

ECEC POLICY



Providing a Child Safe Environment	Document No:	R 168 2 (h)
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The City of Greater Geelong is a Child Safe Organisation. We take the wellbeing and safety of children seriously and have zero tolerance for child abuse of any kind.

1. PURPOSE

The City of Greater Geelong Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Services, are committed to providing safe, stimulating, inclusive learning environments that promote children's ability to take reasonable risks, make their own decisions and develop a strong sense of agency. Children learn in our ECEC Services in "group settings" - learning environments that are different from home environments; and we acknowledge we have a duty of care to all children's safety and sense of security in these learning spaces.

2. SCOPE

ALL SERVICES:

Are committed to sustaining safe and inclusive environments that ensure the physical, emotional, social, cultural, and spiritual safety of all children. Our focus is to create environments that are child safe and child friendly, where children feel safe, respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. All staff and educators have a duty of care and are supported to follow the eleven Child Safe Standards, ensuring all children in our community are safe at all times, including online safety. All Services have zero tolerance of racism and make sure any racist speech or actions are always addressed. They discuss racism and where this stems from, and work to address unconscious bias and take opportunities to pause and reflect or participate in open discussions about racism.

In line with the **Paramountcy Principle (s2A)** every person involved in delivering our education and care services will ensure that the safety, rights and best interests of children is the **paramount consideration in all their decisions and actions**.

3. REFERENCES

- Education and Care National Regulations 2011
- Amendments 2017
- Education and Care National Law Act 2010
- Amendments 2017
- Education and Care National Quality Standards

- [Red Nose Guidelines](#)
- [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)
- [Child Safe Standards 2022 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,11](#)
- [Reportable conduct scheme.](#)
- [Child Safe Code of Conduct](#)
- [PROTECT](#)
- [DE full updated summary of 11 CSS \(July 2022\)](#)
- National Model Code (July 2025)
- NQF Child Safe Culture Guide, ACECQA 2025

4. ECEC POLICY

IN ALL SERVICES MANAGEMENT WILL:

- Ensure all children are protected at all times in accordance with the relevant Acts, Regulations and Standards that apply to Children's Services.
- Ensure child-to-educator ratios are maintained at all times.
- Ensure staff and educators have completed the Child Protection training with DE online, annually, and the Child Safe Standards online training module annually, and understand their responsibilities and course of action required.
- Ensure all children attending our service are provided with a safe environment, both physically and online, through reasonable precautions and adequate supervision procedures.
- Ensure all staff are aware of the newest Regulatory Policy: *Safe use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments. (September 2025)*
- Creation of a child safe culture which actively promotes and supports child wellbeing.
- Demonstrate implementation of the Child Safe Standards in their QIPs. This includes:
 - Documenting changes or practices introduced to meet the Standards.
 - Using self-assessment processes to evaluate how child safety is embedded in service operations.
 - Demonstrating continuous improvement in child safety practices.
- Ensure staff and educators are aware of the Child Protection Guidelines for the Action Steps to take in the event of a need to report an incident. *See Guidelines & DE PROTECT poster.*
- Ensure that when a child is exhibiting challenging, unsafe or sexualised behaviours, that the appropriate policies and guidelines are followed (i.e. Child Safe, [FLOWCHART - Monitoring Behaviours of Concern](#)).
- Ensure a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
- Ensure Aboriginal voice is part of decision making in matters that affect Aboriginal children and families & be open to different ways of doing and expressing things.
- Ensure educators have access to hygiene guidelines, training, and materials.

- Ensure a culture of supportive communication with educators and families about any child who is experiencing significant challenges that are impacting on the child's learning and the safety of all children and team members. Use the [FLOWCHART](#) system.
- Ensure there is a process for the review and replacement of equipment and toys as required.
- Ensure all children have access to sufficient furniture, materials, and developmentally appropriate equipment suitable for the education and care of that child.
- Ensure there are clear guidelines in place for the care and maintenance of animals/pets in a service.

IN ALL SERVICES EDUCATORS WILL:

- Ensure their daily practices are compliant with all the relevant Acts, Regulations and Standards that apply to Children's Services to ensure that children are protected at all times.
- Ensure children are protected at all times from any harm and hazards.
- Ensure all children attending our service are provided with a safe environment, both physically and online, through reasonable precautions and adequate supervision.
- Creation of a child safe culture which actively promotes and supports child wellbeing.
- Ensure children are adequately and effectively supervised at all times and child-to-educator ratios are maintained at all times.
- Ensure where a child is presenting with significant dysregulated behaviours causing distress to other children, communication about the child's needs are shared with Management and the family in a timely manner. Use the [FLOWCHART - Monitoring Behaviours of Concern](#) system.
- Ensure that management is informed immediately if a child is presenting with concerning sexualised behaviours.
- Ensure they are aware of the Child Protection Guidelines for the Action Steps to take in the event of a need to report an incident. See *Guidelines & DE PROTECT poster*.
- Implement this Providing a Child Safe Environment policy and procedures and ensure that any action plans for individual children are carried out.
- Ensure risk assessments are completed and updated as required.
- Ensure good hygiene practices are implemented and promoted with children as recommended in the service guidelines.
- Ensure they are providing equipment and toys that are safe, clean and in good repair and removed if dangerous.
- Follow all guidelines relating to the care and maintenance of animals/pets in the service.
- Provide an inclusive education and care environment that allows all children to participate equally, regardless of ability, culture, age or disposition.

- Ask Aboriginal children and their families for feedback about what the Service & programs do well, and what could be improved.
- Ensure safe sleeping guidelines are followed at all times.
- Ensure the voice of the child is considered & reflected in respectful interactions and seeking their permission.

IN ALL SERVICES FAMILIES WILL:

- Provide management and educators with relevant up to date information regarding their child's health and wellbeing.
- Provide up to date medical action plans, risk minimisation plans, and communication plans as requested, where applicable; prior to their child commencing.
- Engage with management and educators to provide up to date information about their child's development including any complex issues that may impact on their own child's safety, the safety of their peers and how this may impact on their learning.
- Ensure children's immunisations are kept up to date.
- Communicate with educators regarding their children's likes, dislikes, needs and routines to ensure their individual needs are met within a group educational setting.
- Ensure children displaying signs and symptoms of communicable illnesses are kept away from the service until cleared (by a medical practitioner) to return.
- Support children in making safe choices when entering and exiting services.
- Provide feedback about what matters to them, what makes them feel safe and whether the service's child safety strategies are meeting their needs. Use focus groups, questionnaires, or other methods.
- Where a family are contacted to collect their child from the Service (prior to the end of their program day), they do so in a timely manner to ensure their child's emotional wellbeing is protected.
- Understand where a family does not collect their child, this "failure to collect" will require the Management to enact their response to this medical emergency (child's psychosocial distress) – as part of our professional responsibilities under the Child Safe Standards and mandatory reporting responsibilities.

5. CHILD SAFETY REFORMS

In line with Child Safe Standards and the 2025/2026 Child Safety Reforms (VECRA) to ensure Victoria's early childhood education and care services are providing safe, high-quality education and care our staff will be provided with opportunity to complete annual **DE Protecting Children - Mandatory Reporting and Other Obligations for Early Childhood** Online Training; and every two years **National Child Safety Training**.

6. QUALITY RECORDS & ADDITIONAL SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

- ECEC Educator Handbook. **ECEC TEAM APP.**
- City of Greater Geelong Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme
- City of Greater Geelong – Child Safe Standards Report Forms
- City of greater Geelong – CSS Code of Conduct
- **FLOWCHART - Monitoring Behaviours of Concern** system.
- Safe Use of Digital Technologies and Online Environments **Policy**
- **Guidelines** for team members managing complex behaviours. (accompanying Procedures)
- **Guidelines** for Supervision in an ECEC Service
- **Guidelines** for Supervision on Excursions
- **Guidelines** for Safe Sleep in ECEC Services & Risk Assessments.
- **Template** – Early Childhood Mandatory Reporting – PROTECT (D24-227837)
- **Template** – ECEC Centre Photo & Video Permission from families
- **Template** - Individual Child Support Plan

6. ATTACHMENTS

PROTECT Identifying and Responding to All Forms of Abuse in Early Childhood Services

<https://www.vic.gov.au/child-protection-early-childhood-protect?Redirect=1>

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations - <https://childsafeforhumanrights.gov.au>

[Social Services Regulator registration | vic.gov.au](#)

[National Model Code Taking Images and Videos.pdf](#)