Child Safe Culture Policy

Purpose

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Child Safe Policy, Child Safe Procedure, the ECMS Child Safety, and Early Childhood Compliance: Reportable Matters Handbook, and the ECMS Child Safety Commitment Statement. It provides a clear set of guidelines and procedures to ensure:

- all children attending ECMS services are provided with a safe environment
- all reasonable steps are taken by the Approved Provider, educators, and staff to ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of children attending the service.

Principals

ECMS, as an approved provider, has a legal and moral responsibility to ensure that all children are safe in their care, and will provide training, resources, information, and guidance to support this. ECMS is committed to:

- Ensuring that the health, safety and wellbeing of children at the service is protected at all times while also promoting their learning and development
- Fulfilling its duty of care obligations under the law by protecting children from any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm
- Ensuring that people educating and caring for children at the service act in the best interests of the child, and take all reasonable steps to ensure the child's safety and wellbeing at all times
- Ensuring its adherence to the ECMS Child Safety Commitment Statement
- Fulfilling its legal obligations to report all allegations and incidents of abuse, neglect, and misconduct to the appropriate authorities
- Fulfilling its obligations to the Child Information Sharing Scheme, the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme, and the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework
- Supporting the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe, at all times
- Developing and maintaining a culture in which children feel valued, respected, and cared for
- Encouraging active participation from parents/guardians and families at the service, and ensuring that best practice is based on a partnership approach and shared responsibility for children's health, safety, wellbeing, and

development

- Promoting children's development and wellbeing
- Ensuring that additional considerations are made for children from an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) families, and children with disabilities and vulnerable families in order to keep children safe.

Scope

This policy applies to all ECMS staff including the Board, Executive, support services, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, and others attending ECMS services, including during off-site excursions and activities.

Roles & Responsibilities

Director, Early Childhood Education	Accountable for: • Ensuring implementation and compliance with this policy and procedure • Leading and fostering a culture of reporting child safety matters • Ensure annual Child Safety training is completed

People and Capability	Responsible for:
	• Adherence to the requirements within the ECMS Child Safety Policy and Procedures with respect to:
	   ○ Recruitment and section criteria
	   ○ Documentation required before commencement
	   ○ Corporate Induction

Area Managers	Responsible for: • Ensuring implementation and compliance with this policy and procedure • Undertake the responsibilities as outlined in the Child Safe Policy and Procedure • Undertake the responsibilities outlined in the Information Sharing Scheme Policy and Procedure • Supporting Nominated Supervisors to promote child safety matters and encourage a culture of reporting within their teams • Ensure annual Child Safety training is completed
Nominated Supervisors and Centre Directors	Responsible for: • Ensuring implementation and compliance with this policy and procedure • Undertake the responsibilities outlined in the Information Sharing Scheme Policy and Procedure

	• Undertake the responsibilities as outlined in the Child Safe policy and procedure • Support staff during matters of child safety to encourage a culture of reporting • Support staff to create a safe environment for the child in the event of an investigation • Ensure annual Child Safety training is completed
Educators (including students and volunteers)	Responsible for: • Undertake the responsibilities as outlined in the policy and procedure • Undertake the responsibilities outlined in the Information Sharing Scheme Policy and Procedure • Undertake the responsibilities as outlined in the Child Safe policy and procedure • Creating a safe environment for children in the event of an investigation • Ensure annual Child Safety training is completed

Sources

Related Policy and Procedure	Acceptance or refusal of Authorisation Policy and Procedure Child Safe Policy and Procedure Code of Conduct Medical Conditions Policy and all associated Medical Procedures Emergency and Evacuation Management Policy Excursion Policy Incident Reporting Policy and Procedure Infectious Diseases Policy and Procedure Information Sharing Scheme Policy and Procedure Interactions with Children Policy and Procedure Medication Policy and Procedure Nutrition, Food Beverages and Dietary Requirements Policy and Procedure Reportable Conduct Policy and Procedure Sun Protection Policy Supervision of Children Policy Use of Images of Children Participation of Volunteers and Students Policy and Procedure Water Safety Policy
Relevant Legislation	Child Safe Standards Children, Youth, and Families Act 2005 (Vic) Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)

	Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic): Sections 165, 166, 167 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (Vic): Regulations 84, 85, 86, 99, 100, 101, 102, 168(2)(h) Education Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic) Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic) Working with Children Act 2005 (Vic) Working with Children Regulations 2006 (Vic)
Sources and Further Reading	Child Protection in Early Childhood (PROTECT) Child Information Sharing Scheme https://www.vic.gov.au/child-information-sharing-scheme www.dhs.vic.gov.au/for-service-providers/children,-youth-and- families/child-protection Making a report to Child Protection https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/making-report-child-protection Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)available at: http://www.legislation.vic.gov.au/ Commission for Children and Young People https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/ Owens, Angela (2012) Health Safety and Wellbeing. Early Childhood Australia, National Quality Standard Professional Learning Program, e- Newsletter no. 29, 2012. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: www.unicef.org/crc