



Creating a Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

This guide will help you to create or update your Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. To comply with the Child Safe Standards (the Standards) your organisation should have a Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy that explains your organisation's approach to meeting the Standards. This guide has three parts: steps to develop a Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, a template you may wish to use to create your policy and an example policy. For more information, please read [A guide for creating a Child Safe Organisation](#).

Steps to develop your Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Your organisation can create a Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy by following these six steps. More information on child safety and wellbeing policies can be found in Standard 2 in [A guide for creating a Child Safe Organisation](#).

As well as requirements under Standard 2, the Standards have minimum requirements relating to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy under Standards 8 and 9. Guidance on management of policies including review and continuous improvement is included under Standards 10 and 11 in [A guide for creating a Child Safe Organisation](#).

Step 1: Consult widely

You should consult with staff, volunteers, families and children¹ when developing your policy. Areas to consult on include:

- feedback from families and communities on current child safe practices and potential improvements
- children's experience of safety in the organisation and what they would do if they had a concern, or something happened to them
- feedback from staff, families and children on the organisation's responses to child safety concerns and incidents and any improvements
- families' and children's ability to express their identity in the organisation including expressions of culture, sexuality and gender identity and support for inclusion of children and families with disability or diverse family structures (such as living out of home or rainbow families)
- feedback on experiences of racism in the organisation and any improvements to the organisation's systems and/or responses.

In addition, it can be helpful to research and gather information about what other organisations are doing, what is best practice in your sector and whether there are any useful resources such as sector-specific templates or policy examples available to use as a foundation for your policy development.

Further guidance on requirements to consult, and review and improve policies and procedures can be found in Standards 3, 4, 5 and 10 in [A guide for creating a Child Safe Organisation](#).

¹ In this guide, we use the term child or children to include both children and young people under the age of 18 years.

Step 2: Write the policy or statement

A Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines how your organisation prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps it will take to do this. It sets out the organisation's expectations about child safe practices for staff, volunteers and the broader organisational community. It should support your organisation to meet the requirements of the Standards.

When writing the policy, you will need to reflect on how your organisation will meet the objectives of each of the Standards. As part of this process, you should refer to the compliance indicators listed in [A guide for creating a Child Safe Organisation](#). The policy should outline the steps your organisation is taking to implement each of the Standards.

You could choose to structure the policy under each of the Standards, or by themes. The example Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at the end of this document may also assist.

Consider if you will produce one policy with all content, or several policies. You should refer to and link supporting policies and procedures to your Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Some other important questions that should be considered when writing your organisation's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy are:

- How does the policy help the organisation meet its child safety and wellbeing obligations?
- Will people in the organisation understand the policy? If not, what can be done to make the policy more accessible?
- Will the whole policy be made public? If not, will parts of the policy be made public? Think about how you can structure the policy to facilitate this.
- What is the approval process for the policy?
- How does the policy work together with the organisation's other policies and procedures? Are there any conflicts or inconsistent information between different policies and procedures? Do other policies and procedures require updating?

Step 3: Seek feedback on a draft policy

Once you have developed a draft of your policy, it can be helpful to share it with people to ask for their feedback. This could include a group of staff and volunteers, children and/or people from outside your organisation who can give you another perspective. It might be helpful to have feedback from a similar organisation so you can support each other with a 'peer review'.

Step 4: Approve the policy

The board, Management Committee and/or other leaders of the organisation should approve the policy.

Step 5: Communicate the policy

Publish or store the policy so that it is easily accessible. This could be on your organisation's website or intranet, or you could print it and provide copies. You may like to perform a 'launch' of the policy to ensure that all employees, volunteers and others in the organisation's community are aware of the policy and the information and requirements relevant to them.

You should also consider if training is needed as part of communicating the policy, particularly for staff and volunteers. At a minimum, the policy should be included as part of the induction of new staff and volunteers.

If you do not think it is appropriate to make the whole policy public, prepare a separate document with relevant information for the organisation's community.

You should also continue to identify opportunities to remind the organisation's community about the policy, such as when memberships are renewed, when a new season commences or through the organisation's newsletter or meetings. This will help to embed your organisation's culture of child safety and may act as an opportunity to open discussions regarding child safety.

Step 6: Regularly review and update the policy

A Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy should be reviewed and updated regularly. This ensures that it remains up-to-date with current research and contemporary views on best practice and accurately reflects the organisation's activities, structure and practices.

Other events that might trigger a review include changes in legislation or a safety incident within the organisation.

When the policy is reviewed and updated, you should re-communicate the policy to employees and volunteers. You should also recommunicate relevant information from the policy to your organisation's community.

What to include in a Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

The content of your Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy should be specific to your organisation and the services and facilities you provide to children.

A Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy should:

- demonstrate your organisation's commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children
- identify to leaders, staff and volunteers the actions required to keep children safe and well, and to promote and protect their rights
- support leaders, staff and volunteers to be alert to child abuse and harm
- clarify roles and responsibilities in relation to recognising and responding to child abuse and harm including reporting
- support leaders, staff and volunteers to identify and manage the risks of child abuse and harm in the organisation
- usually apply to all people who conduct work for the organisation in a paid or unpaid capacity – this may include, for example, board members, executive leadership, staff, volunteers, interns, trainees, contractors and consultants
- describe the ways the organisation will empower children to know their rights and to support their participation in decisions that impact them
- be central to your organisation's child safe culture and guide decision-making on child safety issues that arise
- be specific to the size, nature and risks of your organisation and the specific activities, facilities and services it provides to children
- refer to relevant legislative requirements, reporting obligations and to the organisation's other policies and procedures for keeping children safe
- be easy for people to access and understand.

You should refer to [A Guide for creating a Child Safe Organisation](#) for full details on what to include in your organisation's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. The following general guidance is adapted from a [template](#) developed by the Australian Human Rights Commission. Your organisation may want to take a different approach depending on your specific needs.

The template below is broken up into two parts:

- Part 1 contains introductory material where you can set the title, purpose and parameters of the policy and provide key links to relevant policies and legislation.
- Part 2 is where your organisation can document its approach to implementing each Standard.

1. Introductory content

Policy title	Name of the organisation's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
Purpose	Provide a brief statement about what the policy is intending to achieve. A Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines how your organisation prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps it will take to do this. It sets out the organisation's expectations about child safe practices for staff, volunteers and the broader organisational community.
Statement of commitment to child safety	A clear statement of the organisation's commitment to child safety and that it will not tolerate child abuse and harm. The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy should include how the organisation will achieve its commitment to child safety and other child safety objectives.
Scope	Who this policy applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy should apply to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, the organisation in a paid or unpaid capacity. This may include board members, Management Committee, executive leadership, staff, volunteers, interns, trainees, contractors, members and consultants. What this policy applies to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy should apply to all activities in the organisation which involve, result in or relate to contact with children.
Responsibilities	An overview of who is responsible for particular aspects of child safety and wellbeing in the organisation. For example, this section may outline the roles and responsibilities of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • board members and/or executive leadership • managers and staff • child safety person or officer • volunteers, interns and trainees • members • contractors and consultants. This section may also outline who is responsible for implementing or complying with aspects of the organisation's child safety and wellbeing including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy • recruitment and screening practices • staff induction, training, supervision and support • policy or procedure for receiving and responding to complaints • risk assessment and management process • policies or procedures on external reporting, record keeping and information sharing • Code of Conduct.
Definitions	Definition of key terms used in this policy. This may include terms relevant to the particular context of your organisation, for example, categories of paid and unpaid staff, particular positions or governance structures in the organisation.

	<p>It may also include definitions of standard terms such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child/children • child abuse and harm • mandatory reporting • complaints • cultural safety.
Relevant legislation and standards	<p>Reference and links to relevant legislation, regulations, external policies and standards on child safety and wellbeing, as relevant to the organisation and the services it provides to children. This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. • Relevant Commonwealth or Victorian legislation — for example the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) — or regulations, including legislative requirements for Working with Children Checks, mandatory reporting, the Reportable Conduct Scheme for in scope organisations and criminal offences. • Relevant policies or standards, for example the Child Safe Standards.
Related organisational policies and procedures	<p>Reference and links to other internal policies and procedures related to child safety and wellbeing in the organisation. For example, this may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code of Conduct • complaint handling policy • risk management plan • human resources, recruitment and screening policy • disciplinary policy • policies or procedures on record keeping, information sharing and external reporting.
Access to the policy	<p>How the policy can be accessed (for example, on website, at the reception desk).</p>
Policy status and review	<p>Who approved this policy in the organisation and when did it come into effect?</p> <p>Who to go to for more information or assistance with this policy? This may include who to contact in the event of identifying breaches of the policy.</p> <p>When this policy is due to be reviewed and who is responsible for leading the review process.</p>

2. Implementation of the Victorian Child Safe Standards

The list of all Child Safe Standards (the Standards) and some prompts are contained below to help your organisation write content that could be included in your organisation’s Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. This is not intended to be a complete list. It will help you to gather information to explain what your organisation is doing to implement the Standards.

Remember the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy needs to be easy to read and understood by all members of your organisation’s community.

You should refer to the Commission’s compliance indicators and [A Guide for creating a Child Safe Organisation](#) for further guidance.

Suggested headings for sections are included following the order of the Standards. A different structure or headings may be right for your organisation’s Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Cultural safety for Aboriginal children
<p>This section outlines how you will give effect to Child Safe Standard 1: <i>Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.</i></p>
<p>Describe strategies used by the organisation to create a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal children.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <p>How the organisation will describe its commitment to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlining the key actions the organisation will take to create an inclusive and welcoming physical and online environment for Aboriginal children and their families. • How the organisation will support, guide or train staff and volunteers and leaders to understand, respect and value Aboriginal culture and to understand the importance of this to the safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children. • How staff and volunteers will encourage and support children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights. • How the organisation will support and facilitate participation and inclusion within the organisation by Aboriginal children and their families. • What the organisation’s approach is to racism. • How the organisation promotes the participation and inclusion of Aboriginal children and their families.

A commitment to child safety and wellbeing
<p>This section outlines how you will give effect to Child Safe Standard 2: <i>Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.</i></p>
<p>Describe how the organisation puts into practice its commitment to child safety and wellbeing and how a child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the organisation will describe its commitment to child safety and wellbeing. • What the organisation’s expectations and practices are about child safety and wellbeing and what the governance arrangements are to ensure this is achieved. • How leaders, staff and volunteers will champion a child safe culture and the expectations around child safety and reporting. • How and when leaders will monitor and review the organisation’s performance in delivering child safety and wellbeing. • What should be in the organisation’s Code of Conduct, who needs to comply with it, and what happens if a person breaches it. • What the organisation’s approach is to record keeping and information sharing.

Taking child participation and empowerment seriously

This section outlines how you will give effect to **Child Safe Standard 3: Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.**

Describe strategies used by the organisation to empower children to know their rights and have their rights respected, participate in decision-making and have their voices heard.

Consider:

- How the organisation will educate and engage with children about their rights, safe environments and how to raise concerns and access support services.
- Key processes or opportunities for children to participate in the organisation and contribute to decision-making.
- Ways the organisation seeks the views of children and encourages their participation, including on safety and wellbeing issues.
- Information or training provided to staff and volunteers so they understand the rights of children, are skilled at engaging with children and helping them participate in decision-making and can recognise and act on the signs of child abuse and harm.
- Ways the organisation promotes friendships and peer support for children.
- Whether sexual abuse prevention information will be offered to children.

Involving families and communities

This section outlines how you will give effect to **Child Safe Standard 4: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.**

Describe how the organisation puts into practice effective communication and participation strategies for engaging with, and responding to, the diversity of families and communities.

Consider:

- How families can participate in decisions that impact their child.
- How families and communities are given information about the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policies.
- How the organisation provides information about the organisation's governance and operations, complaints processes and disciplinary processes.
- How the organisation seeks and responds to feedback from family and community members.
- Ways the organisation seeks the input of families and communities on the organisation's approach to child safety and wellbeing.
- How the organisation engages with families and communities to build cultural safety for children in the organisation.

Respecting equity and diversity

This section outlines how you will give effect to **Child Safe Standard 5: *Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.***

Describe how the organisation creates an environment where children's diverse circumstances and needs are recognised, and all children feel safe, welcome and included.

Consider:

- How the organisation will describe its commitment to equity and inclusion.
- Ways the organisation will recognise and respect the diverse needs of all children and provide ways for children or their families to identify their individual needs.
- How the organisation will provide children with access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.
- How the organisation will respond to the needs of all children, with a particular focus on those experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage.
- How the organisation upholds equity for all children and prevents child abuse and harm resulting from discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation.
- Training for staff and volunteers on identifying and responding to children with diverse circumstances and needs.

Ensuring that staff are suitable and supported

This section outlines how you will give effect to **Child Safe Standard 6: *People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.***

Describe how the organisation puts into practice its recruitment and staff development policies including screening, induction and supervision to ensure that staff and volunteers reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

Consider:

- How to describe the organisation's approach to recruitment, including advertising, position descriptions, selection criteria, pre-employment screening and referee checks.
- How you will regularly check qualifications, Working with Children Check and other registration or ongoing screening checks remain valid.
- What training will be provided for staff and volunteers on their child safety and wellbeing responsibilities, the organisation's child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, external reporting obligations (such as mandatory reporting), the Code of Conduct, the complaints process, information sharing and record keeping.
- The organisation's approach to supervision, support and performance management of staff and volunteers.

Child-focused complaint systems
<p>This section outlines how you will give effect to Child Safe Standard 7: <i>Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused.</i></p>
<p>Describe how the organisation ensures that it has accessible and responsive complaints management processes that are focused on the needs and rights of children.</p> <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The organisation’s approach to receiving, responding to and investigating concerns or complaints of child abuse or harm and how the organisation prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children. • How the organisation provides child-friendly and accessible information to children, families and community members about how they can raise concerns and how those concerns will be responded to and investigated. • The roles and responsibilities of staff and volunteers in the complaints process and how staff and volunteers should respond to children who disclose abuse. • The organisation’s approach to privacy and confidentiality. • What must be reported to external authorities and how this should be done. • Record keeping and information sharing requirements. • What employment law obligations are relevant to complaint handling. • How the organisation will respond to concerns or complaints relating to abuse or harm caused to a child by another child. • What needs to be done to identify and respond to risks to the safety of children when a complaint or safety concern is raised. • What support is available to those making a complaint and those involved in the complaint process.

Staff knowledge, skills and awareness
<p>This section outlines how you will give effect to Child Safe Standard 8: <i>Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.</i></p>
<p>Describe how the organisation promotes child safety and wellbeing by ensuring that staff and volunteers are provided with relevant knowledge and skills on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Staff and volunteers need training and information on issues such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • children’s rights • the organisation’s child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures • recognising signs of child abuse or harm • responding to disclosures • understanding and responding to harmful behaviours by a child towards another child • record keeping • risk assessment and management • external reporting obligations • creating culturally safe and inclusive environments and responding to racism. <p>Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How you will identify training needs for staff and volunteers and how you will record attendance. • How information will be made available to staff and volunteers and who is responsible for providing this. • How the organisation will provide support for staff and volunteers.

Safe physical and online environments

This section outlines how you will give effect to **Child Safe Standard 9: *Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.***

Describe how the organisation promotes child safety and wellbeing in physical and online environments in order to reduce the risk of harm.

Consider:

- How the organisation will develop and implement risk management plans.
- How risk management plans will be informed by and responsive to the views of staff, volunteers, parents and carers and children.
- How to minimise risks of child abuse and harm without compromising children's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.
- Online as well as physical environments.
- Any procurement by the organisation and how to ensure child safety and wellbeing when contracting third parties.

Review of child safe policies and practices

This section outlines how you will give effect to **Child Safe Standard 10: *Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.***

Describe how the organisation continues to reflect on and improve its child safety and wellbeing policies and practices.

Consider:

- How frequently this policy, and the organisation's other child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, will be reviewed and who is responsible.
- How you will make sure the organisation has fully implemented each of the Standards.
- How the organisation engages children, families, communities, staff and volunteers in review processes and provides feedback on review outcomes.
- How the organisation regularly analyses complaints, concerns, incidents or significant breaches of policy to identify causes or systemic weaknesses and implements improvements.
- How you will tell the organisation's community about the findings and actions taken in response to reviews.

Documenting policies and procedures

This section outlines how you will give effect to **Child Safe Standard 11: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.**

Describe how the organisation documents and makes available its policies and procedures for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children.

Consider:

- What documents are needed to demonstrate how the organisation supports child safety and wellbeing (including a Code of Conduct, risk assessment and management plans, complaint handling policy, recruitment policy, human resources and volunteering policies, procurement policy and policies on record keeping and information sharing).
- Which information will be in the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and which information will be in other policies and procedures, ensuring all policies and procedures together address all the requirements of the Standards.
- How to make sure these documents are informed by stakeholder consultation.
- How the organisation uses information from experts and other organisations to inform policies and procedures.
- How the organisation will monitor if leaders, staff and volunteers understand child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures, have implemented them and are following them.
- The expectations for leaders, staff and volunteers in complying with and implementing child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures.

Example of an organisation's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

The following example policy provides an approach to the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy that may be suitable for smaller organisations.

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy² is a community-based organisation that helps children aged four and up to develop and showcase their performing arts skills. Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy has approximately 200 current students. Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy operates in regional Victoria and the community has a significant South Sudanese-Australian population that speaks Dinka as their first language.

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy acknowledges the Yorta Yorta People, the Traditional Owners of the land on which we operate. We acknowledge and respect their contributions, experience and knowledge as First Nations people. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy was approved by the Management Committee on 30 June 2021. It demonstrates the strong commitment of management, staff and volunteers to child safety and wellbeing, and how our organisation keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

Commitment to child safety

All children who come to Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and harm. We aim to create a child safe and child-friendly environment where children feel safe and have fun while enjoying learning the performing arts.

Purpose

This Policy outlines how Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps we will take to do this.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Management Committee members, children and other individuals involved in our organisation. This policy applies to all activities – classes, tutoring and performances – conducted by Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy.

Definitions

Management Committee means the Chair, CEO, Director of Performing Arts and two Parents' Representatives.

Child abuse means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming
- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child

² Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy is not a real organisation and this example has been developed for illustrative purposes only.

- serious neglect of a child.

Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

Child/Children means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Concerns and complaints

A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy related to one or more of the following:

- our services or dealings with individuals
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual associated with Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy
- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person
- the conduct of a child or young person at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy
- the inadequate handling of a prior concern
- general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.

Role of the Management Committee

The Management Committee has the role of making sure Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy prioritises children's safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.

The Management Committee will champion and model a child safe culture at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy. We encourage anyone involved with the organisation to report a child safety concern. The Management Committee will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns.

Everyone at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm. The Management Committee will make sure that staff and volunteers are conducting risk assessments and taking action to manage risks in accordance with this policy. They will also ensure that appropriate child safety training for staff and volunteers is identified and completed.

The Management Committee will conduct an annual review of how effectively Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy is delivering child safety and wellbeing. The input of people involved with Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy will be sought as part of this review.

Children's empowerment and participation

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy is a child-centred organisation. We actively seek to include children's views and ideas in our organisational planning, delivery of services including rehearsals and performances, and management of facilities.

We want children to develop new friends through Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy and encourage children to be supportive of each other. We do not tolerate bullying or abusive behaviour between children and take action if this occurs.

We respect the rights of children and provide them with information about their rights including the right to be safe at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy. We actively seek to understand what

makes children feel safe in our organisation. We regularly communicate with children about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy values the voices of children and will act on safety concerns raised by children or their families. Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy supports children's participation in the following ways:

- Regular discussions with children, including child-led conversations on what makes them feel safe and unsafe.
- A suggestion box for children that is regularly emptied with suggestions assessed and acted on where appropriate. Children are provided with feedback on their suggestions.
- Consultation with children about any proposed significant changes to the physical environment, policies, procedures, programs or staffing. Children's views are collected by staff, provided to management and considered in the decision-making process.
- Information provided to children and families about Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy operations, staffing and programs are made suitable for different age groups and diversity of the children. Child safety information sessions will be offered in Dinka where needed.

Families and communities

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy recognises the important role of families and involves parents and carers when making significant decisions about their child. Parents, families and communities are welcome to provide feedback at any time through our contact email address and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with us.

At the annual general meeting each year, we elect the Chair and two parent representatives on the Management Committee and all community members are invited to share their thoughts on the direction of Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy for the next year.

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices including through:

- publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct on our website
- including information about our child safety approach, our operations and Management Committee and management structure, in the Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy parent and parer information manual
- including articles and information on child safety and wellbeing, and reminders about our policies and procedures, in our newsletter.

Creating culturally safe environments for all Aboriginal children and their families

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy is committed to creating environments where Aboriginal culture is celebrated and Aboriginal children, families and community members are welcomed and included. Strategies to embed cultural safety for Aboriginal children include:

- an Acknowledgement of Country at all performances
- consulting with families and members of the Aboriginal community to identify opportunities to promote Aboriginal culture and practices in the Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy studio and programs
- providing opportunities for children to share their cultural identity and express their culture, including through performance and during Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy community activities
- supporting children who wish to explore their culture, including consulting with their family and relevant Aboriginal organisations

- providing training for staff and volunteers on the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children
- celebrating NAIDOC Week and acknowledging significant events including National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week
- seeking feedback from Aboriginal children, families and communities on their experience at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy, particularly how safe they feel expressing their identity including their culture.

Valuing diversity

We value diversity and equity for all children. To achieve this, we:

- provide training for all Management Committee members, staff and volunteers on understanding diversity and how to support inclusion and cultural safety
- welcome and support participation of all children, including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families
- offer students and families through our enrolment forms the opportunity to provide information about themselves, including any specific needs to participate fully in our programs
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified
- deliver programming that reflects the diversity of our students, their interests and cultures
- strive to reflect the diversity of our community through representation in our staff and Management Committee members – we are committed to having representatives of South Sudanese background on our Management Committee
- acknowledge and celebrate important cultural dates in our classes
- have a physical and online environment that actively celebrates diversity
- commit to ensuring our facilities and online activities promote inclusion of children of all abilities.

Code of Conduct

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy has a Child Safe Code of Conduct. Staff, volunteers and the Management Committee must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including termination of a person's involvement with the organisation.

All third-party contractors are also expected to abide by the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and where they are engaging with children will have to sign an agreement to comply with the code, prior to delivering any services.

Recruiting staff and volunteers

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy puts child safety and wellbeing at the centre of recruitment and screening processes for staff and volunteers as outlined in the recruitment and screening policy. We only recruit staff and volunteers who are appropriate to engage with children. Members of the Management Committee must also be screened.

We require a Working with Children Check, Police Checks and referee checks for all staff and volunteers who have a role with children or have access to children's personal information. We require staff to have appropriate qualifications for their roles and check to make sure these qualifications are valid. Members of the Management Committee must hold a valid Working with Children Check and a national Police Check is required.

Supporting staff and volunteers

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy is committed to ensuring that all leaders, staff and volunteers receive training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and to support their engagement with children. Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy assists its leaders, staff and volunteers to incorporate child safety considerations into decisions and to promote a safe environment where children are empowered to speak up about issues that affect them.

All Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy Management Committee members, leaders, staff and volunteers are required to complete annual child safety training. Training will be recorded in the Child Safety Training Action Plan.

Staff and volunteers will receive supervision to support their engagement with children and for compliance with our Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Issues or concerns about behaviour with children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with our Code of Conduct, complaint handling policy and disciplinary policy.

Complaints and reporting

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy has a complaint handling policy that includes information for staff and volunteers about how a complaint or child safety concern will be responded to. An easy-to-understand complaints information sheet will be provided for children, families and the community to know about the complaint process and the supports available to those making a complaint and those involved in the complaint process.

If a complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, then staff and volunteers at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy must report it in accordance with the complaint handling policy. Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy staff and volunteers are required to prioritise children's safety in any response and to report all potentially criminal conduct to Victoria Police. Under the complaint handling and disciplinary policies, staff and volunteers may be subject to actions to support child safety including:

- being stood down during an investigation or terminated following an investigation
- having their duties altered so they do not engage with children at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy
- not allowing unsupervised contact with children at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy
- removing their access to the Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy IT system and facilities.

Complaints can be emailed to complaints@kidshavefun.org.au or you can speak with a Child Safety Person.

If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.

Child Safety Person

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy has two trained child safety persons with responsibility for responding to any child safety related complaints or concerns.

Child safety persons are introduced to children so they know and understand who the appointed officers are, and how and when they may contact them. Photos and names of the child safety persons are displayed on our noticeboard and in our newsletters.

If a person does not feel comfortable making a report to a child safety person, they may report their concern to the Chair of the Management Committee.

Record keeping

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

All child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and near misses will be recorded in the incident reporting system.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

We will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Records will be stored securely and kept by Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy for at least 45 years.

Information sharing

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests. Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety. We may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety. More information is available in our complaint handling policy.

Risk management

We recognise the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments operated by Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy.

We conduct regular risk assessments and have a risk management plan to address the risk of child abuse and harm at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy. The risk management plan will be developed in consultation with our staff, volunteers, parent representatives and children. We will ensure that any risk controls put in place balance the need to manage harm with the benefits of participating at Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy. The Management Committee is responsible for approving the risk management plan.

Any contractors or other providers of services will always be supervised by a member of staff while working with us to ensure child safety. See also Code of Conduct above.

Non-compliance with this policy and the Code of Conduct

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and any other child safety and wellbeing policies (see list below). Potential breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement or other corrective action. More information can be found in our disciplinary policy.

Review

Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy will review all child safe practices and policies at least every two years. We also review relevant practices and policies in response to a child safety incident or 'near miss'. Findings from reviews will be reported to the people involved in our organisation and also inform our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices. Reviews are

overseen by the Management Committee and will be informed by consultation with children, families and staff.

Supporting documents – Kids Have Fun Performing Arts Academy child safety and wellbeing system

- The following policies and procedures work together to support child safety and wellbeing across all of our operations:
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- complaint handling policy
- recruitment and screening policy
- disciplinary policy
- risk management plan
- child safe training plan.

Supporting legislation

- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)* (including Child Safe Standards)
- *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)* (including reporting to Child Protection)
- *Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)* (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- *Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)* (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)