

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Policy Authorised by	Board of Governance
Responsible Person	Manager
Staff involved	All Staff, Volunteers, Tutors and Committee Members
Version	001
Approved by	Board of Governance
Approved on	19 th June 2024
Review date	2026

Purpose

We prioritise the safety and wellbeing of children and expect that all staff, volunteers and anyone in our broader organisational community takes a role in ensuring children are safe and well. This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates the strong commitment of management, staff, tutors and volunteers to child safety and wellbeing, and how our organisation keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

Commitment to child safety

Orana Neighbourhood House is a child-safe organisation. All children or young people who attend services, programs and events delivered by Orana Neighbourhood House, or spaces managed by the House, have the right to feel and be safe. We have zero tolerance of child abuse and are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and empowering environment, where protecting children and preventing and responding to child abuse is embedded in our culture.

Policy

We are a child-safe organisation. We are committed to creating and maintaining a safe and empowering environment for children. We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and preventing and responding to child abuse is embedded in our culture.

Our Board:

- Understands the organisational expectations and responsibilities around child safety and reporting and champions a child safe culture
- Will enable the achievement of Child Safety Standards by ensuring that training plans, risk assessments and policy and procedure updates are completed.

- Conduct reviews of how effectively Orana Neighbourhood House is delivering child safety and wellbeing through policy and procedure reviews.

Our Management:

- Acts as the Child/Youth Safety Officer
- Ensures the following are in place:

Statement of Child Safety and Code of Conduct

- Our **Statement of Child Safety** and **Code of Conduct** apply to anyone who uses our space, whether formally or informally.
- Orana Neighbourhood House has a Code of Conduct that incorporates important issues related to child safety. Staff, volunteers and the Board of Governance must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including termination of a person's involvement with the organisation.

Recruitment, Induction, Supervision and Performance Management

We only recruit staff and volunteers (including our Board of Governance) who are appropriate to engage with children. All staff and formal volunteers must complete a working with children check and a police check. All staff must also provide references.

All contractors directly engaged by our organisation and long-term room hirers must provide us with a copy of their working with children check and link it to our organisation.

Our Staff and Volunteer manuals and **Board of Governance and Staff Code of Ethics** outline the responsibilities and reporting processes for everyone formally engaged in our organisation, and outline the relevant supervision, support and performance management they can expect relevant to their position.

On engagement all staff and volunteers (including our Board of Governance) receive training/information to ensure they understand what is meant by child safety, our commitments to child safety and exactly how and when they are required to take action.

Our programs and services

- Are guided by formal and informal feedback from our broader community on how our space can best engage and empower children

Working together with our community to enhance and strengthen our neighbourhood



- Periodically change to encourage and enable children to maximise opportunities for positive engagement
Create opportunities for children, parents, grandparents and carers to build community connections, form friendships and get peer support
- Encourages and supports access, equity and diversity
- Celebrates Aboriginal culture and encourages Aboriginal children, families and community members to feel welcome.

Non-compliance

We actively enforce this policy. Potential breaches will be investigated and may result in termination of room hire, restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement, reporting the incident to the police and other corrective action.

Definitions

Child abuse means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming
- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.

Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm.

Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

Child/Children means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Related external documents

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (including Child Safe Standards)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) (including reporting to Child Protection)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic) (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse)

Working together with our community to enhance and strengthen our neighbourhood

