

# COONARA EARLY LEARNING CENTRE POLICY NO: 3

## CHILD PROTECTION POLICY (VIC)

Our Service is committed to providing a child safe environment where children’s safety and wellbeing is supported and children feel respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Our Service embeds the *Victorian Child Safe Standards* 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. Our Service follows the [National Model Code and Guidelines](#) for taking images or videos of children released by ACECQA 1 July 2024.

We will ensure all employees and volunteers understand the meaning, importance and benefits of providing a child safe environment and critically, understand their obligations and requirements as Mandatory Reporters. At all times, management, staff and volunteers will treat children with the utmost respect and understanding.

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.2	Safety	Each child is respected.
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, practiced 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.

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 hazard

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S. 174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
S. 175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents
84	Awareness of child protection law
86	Notification to parents of incident, injury, trauma and illness
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
145	Staff records
149	Volunteers and students
155	Interactions with children
168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures to be followed
175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
176	Time to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority

### RELATED LEGISLATION

<i>Failure to Protect 2015 (Under Section 327 of the Crimes Act 1958 [Vic])</i>	<i>Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)</i>
<i>Failure to Disclose 2014 (Under Section 327 of the Crimes Act 1958 [Vic])</i>	<i>Family Law Act 1975 (Cth)</i>
<i>Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)</i>	<i>Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic.)</i>
<i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Amended 2014) (Vic)</i>	<i>The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)</i>
<i>Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012 (Amended 2014) (Vic)</i>	<i>The Worker Screening Act 2020</i>

### RELATED POLICIES

Child Safe Environment Policy Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy Code of Conduct Policy Dealing with Complaints Policy Family Communication Policy Health and Safety Policy Interactions with Children, Family and Staff Policy Privacy and Confidentiality Policy	Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy Recruitment Policy Respect for Children Policy Responsible Person Policy Staffing Arrangements Policy Student, Volunteer and Visitors Policy Supervision Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
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## PURPOSE

All educators, staff, visitors and volunteers are committed to identifying possible risk and significant risk of harm to children and young people at the Service. We comprehend our duty of care responsibilities to protect children from all types of abuse and neglect and will adhere to our moral and legislative obligations at all times.

We aim to implement effective strategies to assist in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all children. Our Service will act in the best interest of each child, assisting them to develop to their full potential in a secure and child safe environment. We understand our statutory duty of care to comply with both the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme to build our capacity as an organisation to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse.

## SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

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## WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE?

The World Health Organisation ([WHO], 2006, p. 9) defines child abuse and neglect as:

*“All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.”*

Child abuse is any action towards a child or young person that harms or puts at risk their physical, psychological or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident or can be a number of different incidents that take place over time.

## DEFINITIONS

**Duty of Care** refers to your responsibility to adequately protect children in care from harm. This common law concept applies to all staff members within any Victorian early childhood service and is usually expressed as *“a duty to take reasonable steps to protect children from injury that is reasonably foreseeable.”* Victoria State Government (2021).

Duty of care means:

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- acting on concerns quickly and in the child's best interests
- protecting the safety, health and wellbeing of children in their care
- seeking appropriate advice or consulting when unsure
- reporting suspected child abuse to Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection or Victoria Police
- providing ongoing support to a child and their family
- sharing information, upon request, to assist DFFH Child Protection or Police to protect and/or promote the wellbeing and development of a child
- notifying the regulatory authority when required
- attending Department of Families, Fairness and Housing (DFFH) Child Protection Case Planning meetings.
- Staff may breach their duty of care towards a child if they fail to act in the way a reasonable/diligent person would in the same situation.

**Mandatory reporting** is the legislative requirement for selected classes of people to make a report to Child Protection and/or Victoria Police where they form a reasonable belief, that a child has been or is at risk of significant harm, as a result of physical or sexual abuse, and the child's parents have not protected or are unlikely to protect the child from that abuse. It is a criminal offence to fail to report in these circumstances. In Victoria (VIC) mandatory reporting is regulated by the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005*.

**Mandatory reporters** in Victoria, are people who deliver the following services, wholly or partly, to children as part of their paid or professional work:

- registered medical practitioners
- nurses, including midwives
- Victorian police officers
- registered teachers and school principals
- out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)
- early childhood workers
- youth justice workers
- registered psychologists
- school counsellors

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- people in religious ministry.

<https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/child-protection>

### TYPES OF ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The VIC Government identifies the following types of abuse and neglect:

- physical child abuse
- child sexual abuse
- grooming
- emotional child abuse
- neglect
- family violence
- children exhibiting inappropriate sexual behaviour

Staff within early childhood services play a vital role in protecting children from harm by responding to and reporting any incidents, disclosure or suspicions. Educators and staff are best placed to identify signs and behaviours that may indicate that a child has been subject to abuse or identify a community member, staff member, contractor or volunteer may be a perpetrator. Understanding the signs of child abuse is critical in supporting children's safety and wellbeing.

Victoria State Government-Child protection in early childhood PROTECT provide definitions and physical indicators: [Identify signs of child abuse](#)

### VICTORIAN INSTITUTE OF TEACHING REGISTRATION AND WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK

Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration or a Working With Children Check is mandatory for all employees working or volunteering with children within Education and Care Services. Education and Care Services and organisations are required to check the status of an employee's Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration or Working With Children Check BEFORE an employee begins working with children.

. Working with Children Check Screening Unit Victoria will notify organisations in writing if an employee, student or volunteers Working with Children Check has been suspended or revoked.

Our Service will not employ or engage a person who does not hold a valid Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration or Working with Children Check.

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### CHILD SAFE STANDARDS

Our Service is committed to keeping children and young people safe and are compliant with the 11 Victorian Child Safe Standards and principles and Reportable Conduct Scheme. (See: *Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*).

Our Service has policies and practices in place that include robust screening of all educators and staff members prior to employment, supervision, training and other human resources practices to reduce the risk of child abuse for new and existing staff members, processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse, strategies to identify and reduce or remove risks of child abuse and strategies to promote the participation and empowerment of children.

### FAILURE TO DISCLOSE AND FAILURE TO PROTECT

Failure to disclose or take action in relation to suspected child sexual abuse can constitute a criminal offence. The law requires **any adult** who holds a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed in Victoria, by an adult against a child (aged under 16) disclosed this information to police.

### FORMING A REASONABLE BELIEF/REASONABLE GROUNDS

A person forms a reasonable belief that a child is in need of protection, or their safety or wellbeing is at risk when they are more likely to accept rather than reject their suspicion and the belief is formed through disclosures, observations or other information. Proof is not required to support your claim.

Reasonable grounds for forming a belief may include where:

- a child states they have been abused
- a child states they know someone who has been, or is being, abused
- someone who knows the child states that the child has been abused, is being abused, or is at risk of abuse
- you observe a child's behaviour, actions or injuries that may place them at risk of harm or abuse
- you are aware of persistence violence, parental substance misuse, disability that is impacting on the child's safety, stability or development
- you observe signs or indicators of abuse.

Staff should make sufficient enquiries to form a belief, however it is not the role of staff to conduct an investigation into child protection concerns or criminal offences. DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police will determine what is to be investigated.

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### IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service strongly opposes any type of abuse against a child and endorses high quality practices in relation to protecting children. Educators have an important role to support children and young people and to identify concerns that may jeopardise their safety, welfare, or wellbeing including:

- A duty of care to ensure that reasonable steps are taken to prevent harm to children
- Obligations are met under child protection legislation
- Obligations are met under work, health and safety legislation.

To ensure best practice, all educators will attend approved child protection training certified by a registered training organisation. Educators will continue to maintain current knowledge of child protection and mandatory reporter requirements by completing Child Protection Awareness Training annually.

### THE APPROVED PROVIDER/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- educators, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy
- families are aware of this *Child Protection Policy*
- any Responsible Person in day-to-day charge of the Service has successfully completed a course in child protection approved by the Regulatory Authority
- the recruitment process for all educators and staff is robust and includes pre-employment screening, reference checks
- all educators', staff, volunteers' and students' Victorian Institute of Teaching Registration or Working with Children Checks are validated and checked prior to engagement of work BEFORE the person begins working or interacting with children
- a record is kept and updated of the number of each VIT Registration or WWC Check number and expiry date
- all employees, volunteers and students are:
  - provided with a copy of the current *Child Protection, Child Safe Environment, Child Safety and Wellbeing and Reportable Conduct Scheme Policies*
  - required to participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, includes an understanding of child protection law
  - supported to create and maintain a child safe culture within the Service by complying with the Child Safe Standards

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- provided with support to adhere to a zero-tolerance stance against child abuse
- aware of duty of care obligations for all children who are involved in or affected by the suspected child abuse
- aware of the [Four Critical Actions](#) to follow when responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of child abuse
- aware of mandatory reporting obligations in relation to the Reportable Conduct Scheme, including reporting to the approved provider any allegations of reportable conduct or convictions
- aware that neglecting to report child protection concerns may be deemed a criminal offence
- training and development are provided for all educators, staff, and volunteers in child protection on an annual basis
- training and information are provided to all educators about the Child Information Sharing, Family Violence Reforms and Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Management Framework (MARAM)
- educators are supported and empowered to make a report to DFFH Child Protection, Victoria Police or seek a referral to Child FIRST by having clear procedures in place
- access is provided to all staff regarding relevant legislations, regulations, standards and other resources to help educators, staff, and volunteers meet their obligations
- records of abuse or suspected abuse are kept in line with our *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*
- records relating to child sexual abuse that has or is alleged to have occurred are kept for at least 45 years
- to adhere to the Reportable Conduct Scheme and report any allegations of ‘reportable conduct’
- 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)
- ensure our complaint handling processes are child-focused providing support and guidance for children to know who to talk to if they are feeling unsafe (*See Dealing with Complaints Policy*).

### TEACHERS/EDUCATORS WILL:

- contact the police on 000 if there is an immediate danger to a child and intervene if it is safe to do so
- participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, including an understanding of child protection law



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- provide valid Victorian Institute of Teaching (VIT) Registration or Working with Children (WWC) Check details during their employment and engagement at the Service
- advise the approved provider of any circumstances that may affect their VIT Registration or WWC Check or fit and proper status
- be able to recognise indicators of abuse to children and young people through participation in annual child protection training (best practice)
- ensure children feel safe and supported at the early childhood service and their individual needs are met
- respect what a child discloses, taking it seriously and follow up on their concerns through the appropriate channels
- comprehend their obligations as mandatory reporters and their duty of care requirements if they have formed a reasonable belief that a child has suffered or is likely to suffer significant harm
- participate in annual child protection training and other relevant professional training
- participate in training about the Child Information Sharing, Family Violence Reforms and Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Management Framework (MARAM)
- be able to identify signs of child abuse (see Appendix 1)
- follow the [Four Critical Actions for Early Childhood Services: Responding to incidents, disclosures and suspicions of Child Abuse](#)
  - Responding to an emergency
  - Reporting to authorities
  - Contacting parents or carers
  - Providing ongoing support
- respect what a child discloses, taking it seriously and follow up on their concerns through the appropriate channels
- refer families to appropriate agencies where concerns of harm do not meet the threshold of significant harm. These services may be located through Child FIRST or The Orange Door- <https://services.dffh.vic.gov.au/referral-and-support-teams> Family consent will be sort before making referrals
- promote the welfare, safety, and wellbeing of children at the Service at all times by creating and maintaining child safe environment
- allow children to be part of decision-making processes where appropriate
- foster a culture of openness and respect where children and young people feel safe to disclose risk of harm to children

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- prepare accurate records recording exactly what happened, conversations that took place and what was observed to pass on to the relevant authorities to assist with any investigation
- understand that allegations of abuse or suspected abuse against them are treated in the same way as allegations of abuse against other people
- NOT investigate suspicion of abuse or neglect but collect only enough information to substantiate concerns and pass on to the Child Protection Helpline or appropriate authority
- understand their legal obligations to report or take action in relation to suspected child abuse under the Reportable Conduct Scheme
- share information with other professionals working with children as part of the information sharing and family violence reform schemes
- provide ongoing monitoring and follow-up for children's health and wellbeing.
- report any allegations of reportable conduct to the approved provider or Commission
- identify and notify any concerns around staff, educator or volunteer behaviour or conduct to management of the Service.

### STUDENTS/ VOLUNTEERS/ VISITORS WILL:

- contact the police on 000 if there is an immediate danger to a child and intervene if it is safe to do so
- participate in a comprehensive induction and orientation program, including an understanding of child protection law
- provide valid Working with Children (WWC) Check details during their engagement at the Service
- advise the approved provider of any circumstances that may affect their WWC Check or fit and proper status
- promote the welfare, safety, and wellbeing of children at the Service, fostering a child safe culture
- participate in child protection training as required
- provide a child safe environment for all children
- allow children to be part of decision-making processes where appropriate
- prepare accurate records recording exactly what happened, conversations that took place and what was observed to pass on to the relevant authorities to assist with any investigation
- understand that allegations of abuse or suspected abuse against them are treated in the same way as allegations of abuse against other people
- NOT investigate suspicion of abuse or neglect but collect only enough information to substantiate concerns and pass on to the DFFH Child Protection
- report any allegations of reportable conduct to the approved provider or Ombudsman

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- identify and notify any concerns around staff, educator or volunteer behaviour or conduct to management of the Service.

### MAKING A CHILD PROTECTION REPORT

Early childhood services must take immediate action relating to concerns about potential child abuse.

In the case of an emergency, staff should contact Emergency Services on 000.

Under the **Failure to Disclose** offence, *any adult* must report to Victoria Police if they reasonably believe that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16.

A report must be made to DFFH Child Protection if the mandatory reporter forms a belief on reasonable grounds the child is:

- in need of protection due to child abuse
- at risk of being, harmed (or has been harmed) and the harm has, or is likely to have an impact on the child's safety, stability or development.

If an educator has a concern and they are unsure if a report should be made to DFFH Child Protection or Victoria Police, or a referral to ChildFIRST they should discuss this with the approved provider, director or responsible person.

Services will contact their local DFFH Child Protection intake provider to report concerns.

Northern Division intake: **1300 664 977**

South Division Intake: **1300 655 795**

East Division intake: **1300 360 391**

West Division intake- metropolitan: **1300 664 977**

West Division intake- rural and regional: **1800 075 599**

If you are not sure which number to call, check Department of Families, Fairness and Housing-- [Child protection](#) contacts for details on the LGAs covered by each intake service.

### REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT THE WELLBEING OF A CHILD

Educators and staff who have significant concerns for the wellbeing of a child (or unborn child) may report these concerns to DFFH Child Protection or refer the matter to ChildFIRST.

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### DOCUMENTING A DISCLOSURE

A disclosure of harm emerges when someone, including a child, tells you about harm that has happened or is likely to happen. When a child discloses that he or she has been abused, it is an opportunity for an adult to provide immediate support and comfort and to assist in protecting the child from the abuse. It is also a chance to help the child connect to professional services that can keep them safe, provide support and facilitate their recovery from trauma. Disclosure is about seeking support and your response can have a great impact on the child or young person's ability to seek further help and recover from the trauma.

### WHEN RECEIVING A DISCLOSURE OF HARM, THE PERSON RECEIVING THE DISCLOSURE WILL:

- give the child or young person their full attention
- remain calm and find a private place to talk
- not make promises that can't be kept. For example, never promise that you will not tell anyone else
- honestly tell the child or young person what you plan to do next
- tell the child/person they have done the right thing in revealing the information but that they'll need to tell someone who can help keep the child safe
- only ask enough questions to confirm the need to report the matter because probing questions could cause distress, confusion and interfere with any later enquiries
- let the child or young person take his or her time
- let the child or young person use his or her own words
- not attempt to conduct their own investigation or mediate an outcome between the parties involved
- not confront the perpetrator
- document as soon as possible so the details are accurately captured including:
  - time, date and place of the disclosure
  - 'word for word' what happened and what was said, including anything they (the staff member/educator) said and any actions that have been taken
  - date of report and signature

### NOTIFICATIONS

### THE APPROVED PROVIDER/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

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- notify the regulatory authority through the NQA-ITS (within 7 days) of any incident where it is reasonably believed that physical and/or sexual abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the Service
- notify the regulatory authority through the NQA-ITS (within 7 days) of any allegation that sexual or physical abuse of a child has occurred or is occurring while the child is being educated and cared for by the Service.
- notify the regulatory authority through the NQA-ITS (within 24 hours) of any complaints alleging that a serious incident has occurred or is occurring at the Service
- notify the regulatory authority through the NQA-ITS (within 24 hours) of a serious incident, which may include physical or sexual abuse where emergency services attended the Service
- notify the Commission within three (3) business days of becoming aware of a reportable allegation made against an employee or volunteer using online forms found at <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/about-reporting-allegations/> and ensure they are investigated, and appropriate action taken.

### CONFIDENTIALITY

It is important that any notification to DFFH Child Protection or Child FIRST remains confidential, as it is vitally important to remember that no confirmation of any allegation can be made until the matter is investigated. The individual who makes the notification should not inform the suspected perpetrator (if known). This ensures the matter can be investigated without contamination of evidence or pre-rehearsed statements. It also minimises the risk of retaliation on the child for disclosing.

### PROTECTION FOR REPORTERS

All reporters are protected against retribution for making or proposing to make a report under amendments to the *Children Youth and Families Act 2005 and Crimes Act 1958* effective April 2021. The identity of the reporter is protected by law from being disclosed, except in certain exceptional circumstances. Provided the report is made in good faith:

- does not breach standards of professional conduct or ethics
- cannot lead to defamation and civil and criminal liability

A report is also an exempt document under the *Freedom of Information Act 1989*.

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CHILD INFORMATION SHARING SCHEME (CISS) AND FAMILY VIOLENCE INFORMATION SHARING SCHEME (FVISS) AND THE FAMILY VIOLENCE MULTI-AGENCY RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (MARAM).

Our Service will align with the MARAM Framework to assist in identifying, assessing and responding to family violence risk. This includes ensuring our educators and staff:

- have a shared understanding of and consistent response to family violence
- work collaboratively to provide coordinated and effective risk assessment and management responses to identify family violence
- share information relevant to family violence risk with other services
- promote continuous improvement in risk assessment and management practice, information sharing and enhanced collaboration with other services.

The [Child Information Sharing Scheme](#) (CISS) allows professionals working with children (from birth to 18 years of age) to gain a complete view of the children they work with, making it easier to identify wellbeing or safety needs earlier, and to act on them sooner. Victorian education and care services can share, request and use information about child wellbeing or safety through the scheme with other professionals provided certain requirements for sharing are met.

Educators within the Service need to have sufficient information in order to be able to support a child who has been impacted (or is suspected to have been impacted) by child abuse. Therefore, it is legally allowable for educators to share certain information about a child with other staff members of the Service without the consent of a parent/carer and without breaching privacy laws. Data security requirements that apply to the Service must be followed when sharing any information.

Under CISS, information sharing entities (ISEs) can share confidential information with other ISEs for the purpose of promoting the wellbeing or safety of a child or group of children or sharing information to inform action.

Sharing of information may assist the ISE to

- access and engage with supportive services
- access resources for learning and development
- make a decision, assessment or plan
- start or conduct an investigation
- provide a service relating to a child/children

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- manage any risk to a child/children.

Under the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS) relevant information can be shared for two main purposes:

- Family violence assessment purpose-to establish or assess the risk of a person committing family violence or being the subject of family violence
- Family violence protection purpose- manage the risk to the victim survivor. This includes information sharing to support ongoing risk assessment.

Risk Assessment Entities (RAEs) can request and receive information for a family violence assessment. RAEs include DFFH Child Protection, Victoria Police, family violence services and some Orange Door services. Our Service will respond to all requests for information in a timely manner. The approved provider or licensee should maintain contact with Victoria Police and DFFH Child Protection as necessary to protect the safety and wellbeing of the children involved. Disclosure of information to an RAE does not constitute unprofessional conduct or a breach of professional ethics.

### BREACH OF CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

All educators, students, volunteers and staff working with children have a duty of care to support and protect children. A breach of our *Child Protection Policy* may include if a person:

- does something that a reasonable person in that person's position would not do in a particular situation
- fails to do something that a reasonable person in that person's position would do in the circumstances or
- acts or fails to act in a way that causes harm to someone the person owes a duty of care.

A breach is any action or inaction by any individual within the Service, including children and young people, that fails to comply with any part of the policy.

### MANAGING A BREACH IN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Management will investigate any breaches to this policy in a fair, unbiased and supportive manner by:

- liaising with the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) for appropriate processes to ensure chain of evidence is not destroyed or compromised

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- not undertaking and investigating the allegation whilst the CCYP or the Police are conducting an investigation
- removal of the educator or staff member from a role with contact with children or young people until authorities conclude their investigation.

Management may undertake an investigation if the CCYP or the Police are not conducting their own investigation or if their action has concluded. Management will:

- give the educator, staff member, student or volunteer the opportunity to provide their version of events
- document the details of the breach, including the versions of all parties
- record the outcome clearly and without bias
- ensure the matters in relation to the breach are kept confidential
- reach a decision based on discussion and consideration of all evidence.

### OUTCOME OF A BREACH IN CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Staff members or educators who fail to adhere to this policy may be in breach of their terms of employment. Visitors or volunteers who fail to comply to this policy may face termination of their engagement. Depending on the nature of the breach outcomes may include:

- emphasising the relevant element of the child protection policy and procedure
- providing closer supervision
- further education and training
- providing mediation between those involved in the incident (where appropriate)
- disciplinary procedures if required including dismissal of employment
- reviewing current policies and procedures and developing new policies and procedures if necessary

### REPORTABLE CONDUCT SCHEME-ALLEGATIONS AGAINST EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS or STUDENTS (OR CONTRACTORS)

The reportable Conduct Scheme has been designed to ensure that the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) will be aware of every allegation of certain types of employee misconduct involving children in relevant organisations, including approved education and care services (kindergartens, after school hours care services) and Children's services (occasional care providers).

[see: Reportable Conduct Scheme Policy (Victoria only)]



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### EDUCATING CHILDREN ABOUT PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOUR

Our program will educate children:

- about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and what is appropriate and inappropriate contact at an age-appropriate level and understanding
- about their right to feel safe at all times
- to say 'no' to anything that makes them feel unsafe or uncomfortable
- about how to use their own knowledge and understanding to feel safe
- to identify feelings that they do not feel safe
- the difference between 'good' and 'bad' secrets
- that there is no secret or story that cannot be shared with someone they trust
- that educators are available for them if they have any concerns
- to tell educators of any suspicious activities or people
- to recognise and express their feelings verbally and non-verbally
- that they can choose to change the way they are feeling.

### RESOURCES FOR INDICATORS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT

NAPCAN- <https://www.napcan.org.au/napcan-brochures/>

Child Safe Organisations- <https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au>

Commission for Children and Young People. (2021). [Victoria's new Child Safe Standards](#)

Victoria State Government Education and Training. Child protection in early childhood (PROTECT)

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/health/childprotection/Pages/ecidentifying.aspx>

Victoria State Government. (2021). Family Violence Information Sharing and Child Information Sharing Reforms <https://www.justice.vic.gov.au/information-sharing>

Victorian Government. Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) practice guides and resources. <https://www.vic.gov.au/maram-practice-guides-and-resources>

### CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Child Protection Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

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## SOURCES

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)

Australian Government Department of Education. [Belonging, Being and Becoming: The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia.V2.0, 2022](#)

Australian Government Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2018). [Australian child protection legislation](#)

Australian Government: Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2023). [Mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect](#)

Australian Government Australian Institute of Family Studies. (2022). Australian child protection legislation: <https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/australian-child-protection-legislation>

*Children Youth and Families Act 2005*

*Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)*

Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).

*The Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998*

Victoria State Government Education. *Child Protection in Early Childhood (PROTECT)*

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/health/childprotection/Pages/ecidentifying.aspx>

Victoria State Government Education. (2018). *Obligations to protect children in early childhood services:*

<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/providers/regulation/Pages/protectionprotocol.aspx>

Victoria State Government Department of Families, Fairness and Housing. Creating child safe organisations:

<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/creating-child-safe-organisations>

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*Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic)*

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY:	Carol Czaplowski	Nominated Supervisor	
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