

## 1 Purpose

The purpose of the Child Safety Policy is to ensure that all current and prospective Board directors, staff, students, contractors, volunteers and community members are aware of Sunraysia Institute of TAFE's commitment to the safety, protection, participation and empowerment of all children and young people, and obligation to create a child safe organisation. The Institute supports and respects all children, as well as staff and students, and is committed to providing a framework to ensure children are safe from abuse and neglect.

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to all current and prospective Institute staff, students, contractors, volunteers and community members.

## 3 Policy

**3.1** The Child Safe Standards form part of the Victorian Government response to the 2013 Betrayal of Trust Inquiry. These seven Standards are compulsory minimum standards for all organisations providing services for children, to ensure the protection of children from abuse and neglect.

**3.2** The Institute is committed to ensuring children have the opportunity to participate in education whilst being protected by robust policies, procedures and processes to ensure their safety through zero tolerance and reporting of any form of child abuse.

**3.3** The Institute's commitment to child safety:

3.3.1 Zero tolerance of child abuse;

3.3.2 Commitment and compliance to legal and moral obligations regarding child safety;

3.3.3 Effective human resources and recruitment practices for all staff, volunteers and contractors;

3.3.4 Regular training and education of staff, volunteers, contractors and students on child abuse risks and reporting processes;

3.3.5 Established procedures for the reporting of any inappropriate behaviour and reportable offences through the appropriate channels; including Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria Police and the Commission for Children & Young People.

3.3.6 Proactive management of risks to child safety through identifying and assessing risks, and implementing processes to reduce or remove these risks.

**3.4** All staff are responsible for supporting the safety of children at the Institute by:

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- 3.4.1 Adhering to the Institute's Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Procedure, and upholding the Institute's commitment to child safety at all times;
  - 3.4.2 Listening and responding to any concerns raised by students, staff or the public, when this information alleges any form of child abuse or concern for the safety of a child;
  - 3.4.3 Communicating all reports of abuse, neglect or concerns for the safety of a child to one the Institute's Child Safety Officers;
  - 3.4.4 Promoting the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, culturally and linguistically diverse children, and children with a disability.
  - 3.4.5 By providing a safe environment free from discrimination for children who are same-sex attracted, intersex, non-binary and gender diverse.
  - 3.4.6 Promoting and encouraging physical and situational environments that are safe for children including open, well-lit areas that are frequented by staff and students. Eliminate unnecessary free time for children on campus and unnecessary one-on-one time with children. Report concerns about physical or situational environments to the Institute's Manager Work Health & Safety.
- 3.5** Institute staff must not:
- 3.5.1 Ignore or disregard any suspected or disclosed child abuse;
  - 3.5.2 Develop any personal relationship with children;
  - 3.5.3 Exhibit behaviours with children with which may be construed as unnecessarily physical, or initiate unnecessary physical contact with children;
  - 3.5.4 Put children at risk of abuse, through any actions or inactions;
  - 3.5.5 Initiate and engage in open discussion of a mature or adult nature, use inappropriate language in the presence of children, e.g. swearing, sexually explicit or suggestive language.
  - 3.5.6 Exchange personal contact details such as phone numbers, social networking sites or personal email addresses with any student
  - 3.5.7 Initiate or seek any contact with children outside the Institute, other than for Institute related business;
  - 3.5.8 Engage in any kind of sexual relationship with a child;
  - 3.5.9 Photograph or video a child without the consent of the parent or guardian.
- 3.6** The Institute will adhere to all legislative requirements relating to child safety including;
- 3.6.1 **Reportable Conduct Scheme:** The CEO will investigate and report any allegations of child abuse by an Institute staff member to the Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) in accordance with the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic);

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- 3.6.2 **Failure to disclose:** All adults in Victoria who have a reasonable belief that an adult has committed a sexual offence against a child have an obligation to report that information to the Victorian Police. Reporting child sexual abuse is a community-wide responsibility;
- 3.6.3 **Failure to protect:** People of authority at the Institute will commit an offence if they know of a substantial risk of child sexual abuse and have the power or responsibility to reduce or remove the risk, but negligently fail to do so;
- 3.6.4 **Duty of care:** All Institute staff have a duty of care to report to DHHS's Victorian Child Protection Service if they believe on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury, sexual or emotional/psychological abuse or neglect;
- 3.6.5 **Mandatory reporting:** Under the Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, mandatory reporters must make a report to child protection, if in the course of practicing their profession or carrying out duties of their office, position or employment they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection from physical injury or sexual abuse. Failing to report as required by legislation will result in penalties. See definitions for list of mandatory reporters
- 3.6.5.1 The mandated reporter must;
- Make a report to DHHS's Victorian Child Protection Service as soon as practicable after forming a belief.
  - Make a report each time you become aware of any further reasonable grounds for your belief.
  - Report as soon as practical and on each occasion they form belief including reporting even where the CEO does not share their belief.
  - Ensure that a report has been made in instances where another mandated reporter has undertaken to make the report.
- 3.6.5.2 If a mandated reporter is worried about a child's wellbeing but does not believe they are in need of protection, a referral can be made to Child FIRST or The Orange Door. Refer to DHHS Website on mandatory reporting for referring (<https://providers.dhhs.vic.gov.au/mandatory-reporting>)

## 4 Definitions

Acronym/Term	Definition
CCYP	Commission for Children and Young People
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
Child	Anyone aged under 18
Child abuse	Includes <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>any act committee against a child involving:<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>A sexual offence; or</li><li>An offence under section 49 of the Crimes Act 1958 (grooming); and</li></ol></li><li>The infliction, on a child, of;</li></ol>

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	i) Physical violence; or ii) Serious emotional or psychological harm; and c. Serious neglect of a child.
<b>Child Safety Officer</b>	The designated person/s with knowledge of child safety issues. All Student Support Services staff members at individual campuses are Child Safety Officers
<b>DHHS</b>	Department of Health and Human Services (Victoria)
<b>Grooming</b>	Grooming can involve the use of a variety of manipulative and controlling techniques used to build trust or normalise sexually harmful behaviour with the overall aim of facilitating exploitation or preventing disclosure (or both)
<b>Mandatory Reporters</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• registered teachers</li><li>• early childhood teachers</li><li>• registered medical practitioners</li><li>• nurses</li><li>• midwives</li><li>• school principals</li><li>• school counsellors</li><li>• police officers</li><li>• out of home care workers (excluding voluntary foster and kinship carers)</li><li>• early childhood workers</li><li>• youth justice workers</li><li>• registered psychologists</li><li>• people in religious ministry.</li></ul>
<b>The Institute</b>	Sunraysia Institute of TAFE (SuniTAFE)

## 5 Legislative Context

- [Child Safe Standards \(Vic\)](#)
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) – Section 327 & 490
- Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)
- Guidelines for non-school senior secondary education providers - Minimum standards for registration to provide an accredited senior secondary course

## 6 Associated documents

### 6.1.1 Associated Policies

- Children on Campus Policy
- Complaints and Appeals Policy

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- Criminal Record Checks Policy
- Excursion Policy
- Family Violence Policy
- Mobile Phone Usage Policy
- Occupational Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct Policy
- Student Code of Conduct Policy
- Working with Children Check Policy
- Workplace Learning Policy

### 6.1.2 Associated Procedures

- Child Safe Procedure
- Staff Complaints and Appeals Procedure
- Complaints and Appeals Procedure - Students & Community
- Student Conduct Breach Procedure
- Student Support Services Information and Referral Procedure
- Transporting Students in an Emergency or Exceptional Circumstances Procedure
- Unattended Children in the Institute Procedure

### 6.1.3 Associated Forms

- Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Report Form
- Consent to Counsel a Child
- Counsellor and Wellbeing Intake Checklist
- Incident Report

### 6.1.4 Other associated documents

- Strategic Risk Register
- Child Protection Contacts - <https://services.dhhs.vic.gov.au/child-protection-contacts>

## 7 Responsibility

The CEO is responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy, and its associated procedures and systems.

## 8 Review Frequency

This policy is to be reviewed annually, and remains in force as amended from time to time, until rescinded.

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