

Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc Code

Policy name	Child Safety & Wellbeing Code of Conduct
Responsible person	Board of Governance, CEO – Wyndham CEC School Council, Principal – Werribee Community College
Staff involved	All staff, volunteers, Board Directors and School Council members
Review dates	Approved: 19 June 2023 Review due: semester 2, 2024

Context

Wyndham Community and Education Centre (**Wyndham CEC**) is a not-for-profit Incorporated Association based in the City of Wyndham.

The Victorian government has mandated that organisations working with children adhere to a set of standards to promote child safety, prevent child abuse and properly respond to allegations of child abuse. As part of embedding a culture of child safety across the organisation, Wyndham Community and Education Centre (Wyndham CEC) has developed a suite of resources and documents to effectively implement such a culture.

A child safe organisation has policies and practices that promote the safety and wellbeing of children at all levels of the organisation and encourage working together to prevent, respond to and report allegations of child abuse and harm.

Wyndham CEC also operates a School known as Werribee Community College (the School). Wyndham CEC's School delivers the Victorian Pathways Certificate (VPC) and the VCE Vocational Major to students aged 15-19 years. It provides a safe and inclusive learning environment for young people who may have been disengaged or are at risk of disengaging from education. Wyndham CEC is committed to supporting students to reach their personal, social and educational potential by providing the tools and skills to reflect, set goals and plan for success in life.

Wyndham CEC is committed to creating and maintaining a school in which all young people are safe from harm and to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all young people from all cultures and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and those with a disability. We understand and implement our duty of care to all students, and we undertake reasonable measures of proper supervision and protection so that no student faces risks, injury or harm.

Wyndham CEC supports the premise that children's safety is everyone's responsibility. All Board members, School Council members, staff, volunteers and contractors have a responsibility to prevent child abuse and respond appropriately to any allegations.

Wyndham CEC complies with Ministerial Order 1359: Implementing the Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises (MO1359) and the Victorian Child Safe Standards (VCSS).

Wyndham CEC's school community is diverse and includes people from all walks of life who reflect the broad diversity of the Victorian community. Wyndham CEC's school is inclusive of the needs of all children and young people; particularly those who are vulnerable due to their age,

This document was accepted by the Board of Governance of the Wyndham Community and Education Centre Inc on 19/06/2023 and supersedes all previous versions.

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family circumstances, disability, indigenous or CALD backgrounds, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people (LGBTQI+).

Wyndham CEC will review its practices and policies regularly to ensure best practice. One practice recommended is that ongoing employees and volunteers sign a statement to agree to abide by a *Child Safety Code of Conduct* that outlines principles across the organisation and reinforces the importance of a whole of organisation approach.

The *Child Safety Code of Conduct* has been developed to ensure a working environment where all staff and volunteers feel valued and respected and all students and clients feel welcome and safe. All children have the right to feel welcome and be safe.

All staff and volunteers (including Board Directors and School Council members) will be asked to re-familiarise themselves with this *Child Safety Code of Conduct* and sign it annually. By signing it staff and volunteers acknowledge they have read it, understand it, and agree to abide by it.

Child safe behaviour and community-wide understanding of the risks of child abuse and its impacts is critical to keeping children safe.

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The *Child Safety Code of Conduct* applies to all staff working at the Wyndham CEC and includes all full time, part time, sessional, and casual staff, contractors and volunteers, including Board Directors and members of the Werribee Community College School Council.

Wyndham CEC's CEO, School Principal and HR team will:

- be responsible for embedding an organisational culture and commitment to child safety and wellbeing
- appoint a Child Safety Officer for Wyndham CEC and the School, to provide information and support to staff, volunteers, young people, and their carers regarding child protection matters
- promote a confidential reporting culture
- build responsibility to a child safe organisation into job descriptions and recruitment processes
- review and improve policies and procedures in relation to child safety and wellbeing
- provide ongoing professional development to staff
- publicly communicate our stance as an organisation on child safety and wellbeing
- commit to respecting and valuing aboriginal and CALD children and young people
- adopt a no tolerance to racism position
- help everyone in the organisation acknowledge the strengths and cultures of First Nations people
- ensure complaint handling mechanisms are current and easily accessible to children and young people
- set out expectations in job descriptions
- include child safety in all induction processes

Child Safe Principles and Expectations

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Wyndham CEC has a no-tolerance approach to child abuse and to racism. All staff, volunteers and Board members of Wyndham CEC are required to observe child safe principles and maintain appropriate and positive behaviour towards and in the company of children.

This *Child Safety Code of Conduct* requires all personnel to:

- operate within Wyndham CEC's or the School's policies and procedures and report any allegations of child abuse to Wyndham CEC's CEO, or the Principal of the School as relevant, or a Child Safety Officer
- take all reasonable steps to protect children and young people from abuse
- establish and maintain a child-safe environment in the course of their work and involve families and communities in efforts to keep children and young people safe
- listen and respond to the views and concerns of children and young people and take appropriate action as required (see Child safety policies and procedures)
- encourage children and young people to 'have a say' and participate in all relevant organisational activities where possible, especially on issues that are important to them
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of Aboriginal children and young people (for example, by never questioning an Aboriginal child/young person's self-identification)
- promote the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of children with culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds
- promote the safety, participation and empowerment of children and young people with a disability (for example, during personal care activities)
- promote the safety, participation and empowerment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex children and young people
- be professional in all actions and act as a positive role model in the presence of children and young people
- respect the privacy of young people, their families, teachers and only disclose information to people who need to know
- treat all children and young people with respect, regardless of race, colour, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic and social origin, culture, property, disability or other status

Under this *Child Safety Code of Conduct* **no person** will:

- Shame, humiliate, oppress, belittle or degrade children or young people
- Unlawfully discriminate against any child or young person
- Engage in any activity with a child or young person that is likely to physically or emotionally harm them
- Initiate unnecessary or inappropriate physical contact with a child or young person, or do things of a personal nature for them that they can do themselves (for example, excludes appropriate first aid treatment or appropriate contact during organised sporting activities)
- Be alone with a child/young person unnecessarily and for more than a very short time
- Develop a 'special' relationship with a child or young person for their own needs
- Show favouritism through the provision of gifts or inappropriate attention

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- Arrange contact, including online contact, with children or young people outside of the organisation's programs and activities
- Photograph or video a child/young person without the consent of the person or their parents/guardians
- Work with a children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Engage in open discussions of a mature or adult nature in the presence of children or young people
- Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse (can be criminal offence)
- Contravene Wyndham CEC's or the School's (as relevant) policies and procedures or this Code of Conduct

Breaching the Code

If you breach this *Code of Conduct* you will face disciplinary action, including the possibility of termination of employment or cessation of engagement with the organisation.

Any criminal activity will be dealt with as required by the relevant legislation including reporting to Victoria Police and the Commission for Children & Young People (CCYP) and VIT (registered teachers). The School can also notify the VRQA.

By signing this *Code of Conduct* you acknowledge that you have read it, understand it, and agree to support it.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Position: _____

Date: _____

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Related Documents

Legislation: Ministerial Order 1359 Child Safe Standards -Managing the risk of child abuse in schools, Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic), Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth), Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic), Disability Act 2006 (Vic), Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic), Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic), Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic), Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic), Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic), Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic), Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), Victorian Institute of Teaching Act 2001 (Vic), Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), Privacy Amendment (Notifiable Data Breaches) Act 2017 (Cth), Information Privacy Act 2000 (Vic), Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic).

Policies & Procedures: Child Safety and wellbeing Policy & Procedure including Statement of Commitment, School Child Safety and wellbeing Policy, School Child Safety Procedure, Staff Recruitment & Induction Policy & Procedure, School Staff Management Policy & Procedure, School Staff Management Internal Guidelines, Volunteer Recruitment Policy and Procedure, National Police Check, Working with Children Check, VIT Registration Policy & Procedure, Complaints and Appeals Policy & Procedure, School Complaints Policy & Procedure, Conflict of Interest Policy & Procedure (staff & Volunteers), School Council Conflict of Interest Policy & Procedure, Board Conflict of Interest Policy & Procedure, Access and Equity Policy & Procedure, Social Media Policy & Procedure, Computers, Email and Internet Policy & Procedure, School Staff Online Conduct Policy & Procedure, School Student Online Safety Policy & Procedure, Critical Incident and Emergency Management Policy & Procedure, Student Well Being and Duty of Care Policy & Procedure, Privacy Policy & Procedure, Discrimination, harassment, bullying and vilification Policy & Procedure, OHS Policy & Procedure, Code of Conduct for Staff & Volunteers, Disciplinary Action and Termination of Employment Policy & Procedure, Recruitment of Board Members Policy & Procedure, Risk Identification & Management Policy & Procedure.

Other: Child Safe Standards, Under 18s Register, Guide to Making a Report to Child Protection or Child FIRST, Conduct Reporting Guide for Schools, Code of Ethics, Board & Staff Codes of Conduct, Discipline Guide - Jobs Australia 2012(3rd Edition), Skills First Quality Charter, VIT Code of Conduct, E-safety Commissioner at <https://www.esafety.gov.au>, Child Wise at <https://www.childwise.org.au>, Decision guide organisations MARAM framework.