CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICY – VIC

Our Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) Service is committed to the safety, wellbeing and support of all children and young people. Management, staff and volunteers take every reasonable precaution to protect children in our care and treat all children with the utmost respect and understanding at all times. We are dedicated in promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

Our OSHC Service embeds the new Child Safe Standards (VIC) and promotes a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of child abuse or harm to children whilst promoting children's sense of security and belonging.

We acknowledge that staff within an education and care 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 and behaviours that may indicate child abuse and thoroughly understand their obligations and responsibilities to respond to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of child abuse as mandated reporters.

Our OSHC 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.'
Victoria State Government- Education and Training (2019).

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 Child Safety and Protection (effective Jan 2026)	Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect. Management, educators and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities regarding child safety, including the need to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect
QUALITY AREA 5: RELATIONSHIPS WITH CHILDREN		
5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
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
82	Environment to be free from tobacco, vaping devices, vaping substances, drugs and alcohol
83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
84	Awareness of child protection law

97	Emergency and evacuation procedures
99	Children leaving the education and care service premises
102AAB	Safe arrival of children policies and procedures
102AAC	Risk assessment for the purposes of safe arrival of children policies and procedures
102B	Transport risk assessment must be conducted before service transports child
102C	Conduct of risk assessment for transporting of children by the education and care service
102D	Authorisation for service to transport children
102E	Children embarking a means of transport—centre-based service
102F	Children disembarking a means of transport—centre-based service
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	Premises 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
145	Staff record
149	Volunteers and students
155	Interactions with children
162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
165	Record of visitors
166	Children not to be alone with visitors
167	Record of service's compliance
168 (h)	Education and care services must have policies and procedures - Providing a child safe environment
168(2)(ha)	The safe use of digital technologies and online environments at the service
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available

172	Notification of change to policies or procedure
175	Prescribed information to be notified to regulatory authority
358	Working with children check to be read

RELEVANT LAWS

Education and Training Reform Act 2006- Child safe standards- Managing the risk of child abuse in schools. Ministerial Order No. 1359
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 (Vic)
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

Adventurous (Risky and Nature) Play Policy	Physical Environment Policy
Behaviour Guidance: Bullying Policy	Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (VIC)	Probation Induction and Orientation Policy
Child Protection Policy	Recruitment Policy
Code of Conduct Policy	Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy (VIC)
Dealing with Complaints Policy	Rest Policy
Delivery of Children to and Collection from an Education and Care Service Premises	Safe Arrival of Children Policy
Emergency and Evacuation Policy	Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals Policy
Excursion/Incursion/Extra Curricular Activities Policy	Safe Transportation of Children Policy
Furniture and Equipment Safety Policy	Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy
Governance Policy	Staffing Arrangements Policy
Injury, Incident, Trauma and Illness Policy	Student, Volunteer and Visitor's Policy
Interactions with Children, Families and Staff Policy	Sun Safe Policy
Managing an Unidentified Dog Policy	Supervision Policy
Medical Conditions Policy	Technology Policy
Nutrition and Food Safety Policy	Tobacco Drug Alcohol Free Policy
	Water Safety Policy
	Work Health and Safety Policy

PURPOSE

Our OSHC 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. Children's safety and wellbeing is paramount, and we aim to take all practical steps to protect children from harm, ensuring a healthy and child safe environment. Our OSHC Service adopts and aligns with the National Model Code for taking images or videos of

children. (See *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy*.) We provide children, staff, educators and visitors with an environment free from the use of tobacco (including vaping) alcohol and illicit drugs.

SCOPE

This policy applies to families, staff, educators, management, the approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the OSHC 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. (Reg.168, Reg. 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 children, young people, families, educators, staff, visitors, volunteers and students.

KEY TERMS-DEFINITIONS

Code of Conduct	Together with a code of ethics, the code of conduct helps guide interactions between management, educators and staff, as well as informing the service decision-making processes relating to professional standards
Disclosure	The process where a child or young person conveys or attempts to convey that they are being or have been abused.
Information sharing	Refers to the *Child Information Sharing Scheme* (CISS)- sharing or exchanging information, including personal information about or related to, abuse in organisational contexts. The terms refer to sharing information between (or within) organisations, as well as sharing information with professionals who provide key services for children.
Mandatory reporter	A person who is required to report to Child Protection if they suspect on reasonable grounds that a child has been abused or is at risk of being abused.
Mandatory reporting	Legislative requirement for selected classes of people to report their concerns to Child Protection if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection
National Model Code	The National Model Code for Taking Images or Videos of Children while Providing Early Childhood Education and Care (National Model Code) addresses child safe practices for the use of electronic devices while providing early education and care (ECEC).
Reportable conduct	Certain organisations or entities have legal obligations under the *Reportable Conduct Scheme* to notify and investigate certain allegations of abuse involving a child, when the allegation is against someone they employ, engage or contract in circumstances outlined in the legislation.
Rights of the Child	Human rights belonging to all children, as specified in the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child.
Victoria's Child Safe Standards	The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) are a compulsory framework that support organisations to promote the safety of children, prevent, respond to and report allegations of child abuse and harm. There are 11 Child Safe Standards.
Wellbeing	Sound wellbeing results from the satisfaction of basic needs. It includes happiness and satisfaction, effective social functioning and the dispositions of optimism, openness, curiosity, and resilience.
Working with Children / working with vulnerable people check (WWCC/WWVP)	A notice, certificate or other document granted to, or with respect to a person under a working with children law. The person has been assessed as suitable to work with children; there has been no information that if the person worked with children the person would pose a risk to the children; or the person is not prohibited from attempting to obtain, undertake or remain in child-related employment.

Definitions sourced from
ACECQA. (2023). Policy and procedure guidelines. *Providing a Child Safe Environment*.
Commission for Children and Young People- Child Protection Manual

OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY

- Our OSHC Service is committed to safety and wellbeing 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. We have a dedicated *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* which explains our service's approach to meeting the Standards.
- Our OSHC Service has a zero tolerance to child abuse, and we are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students have undertaken current child protection awareness training and understand their obligations as mandatory reporters and adherence to child protection law [Reg.84]. 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.
- Our OSHC 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 will undertake child protection awareness training every 12months, and whenever significant changes are made to the child protection law or reporting requirements. Staff, educators, visitors and students will comply with our Code of Conduct at all times.
- We are committed to diversity and welcome all children and young people regardless of their abilities, sex, gender or social economic or cultural background. Our OSHC Service will not tolerate bullying or harassment and our *Behaviour Guidance - Bullying Policy* and procedure outlines the preventative strategies and supervision implemented by our service to deal with bullying and help protect children. Our priority is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and encourage positive relationships.

[Primary policy- Child Protection; Child Safety and Wellbeing (VIC); Behaviour Guidance - Bullying; Code of Conduct; Interactions with Children, Families and Staff; Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy]

RECRUITMENT

Our OSHC Service maintains a rigorous and consistent recruitment, screening and selection process to ensure the best staff members and educators are employed based on skills, qualifications, experience and suitability for the position available. All staff and educators participate in robust interviews and have reference checks completed to ensure the applicant's suitability to the role, previous experiences and their commitment to child safe values and practices.
All prospective applicants must declare that they do not hold any prohibition notices preventing them from working with children (Reg 188). The approved provider will verify prohibition notices using the NQA ITS 'register search' tool. Candidates applying for roles such as nominated supervisor or responsible person must also complete a Compliance History notice. Existing employees are encouraged to disclose any enforcement actions taken against them.
All staff and educators are provided with a comprehensive induction process which outlines our Code of Conduct and key policies including *Child Protection, Child Safety and Wellbeing, Reportable Conduct Scheme, Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy Work Health and Safety Policy* and other related policies to ensure a child safe environment. New employees (including the nominated supervisor and staff members), students and volunteers are to familiarise themselves with the *Child Protection Policy* to understand the Child Protection Law and their obligations and mandatory reporting duties to ensure the safety and well-being of children at the Service.
[Primary policy – Child Protection; Probation Induction and Orientation; Recruitment]

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

Working in conjunction with the *Working with Children Act (2005)* and National Regulations, the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children is paramount within our Service and community. A Working with Children Check (WWCC) is a requirement for people who work in child-related work.

It involves a national criminal history check and a review of findings of workplace misconduct and child protection concerns. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring and relevant new records may lead to the clearance being revoked and they will be prohibited from working with children.
The approved provider or nominated supervisor will ensure they have read each person's WWCC before engaging educators, staff or volunteers in the Service. The WWCC will be placed in the individual's file and continue to be updated as required.
Management is responsible for the periodic review and maintenance of up-to-date records of employees' WWCC, including the WWCC number and the date on which each clearance expires. Management will verify all student and volunteer WWCCs prior to placement. Any visitor who has direct contact with children will be required to provide a WWCC for verification prior to coming into contact with children.
The approved provider will keep a record for each day a student or volunteer participates in the Service including date and hours of participation.
[Primary policy – Child Protection; Recruitment; Staffing Arrangements; Student, Volunteer and Visitor]

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, all educators, staff, volunteers and students are advised of current child protection law and understand any obligations under the law. Supervision is effective to ensure they understand that *child safety is everyone's responsibility.*

Approved providers, nominated supervisors, educators and staff are mandatory reporters and have a legal obligation to make reports if they suspect on reasonable grounds, a child is at risk of significant harm. Neglecting these obligations could potentially be deemed a criminal offence. All educators, staff and volunteers are provided with up-to-date training and development about child protection law, and their obligations under this law, and to ensure they are confident in following the reporting guidelines within Victoria and adhere to our *Child Protection Policy*. (Reg. 84).
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 mandatory child protection training approved by the regulatory authority and refresher training on an annual basis.
To protect children and young people and ensure their safety, welfare and wellbeing, management is legally required to report allegations or convictions of harm or risk of harm to a child or young person and child related misconduct by any staff member, educator, volunteer or contractor.
[Primary policies – Child Protection; Child Safety and Wellbeing; Reportable Conduct Scheme]

REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME

The Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organization's responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their employees and volunteers. the approved provider must notify the Commission for Children and Young People (the Commission) about any allegations of misconduct involving a child.
Reportable conduct applies to all employees, volunteers, students (over the age of 18) and contractors at our Service.
Our OSHC 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.
[Primary policy- Reportable Conduct Scheme (VIC)]

CODE OF CONDUCT

Management, educators, staff, volunteers and students will adhere to our OSHC Service's Code of Conduct Policy. Our *Code of Conduct Policy* clearly outlines expectations regarding behaviour and describes the principles, values, and ethical guidelines that guide our staff and stakeholders in their interactions and activities. All educators and staff members are made fully aware that following breaches of the Code of Conduct and role responsibilities may result in disciplinary action which may lead to termination of employment. Individuals can report

any concerns they may have about inappropriate actions of any educator, staff, student or volunteer that involves children or young people to management, ensuring a prompt and thorough response to maintain a safe and secure environment for all.

We will:

- promote a culture of child safety and wellbeing in all aspects of our Service's operations
- adhere to our *Child Safe Environment Policy, Child Protection Policy*, *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy* at all times
- provide adequate and effective supervision of children at all times
- ensure all staff, educators, volunteers and students have undertaken current child protection legislation training
- provide adequate and effective supervision of children at all times
- ensure the safe use of digital technologies and online environments
- take reasonable action to protect children and young people for risk of harm
- ensure the Service premise is free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol-including vaping
- adhere to our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- not discriminate against any child, because of culture, race, ethnicity or disability
- be responsible for their own, and others health and safety
- be a positive role model to children
- respect children's privacy and dignity at all times
- report any allegations of child abuse
- notify the approved provider and the regulatory authority within 24 hours of any serious incident or complaint as per the National Regulations
- encourage children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them

Staff, educators, students and volunteers will not:

- discriminate against any child, because of age, gender, cultural background, race, ethnicity or disability
- put children at risk of abuse- refusing food/play, making threats, exposing children to inappropriate language or material (movies, internet, photos or music)
- be in the possession of a personal electronic device that can take images or videos or personal storage and file transfer media when providing education and care and working directly with children- National Model Code
- develop any 'special' relationships with children or young people that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment
- be under the influence of drugs or alcohol while working; bring alcohol or drugs onto the premises
- not smoke or vape in or on surrounding areas of the OSHC Service.

[Primary policies – Code of Conduct; Privacy and Confidentiality; Probation Induction and Orientation Policy; Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments; Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Policy]

REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO GENERAL COMPLAINTS

Feedback from children, families, educators, staff and the wider community is fundamental in creating an evolving OSHC Service working towards the highest standard of care and education.

We ensure educators, staff, volunteers and students are well informed about the different ways children may express concerns, distress and disclose harm as well as the process for responding to disclosures from children- including a complaint that alleges a child is exhibiting sexual behaviours that may be harmful to the child or another child. (ACECQA, 2023).

We aim to investigate all complaints and grievances with a high standard of equity and fairness. Our OSHC Service believes in procedural fairness and natural justice that govern the strategies and practices, which include:

- The right to be heard fairly
- The right to an unbiased decision made by an objective decision maker
- The right to have the decision based on relevant evidence.

The approved provider will place a prominently displayed notice in the foyer area of our OSHC Service, providing contact information, including the name and telephone number for lodging complaints.

Educators and staff will receive guidance on the complaint/ grievance policy and procedure and the process for reporting complaints during their service induction. Families, children and young people will be advised of the complaint/ grievance policy and procedure and how to report complaints during orientation of enrolment. All grievances and complaints will be treated seriously and as a priority, in accordance with the *Dealing with Complaints*

Policy and procedure. Any complaints that allege a breach of the National Law and Regulations or alleges that the health, safety and wellbeing of a child or young person at the Service may have been compromised will be documented and reported to the regulatory authority within 24 hours.
[Primary policies – Child Protection; Dealing with Complaints]

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT – SUPERVISION AND SAFETY CHECKLISTS

Children's safety is embedded in our day-to-day practices. All staff and educators have knowledge of and adhere to the National Model Code and Guidelines We ensure effective and adequate supervision is provided to children at all times consistently, while ensuring educator to child ratios are met at all times. Educators will employ 'active supervision' strategies within the service environment and when participating in excursions or transporting children. Consideration will be made for the different ages and abilities of children and the activities that may require different levels of supervision. We ensure students and visitors are never alone with children whilst at the Service.
Through conducting risk assessments, we assess and manage risks in the physical environment collaborating with children and young people to develop behaviour guidelines for play including adventurous 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 OSHC Service. We believe that child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels within our Service. Children and young people 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:
Risk assessment and management template – Indoor and outdoor learning environment safety checklist
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; Rest; Toileting; Health and Safety; Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments; 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, staff 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:
[Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals audit, Poison audit, Medication storage audit]
[Primary policies – Safe Storage of Hazardous Chemicals, Administration of Medication]

EQUIPMENT, FURNITURE AND 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, our OSHC Service has 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 OSHC 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:
Maintenance Record, toys register, toy cleaning register
[Primary policy – Furniture and Equipment Safety]

RISK ASSESSMENT AND RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL

It is a legislative requirement that management, staff and educators implement a risk management system where they identify and manage hazards and risks within the workplace to ensure a child safe environment. Strategies are in

place to make sure child safety is embedded across our Service through compliance with the *Education and Care National Regulations* and the Child Safe Standards.
The key principles of risk management include:

1. Identifying all hazards or potential hazards in the OSHC Service
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 OSHC Service to complete a risk assessment where children's safety may be jeopardised and when organising an excursion/incursion or any transportation of children. Risk assessments must be approved by the nominated supervisor prior to any excursion taking place. 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
- non-compliance risk
- hot drinks
- transportation of children (regular outing and regular transportation)
- excursions
- potential emergencies
- natural disasters
- safe arrival of children
- sleep and rest
- organisation culture (child-safe culture)
- physical contact
- training
- safe use of online technologies and physical environment
- use of electronic devices (photographs/videos) NMC
- storage of images and video and how long they will be kept
- privacy and confidentiality

To maintain a child safe environment, all staff and educators will adhere to Service policies and procedures and conduct the following checklist and audits:
this may include risk assessment, maintenance record, excursion risk assessment
[Primary policies – Child Protection; Code of Conduct; Behaviour Guidance Emergency and Evacuation; Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness; Rest; Safe Arrival of Children; Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments; Safe Transportation of Children; Sun Safety; Rest 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 and educators 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. Records will be kept for all rehearsals.
[Primary policy- Emergency and Evacuation]

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE AUTHORISATION

Our OSHC Service prioritises children's safety at all times. Staff and educators will only release children to an authorised person as named on the child's enrolment form. Management 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 or young person.
Educators will work in collaboration with our *Delivery of Children to and Collection from an Education and Care Service Premises Policy*, *Safe Arrival of Children*, and *Student, Volunteers and Visitors Policy* to promote a culture of child safety and wellbeing in the Service.
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 will provide written authorisation if they authorise a person who is not on their emergency contact form to pick up their child from the ECEC Service. Educators and staff will ensure court orders are strictly adhered to and protect children from any potential harm.
[Primary policies - Delivery of Children to and Collection from an Education and Care Service Premises; Safe Arrival of Student; Student, Volunteer and Visitors]

ONLINE SAFETY

Our OSHC Service is committed to create and maintain a safe online environment with support and collaboration with children, young people, staff, educators, families and community. Management ensures anti-virus and internet security systems are installed to block access to unsuitable web sites, newsgroups and chat rooms.
Our OSHC Service ensures backups of important and confidential data is made regularly and either stored securely offline, or online. Software and devices are updated regularly to avoid any breach of confidential information.
Families are provided with information about our software program which is password protected and used to share observations, photos, videos, daily reports and portfolios. Passwords are not to be shared with others as per our written agreement.
Written authorisation is requested as part of the enrolment process for children to use computers/tablets; have their photo taken and published as part of promotional marketing or on the app program used by the service. The identity of a child is not published on any platform.
Any person providing education and care and working directly with children cannot be in possession of a person electronic device that can take images or videos or personal storage and file transfer media. Only Service issued electronic devices are used and strict controls are in place to ensure the appropriate storage and retention of images and video of children as per the National Model Code and Guidelines
Only educational software programs and apps that have appropriate content and have been examined prior to allowing their use are used in the service. Children are always supervised using any technology.
[Primary policies –Privacy and Confidentiality, Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy; Code of Conduct]

FAMILIES

Our OSHC 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
- adopting the National Model Code and Guidelines

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, students 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. Our *Child Safe Environment Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis or earlier if there are changes to legislation, ACECQA guidance or any incident related to our policy. Feedback will be requested from children, families, staff, educators and management and notification of any change to policies will be made to families within 14 days.

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP - RELATED RESOURCES

Child Safe Standards - Guide	Child Safe Standards - Commitment Statement
Child Safe Standards - Checklist	Child Safe Risk Assessment VIC

SOURCES

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). Embedding the National Child Safe Principles
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). *Guide to the National Quality Framework*

ACECQA. (2023). Policy and procedure guidelines. (2023). *Providing a Child Safe Environment*.
Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). *Taking Images or Videos of Children While Providing Early Childhood Education and Care. Guidelines for the National Model Code.*
Australian Government Department of Education. *My Time, Our Place- Framework for School Age Care in Australia.V2.0, 2022*
Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (as amended 2014) (Vic)
Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
Education and Care Services National Regulations. (Amended 2023).
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. Families, Fairness and Housing. Children, youth & families. Child Protection.
Victoria State Government Families, Fairness and Housing. Child Safe Standards
Victoria State Government. *The Child Safe Standards. Early Childhood Services.*
Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	RITA STRACHAN	DIRECTOR	
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	NOVEMBER 2026

VERSION NUMBER	V10.09.25	
MODIFICATIONS	• policy reviewed out of regular calendar review due to legislation changes for child safety- National Model Code (NMC) • added reference to new mandatory policy- *Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments Policy* • minor edits within policy • sources checked for currency and updated as required	
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
NOVEMBER 2024	• annual policy maintenance • inclusion of National Model Code and Guidance [optional] • checking prohibition notices on NQA ITS added • changed order of Families and Continuous Review sections • sources checked for currency and updated as required	NOVEMBER 2025
NOVEMBER 2023	• policy maintenance • Terminology section added • added section – Reporting and responding to general complaints • updated content to reflect NQF review and legislation changes re: child protection law; register for students/visitors • additional related policies added • sources reviewed and updated	NOVEMBER 2024
NOVEMBER 2022	• annual policy maintenance - no major changes to policy • moved Code of Conduct section to earlier in policy • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • minor formatting edits within text • Childcare Centre Desktop Related resources added	NOVEMBER 2023
MAY 2022	• 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	NOVEMBER 2022
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