioritising the needs, rights, safety and wellbeing of children.

The approved provider, in conjunction with educators of the service, will conduct a comprehensive risk assessment in order to identify any potential risk/s or hazards and ensure the safety of all children during sleep and rest. The risk assessment will be reviewed at least annually or after being aware of an incident or circumstance where the health, safety or wellbeing of children may be compromised during sleep or rest. All risk assessments will be regularly assessed and evaluated to facilitate continuous improvement in our service. If a risk concerning a child's safety during sleep and rest is identified during the risk assessment, the

approved provider must update the *Sleep and Rest Policy* and procedure as soon as possible. The risk assessment must be stored safely and securely and kept for a period of 3 years.

Educators will maintain adequate supervision and maintain educator ratios throughout the sleep period, ensuring supervision is active, effective and frequent. They will ensure they are not engaged in other duties (e.g., administrative duties) that will take their attention away from actively supervising sleeping and resting children. Educators will physically check that the child is breathing by checking the rise and fall of the child's chest and the child's lip and skin colour from the side of the floor mattress. They will ensure physical checks of a sleeping child occur at least every 10 minutes (Note: CCTV, audio monitors or heart monitors do not replace the need for physical checking/inspecting sleeping children) and ensure a record is maintained recording the time and observation of each physical check immediately after checks are made on the Safe Sleep Record [include children of all age groups on Sleep/Rest record].

Educators will consider the circumstances and any risk factors that may mean physical checks need to be more frequent for some children (e.g.; children with colds, chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs that may require higher level of supervision). They will consider higher levels of supervision and conduct more frequent checks on children with colds, chronic lung disorders or specific health care needs

Through conducting risk assessments, we assess and manage risks in the physical environment collaborating with children to develop behaviour guidelines for play including adventurous / risky play to ensure their safety. Educators have a sound understanding of their duty of care and responsibilities in ensuring a child safe environment.

Educators conduct regular safety checks to maintain basic standards of safety within our Service. We believe that child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels within our Service. Children are encouraged to speak up about their safety and the safety of their friends by telling an educator if they feel unsafe in a particular situation or environment.

Educators will complete the following daily checklists to assist and record inspections of the physical environment where foreseeable risks may be evident and cause harm or injury to a child: indoor safety checklist, outdoor safety checklist etc. Any findings that require attention will be either dealt with immediately or submitted into the maintenance book depending on priority.

[Primary policies – Code of Conduct; Supervision; Sleep and Rest; Nappy Change and Toileting; Health and Safety, Staffing Arrangement, Supervision]

STORAGE OF HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

We reduce the risk of harm to children and educators by using eco-friendly products. Our Service will endeavour to provide a safe environment where necessary chemical and hazardous equipment are safely stored away from children and handled appropriately.

Management and educators will keep a register of hazardous chemicals used at the Service, including relevant Safety Data Sheets (SDS).

To maintain a safe environment for children, the following audits and checklists are conducted:
Safety checks and audits used within your Service such as : Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals audit, Poison audit, Medication storage audit, etc]
[Primary policies – Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Administration of Medication]

EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE & MAINTENANCE RECORD

There are several factors that can contribute to a hazard, such as a deprived program, insufficient supervision and dilapidated equipment. To ensure a child safe environment free from hazards, we have implemented practices and continue to monitor Service policies and procedures that uphold Australian Safety Standards.

The premises and all equipment and furniture used within the Service are audited to ensure all aspects are safe, clean and in good repair. We understand that hazards are specific to developmental stages; educators are aware that toys and equipment need to be checked to ensure they are safe and developmentally appropriate for children. Regular checks occur within the Service to ensure that all toys, furniture and equipment are in good condition and working order.

These checks include:
Equipment and maintenance records used within our Service. Such Maintenance Record, toys register, toy cleaning register etc]
[Primary policy – Furniture and Equipment Safety]

RISK ASSESSMENT & RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

It is a legislative requirement that Management and educators implement a risk management system where they identify and manage hazards and risks within the workplace to ensure a child safe environment. The key principles of risk management include:

1. Identifying all hazards or potential hazards in the service/residence/venue
2. Assess the risk of harm or potential harm for each hazard
3. Control or manage the risk – Risk Rating Matrix
4. Monitor and improve safety – Risk Assessment Action Plan
5. Evaluate and Review

It is the responsibility of all staff and educators at the Service to complete a risk assessment where children's safety may be jeopardised and when organising an excursion/incursion or any transportation of children. Children's safety must be incorporated into everyday practice within the Service. Common hazards within the Service which may require a risk assessment include:

- cross-infection and infectious disease
- administration of medication
- anaphylaxis procedures and management
- building and equipment (including storage)
- inadequate space for conducting activities and experiences
- hazardous chemicals
- electrical appliances
- food preparation and storage
- environmental influences such as shade, noise etc
- sun safety
- children's behaviours
- water safety
- fire equipment
- pets and/or animals
- inadequate supervision of children
- children's activities and experiences
- Work Health and Safety such as manual handling (e.g., safe lifting children from cots and highchairs)
- non-compliance risk
- hot drinks
- transportation of children (regular outing and regular transportation)

- excursions

To maintain a child safe environment, we will adhere to Service policies and procedures and conduct the following checklist and audits:
This includes risk assessment, maintenance record, excursion risk assessment etc.
[Primary policies – Emergency and Evacuation; Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness; Sleep and Rest, Safe Transportation of Children; Sun Safety; Administration of First Aid; Medical Conditions]

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Management will ensure that copies of the emergency and evacuation floor plan is displayed in prominent positions near each exit of the service premises, including indoor and outdoor learning areas.

All staff are familiar with emergency evacuation procedures and regulatory requirements.
Rehearsals for emergency and evacuation procedures, including lock downs, are conducted at least once every 3 months.
[Primary policy- Emergency and Evacuation]

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE AUTHORISATION

Our Service prioritises children's safety at all times. We will only release children to an authorised person as named on the child's enrolment form. We request families provide current court orders, and parenting plans to ensure our records are up to date.

National Regulations require our Service to keep a record of children and visitor's arrival and departures, with the signatures of the person responsible for verifying the accuracy of the record and the identity of the person collecting the child.

Educators will work in collaboration with our *Delivery and Collection of Children Policy* and *Student and Visitors Policy* to ensure children feel safe and secure.

To ensure children's safety, educators have a clear understanding of their legal obligation to check identification when a person is collecting a child. To maintain compliance, parents and educators will complete a verbal consent form or email the confirmation if they authorise a person who is not on their emergency contact form to pick up their child.

[Primary policies - *Delivery and Collection of Children*; Student and Visitors]

Attendance records

The approved provider of an education and care service must ensure that a record of attendance is kept for the service that:

- records the full name of each child attending the service; and
- records the date and time each child arrives and departs; and
- is signed in by one of the following persons at the time that the child arrives and departs:
  - the person who delivers the child to the education and care service premises or collects the child from the education and care service premises;
  - a nominated supervisor or an educator.
  - a person authorised on the enrolment form as emergency contact or collection.

(Education and Care Services National Regulations, Chapter 4, Part 4.7 , Division 1 , Subdivision 1)

Review of the Attendance Record

- Staff will regularly review the attendances via the software to ensure its accuracy at all times.
- In instances when a parent or authorised nominee has not signed the child in, a staff member will sign that the child is in attendance.
- Prior to closing the service, two staff members must verify all children have been signed out of the centre. If a child is not signed out, educators/staff members will check against written rolls, physically check all areas of the centre and look for clues such as bags remaining in lockers, to ensure no child remains. Educators will then sign the child out, once they are sure there are no children in attendance.

Authorised Nominees

- On enrolment parents/guardians are to provide the names of two people who are authorised nominees for the purpose of collecting their child/ren from the service.
- Authorised nominees will be required to show photo ID to the Director / Responsible Person / Office Manager prior to collecting the child and signing out child/ren for the first time.
- Copy of authorised nominee ID will be identified and kept on the child's file.
- Staff members are to check the name on the photo ID against the list of approved persons to collect a child. A person is not allowed to collect a child if they do not have ID, or if the ID does not match the authorisation list.
- If the educator cannot confirm that the person trying to collect the child is authorised to collect the child, the child's parents will be contacted immediately.
- Parents/guardians are to advise the centre if someone different is picking up their child, either verbally or by email. This is then recorded in the Staff Daily Communication Book and a copy of email held in child's file. The person collecting the child will be required to show photo ID to the Director / Responsible Person / Office Manager prior to collecting the child and signing out child for the first time.

- **Please note:** Both parents have lawful authority of their children and are consequently permitted to remove children from the centres' care unless a Magistrates Court or Family Law Court make different orders prohibiting contact with the child. Court orders must be provided to the service and will be stored with the child's enrolment information.
- In the case of a separated family, either biological parent is able to add an authorised nominee in writing unless a court order is provided to the Nominated Supervisor / Director stating that one parent has sole custody and responsibility

Digital Recording of Head Counts and Attendance Records taken through the day

- Head counts and roll taking is undertaken throughout the day, including at morning and afternoon handover, transition times, emergency evacuations and excursions. These are recorded digitally, checked against attendance records, printed and stored both in paper copy and digitally.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

Management, educators, staff, volunteers and students will adhere to our Service's Code of Conduct Policy. We will:

- ensure that the safety, rights and best interests of children is paramount and prevail over any other obligation or interest.
- maintain high standards of supervision and environmental safety, building a strong safeguarding culture and demonstrating our commitment to prioritising the needs, rights, safety and wellbeing of children.
- ensure effective and adequate supervision is provided to all children at all times.
- take reasonable action to protect children and young people for risk of harm
- ensure the service premise is free from the use of tobacco, vaping substances and devices, illicit drugs and alcohol
- adhere to our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds to support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights
- promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children with a disability
- be responsible for their own, and others health and safety
- be a positive role model to children
- uphold a committment to an equal opportunity workplace and culture which values the knowledge, experience, and professionalism of all employees, team members, and managers, and the diverse heritage of our families and children

- respect the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information about child protection concerns confidential and only share information to promote child wellbeing or safety and /or manage risk of family violence with other Information Sharing Entities (IES) as per state/territory legislation.
- not put children at risk of abuse- refusing food/play, making threats, exposing children to inappropriate language or material (movies, internet, photos)
- As mandatory reporters, all staff must report any allegations of child abuse to the Approved Provider and via the Child Protection Helpline or NSW Mandatory Reporter Guide if they suspect on reasonable grounds, a child is at risk of significant harm.
- notify the approved provider and/or the regulatory authority within 24 hours of any serious incident, inappropriate conduct or complaint as per the National Regulations and National Law including Section 166A and 5AA -Offence to subject child to inappropriate conduct [NSW].

[Primary policies – Code of Conduct; Privacy and Confidentiality;]

ONLINE SAFETY

Our Service is committed to create and maintain a safe online environment with support and collaboration with staff, families and community, in accordance with the requirements of Supply, Authorisation and Use of Devices Order 2026.

Management ensures anti-virus and internet security systems are installed to block access to unsuitable web sites, newsgroups and chat rooms, this is managed by our external IT firm. Our Service maintains a register of all electronic devices purchased for and used within the Service. This register includes details such as the device type, date of purchase, intended use, assigned user (if applicable), security settings, and any features related to connectivity, data storage, or recording capabilities. Devices recorded in the register may include, but are not limited to, computers, tablets, mobile phones, cameras, CCTV systems, audio recorders, smart toys, baby monitors and any other internet-connected or data-enabled devices used within the Service.

Our Service regularly reviews how digital data, including images and videos of children, is stored. Back-ups of all digital data, whether offline or online (such as a cloud-based service), will be performed each month. Digital data stored at the Service will be destroyed in accordance with the *Record Keeping and Retention Policy* and procedure. The approved provider will ensure staff, educators, visitors and volunteers do not transfer images or videos from Service issued devices

to personal devices, unauthorised transferring of digital data may result in disciplinary action.
The identity of a child is not published on any platform.

Written authorisation is requested as part of the enrolment process for:

1. Children to use digital devices under direct supervision of educators
2. Educators to use service provided electronic devices to take photos or videos of children and these videos or audio used to document children's learning and share experiences with our broader community via our Service's public website, newsletter, special events.
3. Educators to use online apps like Canva or Pic Collage to create daily photo observations. (Images are deleted from these apps immediately and hard copies of photos are displayed in rooms and then stored as program evidence.

The use of personal electronic devices used to take photos, record audio or capture video of children who are being educated and cared for at the Service is strictly prohibited, in accordance with the requirements of Supply, Authorisation and Use of Devices Order 2026.
This includes items such as tablets, phones, digital cameras, smart watches, META sunglasses and personal storage and file transfer media (such as SD cards, USB drives, hard drives and cloud storage). These devices should not be in the possession of staff, educators, family members or visitors (e.g. ECIP professionals) while working directly with children or in the presence of children.

Our Service uses a range of secure software programs and apps on Service-issued devices to support the educational program and administration of the Service. All apps used by staff, educators, visitors and children are carefully selected, regularly checked and kept up to date with the latest available system updates. Access to software programs and apps are password protected to ensure the privacy of children, families and staff. Each user is required to create their own user account and ensure log in, and password information is not shared.
[Primary policies – Safe Use of Digital Technologies and online Environments Policy; Privacy and Confidentiality, Code of Conduct]

CONTINUOUS REVIEW

To ensure we maintain a culture of continuous improvement, we will ensure our child safe practices are regularly reviewed, evaluated and improved. We aim to ensure all educators, staff and volunteers

understand and effectively implement our policies and procedures to provide a child safe environment at our Service.

We will regularly review and monitor the effectiveness of our Child Safe policies and procedures and invite children, staff members, families and communities to contribute to their development.
Any updates or revisions will be communicated to all stakeholders.

FAMILIES

Our Service ensures families are always welcome and feel comfortable asking questions on how we prioritise child safety. We provide a range of opportunities for consultation and collaboration about decisions about their child's safety whilst at our Service including:

- policy and procedure review
- child protection
- Child Safe Standards (VIC)
- allegations/grievance procedures
- sun safety
- written authorisations- parenting orders
- code of conduct
- inclusivity and supporting children with diverse needs.

SOURCE

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Commission for children and young people *Being a child safe organisation* https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/being-a-child-safe-organisation/
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The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
The Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998
The Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012
Victoria State Government Health and Human Services. Creating child safe organisations: https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/creating-child-safe-organisations
Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIWED	JUNE 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	JUNE 2027
	Strengthening the wording around the use of a Child Protection Register.		
POLICY REVIEWED	MARCH 2026	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MARCH 2027
	Changes to WWCC requirements. The addition of the National Early Childhood Worker Register. The addition of the use of the Child protection Register. The addition of the completion of mandatory child safety training. Restriction on personal devices in ECEC settings under Part 6A of the National Law and the Regulator Direction issued by the NSW Early Learning Commission under Section 261A of the National Law. New provisions under section 166A and 5AA of the National Law (NSW) Preventing Inappropriate Conduct. The addition of Paramount Consideration.		
POLICY REVIEWED	AUGUST 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	AUGUST 2026
MODIFICATIONS	• Minor editing to text to add vape/vaping substances and devices		
POLICY REVIEWED	MAY 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	MAY 2023
MODIFICATIONS	• Policy rewritten as Child Safe Environment Policy. A new *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* has been drafted to reflect the New Child Safe Standards (effective 1 July 2022) • Additional law/regulations added- ACECQA Guidelines to Policy and Procedure document (June 2021) • Additional laws/regulations added • Additional related policies		

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
APRIL 2021	• review of policy and sources to ensure currency • no further changes as yet due to alignment to National Principles for Child Safe Organisations following review of Victorian Child Safe Standards (review in November 2021)	NOVEMBER 2021