



5.6 Policies for review & endorsement

Section 1: Organisational framework

Policy 1.1 - Framework to Safeguard the Wellbeing of Children

POLICY STATEMENT

EdConnect recognises that all children have the right to develop and reach their potential in a caring, nurturing and safe environment.

EdConnect is committed to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the Child Safe Standards (Victoria) which together set out 11 compulsory standards for safeguarding children to protect them from harm.

EdConnect acknowledges the unique and diverse cultures of our First Nations people, and endeavours to provide a safe environment where the identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children is respected and valued.

EdConnect has zero tolerance for any form of child abuse, racism, or discrimination on any basis.

EdConnect embraces diversity and promotes the inclusion of children of all abilities, cultural backgrounds, gender identities and recognises that lived experience in shaping the values of children and their families.

Everyone at EdConnect is responsible for the care and protection of children and must speak up should they become aware of circumstances or behaviours likely to be detrimental to the wellbeing of any child we support through our programs.

1. Purpose

This Policy and associated Procedure describes the roles and responsibilities of EdConnect directors, staff and volunteers and includes management strategies to promote child safe environments across programs and activities.

Its purpose is to:

- ensure that all directors, staff, contractors and volunteers engaged by EdConnect are:
 - aware of the organisation's commitment to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the Child Safe Standards (Victoria) and safeguarding the wellbeing of children
 - empowered to create and maintain a child-friendly, safe environment that meets the Standards
- facilitate the prevention of child abuse or harm occurring
- establish the framework for an organisational culture of child safety
- outline responsibilities for establishing controls and procedures for preventing abuse or harm and for detecting the occurrence of abuse or harm
- provide guidance to directors, staff, volunteers and contractors as to action to be taken where actual or potential abuse or harm within or outside of EdConnect is suspected



- provide a clear statement to directors, staff, volunteers and contractors forbidding any abuse or harm.
- provide assurance that all suspected abuse or harm will be taken seriously, reported and fully investigated.

2. Scope and Delegation

The Policy and associated Procedure applies to all staff, volunteers, directors, and supporters of EdConnect.

The Chief Executive Officer is the delegated authority responsible for administering this Policy.

3. Definitions

Harm means all forms of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, exploitation (including grooming behaviour), neglect or negligent treatment, commercial (e.g. for financial gain) or other exploitation of a child and includes any actions that results or could result in actual or potential harm to a child.

Child protection means any responsibility, measure or activity undertaken to safeguard children from harm.

Supporters - include sponsors, donors, corporate and community partners who engage with EdConnect's programs and activities which involve children.

Child means a person below the age of 18 years.

Standards means the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations incorporating the additional provisions of the Child Safe Standards (Victoria).

4. Principles

The safety and wellbeing of children is core to EdConnect's purpose and activities. We demonstrate this through:

- ensuring interactions with children create an environment where children feel valued and listened to, are encouraged to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights and in which their participation is valued
- building a culture of openness that encourages the reporting of any concerns for the wellbeing of a child and that all concerns raised will be taken seriously
- affirming that any form of abuse or harmful behaviour is unacceptable and children will be protected
- recruiting staff and volunteers who are suitable to work with children and providing them with high quality training and professional development
- committing to prompt and appropriate investigation of any incidents of suspected actual or potential abuse or harm
- adopting a risk management approach to identify, assess and control the likelihood of children being at risk of abuse and harm in all areas of operation.



- working closely with schools and other agencies to ensure that there is a consistent approach to providing a safe environment for children.
- adhering to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and Child Safe Standards (Victoria) and complying with all other relevant federal, state and territory government policies and standards in relation to prevention, identification and reporting of child abuse.

5. Procedure

Procedure (1.1a) outlines how EdConnect will achieve the aims of this policy through implementation of measures to address:

- compliance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- compliance with the Child Safe Standards (Victoria)
- staff and volunteer code of conduct
- providing appropriate training and awareness for staff and volunteers
- the roles and responsibilities of Board, CEO, staff, volunteers, and supporters
- communication with staff and volunteers
- recruitment, screening and training of staff and volunteers
- maintenance of appropriate background/screening checks and clearances
- managing child safety concerns and complaints
- managing the relationship with the child and family
- marketing, publicity and fundraising events
- working with other agencies.

6. Related Policies and Procedures

Policy Number	Policy Name
	National principles for child safe organisations chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-02/National Principles for Child Safe Organisations2019.pdf
	Child Safe Standards (Victoria) chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/resources/New-CSS/A-short-guide-to-the-Child-Safe-Standards-27.04.23.pdf
	Keeping our Kids Safe (Cultural safety, ref App 1) chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.childsafety.gov.au/system/files/2022-10/child-safe-report.pdf
4.2	Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy
4.7	Staff Code of Conduct Policy
5.1	Volunteer Recruitment Policy
5.2	Volunteer Security Check Policy
5.3	Volunteer Training and development Policy
5.5	Volunteer Code of Conduct Policy
5.10	Volunteer Termination Policy
	EdConnect Volunteer Handbook



	EdConnect Volunteer Training Modules 1, 2 & Refresher Training– section Disclosure
	Relevant state and territories government policies related to Child Protection

7. Legislative Base

Relevant child protection legislation in each state and territory.

Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Victoria)

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)

8. Monitoring & Review of Policy

Every two years and following every reportable incident, a review shall be conducted to assess whether the organisation’s child protection policies or procedures require modification to better protect the children participating in the organisation’s program.

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Reviewed/Endorsed by the Board of Directors

Meeting Date: 16.11.2023

Name: Elena Mogilevski

Signed:

Chair, Board of Directors