



Section 1: Organisational framework

Policy 1.1 - Safeguard the Wellbeing of Children Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

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

EdConnect's commitment to protecting children from abuse and harm is guided by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme, the NSW Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme, the Tasmanian Child and Youth Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme, and Queensland's Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme. Together, the Standards set out compulsory standards and reporting obligations aim to safeguard children and protect them from abuse and 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 promoting the care and protection of children and must speak up should they become aware of circumstances or behaviours likely to be detrimental to the safety and wellbeing of any child we support through our programs and activities.

1. Purpose

This Safeguard the Wellbeing of Children Policy (Policy) and its associated Procedure describe the roles and responsibilities of EdConnect's board of directors, staff, contractors/consultants, volunteers, ambassadors and supporters (EdConnect Representatives and Partners) to promote child safe environments across EdConnect's programs and activities.

Its purpose is to:

- ensure child safety and wellbeing are embedded in EdConnect's leadership, governance and culture, and that all EdConnect Representatives and Partners engaged by EdConnect are:
 - aware of the organisation's commitment to the Standards;
 - empowered to create and maintain a child-friendly, safe environment that meets the applicable Standards;
- promote the prevention of child abuse and harm from occurring;
- outline responsibilities for establishing controls and procedures to prevent child abuse and harm;
- provide guidance to directors, staff, volunteers and contractors as to the actions that are to be taken where actual or potential abuse or harm is suspected in an EdConnect program or activity;

- provide a clear statement to EdConnect Representatives and Partners that EdConnect has a zero tolerance approach to any form of child abuse or harm; and
- provide assurance that all suspected abuse or harm will be taken seriously, reported and fully investigated in accordance with EdConnect's policies and procedures and in line with applicable legislative requirements.

2. Scope and Delegation

The Policy and associated Procedure applies to all EdConnect Representatives and Partners.

It applies to all EdConnect programs and activities, whether conducted in person or online, and whether occurring at EdConnect's premises or at external locations.

The Chief Executive Officer is delegated authority to administer this Policy.

3. Definitions

Child means a person below the age of 18 years.

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

EdConnect Representatives and Partners means EdConnect's board of directors, staff, contractors/consultants, volunteers, ambassadors and supporters.

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.

Standards means the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations incorporating additional provisions of the Child Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme (Victoria), the NSW Child Safe Standards, the Child and Youth Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme (Tasmania) and the Queensland Child Safe Standards.

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

4. Principles

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

- ensuring interactions with children creates 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 are taken seriously and treated respectfully;
- 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 to the extent applicable;
- 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; and

- adhering to the Standards and any other legislative frameworks that may apply, as well as the requirement of any applicable government policies and standards in relation to the prevention, identification and reporting of child abuse.

5. Procedure

Procedure (1.1) 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 and Reportable Conduct Scheme (Victoria)
- compliance with the NSW Child Safe Standards
- compliance with the Child and Youth Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme (Tasmania)
- compliance with the Queensland Child Safe Standards
- the roles and responsibilities of the board directors, CEO, staff, volunteers, contractors/consultants, ambassadors and supporters
- managing child safety concerns

6. Related Policies and Procedures

Policy Number	Policy Name
	National Principles for Child Safe Organisations https://www.childsafety.gov.au/resources/national-principles-child-safe-organisations
	Child Safe Standards & Reportable Conduct Scheme (Victoria) https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safe-standards/the-11-child-safe-standards/ https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/
	NSW Child Safe Standards https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/resources/guide-child-safe-standards
	Tasmania Child and Youth Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme https://oir.tas.gov.au/about/child-and-youth-safe-standards https://www.oir.tas.gov.au/about/reportable-conduct-scheme
	Queensland Child Safe Standards https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafes/resources
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
3.2	Board Code of Conduct
	EdConnect Volunteer Handbook
	EdConnect Volunteer Training Modules 1, 2 & Refresher Training– section Disclosure

7. Relevant Legislation

Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Victoria)
Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Victoria)

Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW)
Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (Tasmania)
Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Queensland)

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, which includes this Policy, require modification to better protect the children participating in the organisation's program.

Version 4

Date Created: 25.03.2013

Dates Reviewed: June 2020, June 2022, April 2026

Date for next Review: April 2028

Reviewed/Endorsed by the Board of Directors

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Dejeu', with a horizontal line underneath the name.

Sabine Dejeu
Chair, Board of Directors