

CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND IMPLEMENTATION



Policy No/Name	EFE 09 Child Safe Environment Policies, Procedures and Implementation
Version	4
Status	Current
Reviewed by	MMW Eton Farm Board
Responsibility	Board/Principal
Scheduled review date	Feb 26



Introduction

This Child Safe Environment policy, procedures, and implementation plans have been developed in collaboration with our school board, the Principal, and staff of Eton Farm Education with guidance from the Royal Commission's child-safe standards.

Aims

Eton Farm Education is committed to providing a child-safe environment that safeguards all students and promotes practices ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and welfare of our children and young people. Eton Farm Education expects all school community members, including staff, volunteers, students, visitors, and contractors, to share this commitment.

School staff are uniquely positioned to detect and prevent abuse and must take every effort to create a child-safe environment. Teachers, in particular, play a critical role in detecting and preventing abuse.

Scope and Application

This policy applies to:

- Employees
- Students
- Parents
- Community members
- Visitors to the school

Definitions

Child: A person under the age of 18 years. Young people aged 18 and over are considered adults and are not covered by this legislation. However, schools still owe a duty of care to all students. In these instances, police should be informed of any assault or crime against the young person.

Teacher: A person registered under the Teacher Registration Act 2012.

Mandatory Reporter: In Western Australia, mandatory reporters of child sexual abuse include the following professions in both government and non-government sectors:

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Midwives
- Teachers
- Police officers
- Psychologists
- Ministers of Religion

Teacher assistants, who work with children but are not mandatory reporters.

Grooming: The process by which a person establishes trust and access to a child, significant adults, and the environment to facilitate abuse, possibly without any explicit mention of sexual activity.

Child Abuse and Neglect: Maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 resulting from action or inaction by a caregiver. Abuse and neglect categories include:

- **Physical abuse:** Severe or persistent ill-treatment, including cuts, bruises, burns, or excessive discipline.
- **Sexual abuse:** Exploitative or inappropriate sexual activity exposure or involvement.
- **Emotional abuse:** Sustained, inappropriate behaviors like threatening, teasing, or belittling.
- **Psychological abuse:** Behaviors damaging intellectual and moral development.
- **Neglect:** Failure to provide basic necessities, adequate supervision, or care.

Note:

Child abuse and neglect, as defined by the Department for Child Protection, is maltreatment done by a person who has responsibility to care for a child and this document concentrates specifically on that relationship.

However, it is very important to note that the definitions of child maltreatment described in this section of this document can be used to explain some of the behaviour that can occur in schools by one child to another. While the treatment of such behaviour may be



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dealt with through other school policies such as Bullying Prevention and Behaviour Management, the victim of that 'bullying' may display some of the physical and behavioural indicators as those described in the next section of this document. These events will be treated seriously by the school with the aim to help both parties. It is also important to note that the child who is 'bullying' may be doing so because they have been subjected to the same inappropriate behaviour and may require assistance through the school's Child Protection policy.

Cultural safety

Is being aware of other cultures and respecting all people. It is about creating a workplace where everyone can examine our own cultural identities and attitudes, and be open-minded and flexible in our attitudes towards people from cultures other than our own.¹

Principles

- Development and maintenance of a child-safe culture are essential.
- Staff will avoid situations where they are alone with a child unless extraordinary circumstances arise.
- Screening, training, and supervision will be maintained for staff and volunteers.
- Professional development and compulsory grooming and mandatory reporting training will be made available to all staff.
- Support will extend beyond mandatory reporting to ensure comprehensive student assistance.
- Confidentiality of mandatory reporters will be protected.
- Delivery of protective behavior curricula enabling students to recognize and report abuse.
- Supervision during school operations and official school events.
- Release of students only to authorized adults.

The school community must remain vigilant, reporting and taking action against any suspected abuse or risks.

Note: Grooming allegations and instances of child abuse are classified as gross misconduct and will result in immediate suspension pending investigation.

¹ www.safework.nsw.gov.au/safety-starts-here/our-aboriginals.



Responsibilities

Board

- Ensuring this policy is updated following legislative changes.
- Annual review of compliance with National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- Ensuring delivery of protective behaviors curricula.
- Screening and vetting job applicants comprehensively.
- Critical incident reporting to DES, if required.

Principal

- Policy updates and oversight of mandatory reporter support.
- Communication with external agencies.
- Ensuring comprehensive record-keeping and supervision.
- Pre-employment documentation and checklist completion.
- Informing DES and the Board Chair of critical incidents and CPFS reports.

Administration Staff

- Keeping updated and accurate records.
- Enrolling new staff in mandatory reporting workshops.
- Expediting correspondence to the Principal on compliance.

Teaching/Other Staff

- Observing and reporting suspected abuse.
- Completing grooming and mandatory reporting training as required.
- Delivering protective behavior curricula.

Adult Members of the School Community

- Notifying the Principal of legal documents affecting their child.
- Prompt reporting of concerns about suspected abuse or neglect.

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The Royal Commission's Child Safe Standards as its Child Safe Organisation Framework is used to underpin Eton Farm Education policies, procedures, practices and strategies to ensure the provision of an environment where children feel respected, valued, supported and safe from harm.

Elements of a Child Safe Institution

<https://www.childabuseroyalcommission.gov.au/sites/default/files/file-list/Research%20Report%20-%20Creating%20Child%20Safe%20Organisations%20-%20Prevention.pdf>

The Royal Commission's work on **child safe institutions** is underpinned by the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**, which was ratified by Australia in 1990.

Consistent with Article 3 of the United Nations Convention on the **Rights of the Child**, all institutions that directly engage with or provide services to children should act with the best interests of the child as a primary consideration. Institutions need to ensure that this principle, is widely known and understood by all staff and volunteers, appropriately integrated, and consistently applied across all elements outlined below.

Each of the proposed child safe elements are intended to be of equal importance and are inter-related. They are framed in an outcome focused manner and allow institutions flexibility in their application.

The ten elements are intended to be dynamic and responsive rather than static and definitive.

Child Safe Framework

Adherence to the ten National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, as outlined by the Royal Commission.

Related Legislation and Documentation

- Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)
- Parliamentary Commissioner Amendment (Reportable Conduct) Act 2022
- Criminal Code Act (1913)
- Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004
- School Education Act 1999
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Children and Community Services Amendment (Reporting Sexual Abuse of Children) Act 2008
- The Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Act 2006

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Related Documentation

Procedures including:

- WA Department of Child Protection and Family Support – How do I recognise when a child is at risk of abuse?
- Indicators of Child Abuse and Neglect (Appendix 1, Child Protection, Department of Education Regulatory Framework System).
- Response to Disclosures of Abuse and Neglect (Appendix 4, Child Protection, Department of Education Regulatory Framework System).
- Child Protection Notification Steps (Mandatory Reporting) AISWA website.
- Child Protection Notification Steps (Non-Mandatory Reporting) AISWA website.
- Facts Sheets 9 pages (Dept. Child Protection).
- Mandatory Report – Sexual Abuse Form.
- Framework for understanding and guiding responses to harmful sexual behaviours in children – June 2 2022 – Department of Communities.
 - <https://www.wa.gov.au/government/publications/framework-understanding-and-guiding-responses-harmful-sexual-behaviours-children-and-young-people>
- Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Amendment Bill 2022

Policies including:

- Behaviour Management Policy.
- Bullying Prevention Policy.
- Complaints and Concerns Policy
- Duty of Care Policy.
- Excursions and Camp Policy.
- Privacy Policy.
- Records Management Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Student Code of Conduct.
- Code of Conduct – National Child Safe

Student Records; to ensure the school has knowledge of any court orders restricting access to students.

References

- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations (Australian Human Rights Commission).
- National Safe Schools Framework, Department of Education, Science and Training
- [How do I recognise when a child is at risk of abuse?](#) (WA Department of Child Protection and Family Support)
- [AISWA child-protection1_0-2.doc](#)
- [Working with Children Check Guidance Notes](#) and Fact Sheets
- [Information for employers and volunteer organisations](#)
- [Information for self-employed people](#)

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Contact Person

Enquiries relating to this policy should be directed to the School Principal or the Chair of the School Board.

Breaches of Policy

- Breach may result in termination of employment or enrolment contract

Review Process

Annual review by the Principal and School Board representative.

Version History		
Date	Version	Reviewer
07/19	01 Created	Board
12/22	02	LS
05/23	03	MMW
02/25	04	School Board CP.MMW

