

THE CITY OF
GREATER GEELONG

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

VERSION: 1

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Approved by: Chief Executive Officer

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Responsible Officer: Manager, Policy and Workplace
Relations

Authorising Officer: Director, Strategy, People &
Performance

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Introduction

PURPOSE

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this Policy) informs all of City of Greater Geelong's (**The City**) staff of their obligations to act ethically towards children and young people and gives guidance on the processes and procedures necessary to ensure child safety and wellbeing across all areas of our work. This policy confirms the City's commitment to the **ten National Principles** required to be demonstrated by a Child Safe organisation.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers, service providers, contractors, representatives, agents and others who act on behalf of The City. It covers all activities at The City which involve, result in or relate to contact with children and young people. Councillors are not bound by the contents of this policy however are required to abide by the Councillor Code of Conduct which includes a commitment to child safety.

BACKGROUND

The City's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy articulates the City's commitment to upholding the ten National Principles required to be demonstrated by child safe organisations. These Principles were developed as a key national response to the recommendation of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse to make organisations safe for our children. Our policy includes the actions that will be taken to meet these National Principles.

Definitions

Child or Young Person

A child or young person is a person under 18 years of age.

City Staff

Includes employees, volunteers and contract.

National Principles

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations endorsed by the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments in response to the findings of the Royal Commission.

Royal Commission

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.

Policy

The City is committed to being a child safe organisation and has zero tolerance for child abuse. We recognise our legal and moral responsibilities in keeping all children and young people safe from harm and promoting their best interests. We have specific policies, procedures and training in place to support City workers to achieve these commitments.

In affirming its commitment to the safety and wellbeing of all Children, the City adopts the National Principles to provide a consistent approach to embedding child safe cultures within organisations that engage with children and act as a vehicle to give effect to the Royal Commission's recommendations in relation to child safe standards.

The National Principles, and the City's commitment to each of them, are as follows:

National Principle	Commitment Statement
1. <i>Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.</i>	This principle provides guidance on the role of organisational leadership and governance at the City in promoting inclusive and welcoming environments for children and young people, a culture of accountability and the ways in which a child safe culture is developed and maintained.
2. <i>Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.</i>	The City will create an organisational culture that supports children and young people to understand what child safety and wellbeing means.
3. <i>Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.</i>	The City will involve families and the community in its approach to child safety and wellbeing, relevant policies and practices and the provision of accessible information.
4. <i>Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.</i>	The City in recognition of children and young people's diverse circumstances will be an organisation that works in a child-centred way and empowers children and young people to participate more effectively.
5. <i>People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.</i>	The City will have in place recruitment and staff development policies, including appropriate screening, that are a foundation of child safe organisations.
6. <i>Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focussed.</i>	The City will have human resource management policies and practices and effective complaints management processes that are accessible, responsive to and can be understood by children and young people, families, and City Staff.
7. <i>Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people</i>	The City is committed to the ongoing education and training of City Staff to equip them with the knowledge required to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children.

National Principle**Commitment Statement**

safe through ongoing education and training.

8. *Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.*

The City is committed to reducing the risk of harm in physical and online environments as an important preventative mechanism.

9. *Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.*

The City will continuously improve its delivery of child safe services and operations through undertaking regular reviews of the implementation of the child safe principles.

10. *Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people*

The City recognises the importance of having clearly documented child safe policies and procedures.

WHAT PERSONS COVERED BY THIS POLICY MUST DO IF THEY HAVE A REASONABLE BELIEF THAT CHILD ABUSE HAS TAKEN PLACE:

Any person working under the auspice of The City have a legal requirement to report a reasonable belief of child abuse. Report the matter to the manager of your department, who will in turn report your concern to The City's Child Safe Advisor. The Child Safe Advisor, in collaboration with other professionals in the child safety field, will determine if the suspected abuse is deemed **Reportable Conduct**, and if so, will report the suspected abuse to the Commission of Children and Young People (**CCYP**).

Following any non-compliance with this policy, we will instigate a review or investigation that may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or other corrective action in line with the Managing Conduct Policy.

Implementation of this Policy

RELEVANT CONTACT OFFICER

The City's Child Safe Advisor in the Policy and Workplace Relations Team

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Policy & Workplace Relations will monitor and be responsible for this policy.

ADVICE AND ASSISTANCE

Policy & Workplace Relations manages the provision of advice to The City regarding this policy.

RECORDS

The City must retain records associated with this policy and its implementation for at least the period shown below.

Record	Retention / Disposal Authority	Retention Period	Location
Investigation Records and Correspondence	Policy & Workplace Relations	Indefinite	ReX

REVIEW

The City should review and, if necessary, amend this policy within two years of the approval date.

References

Legislation

None.

Other Documents

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Findings of the Royal Commission into Intitutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse.