



# Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

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## Purpose of this policy

To ensure that the Hawthorn Early Years (the Service) meets all obligations and requirements under the Child Wellbeing Safety Act 2005 (Vic). Our Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy will work together with other related policies and procedures to develop a child safe culture within the Service and community. This policy will provide direction and guidance for all educators, staff and visitors (including students and volunteers) to comply with and adhere to the 11 Child Safe Standards to ensure a child safe environment for all children. The 11 Child Safe Standards aim to create a culture where:

- the safety of children is promoted,
- child abuse is prevented, and
- allegations of child abuse will be taken seriously and acted upon.

## Policy

Hawthorn Early Years has zero tolerance for child abuse and any harm resulting from discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation.

The Service is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. We understand our responsibilities and statutory duty of care to comply with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, Reportable Conduct Scheme and Information Sharing Scheme to build our capacity to prevent and respond to allegations of child abuse. We have a dedicated Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure which explains our service's approach to meeting the Child Safe Standards.

We are committed to the cultural safety, participation and empowerment of all children including those of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds, culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and those with a disability. We promote diversity and tolerance and aim to form equitable and positive relationships with children. We ensure children participate in decisions affecting them and listen to and respect their suggestions and ideas. All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly, thoroughly and without bias.

The Service strongly opposes any type of abuse against a child and endorses high quality practices in relation to protecting children. All employees understand their roles and responsibilities in protecting children from abuse and neglect and maintain up-to-date knowledge of child protection law. Employees undertake child protection awareness training every 12 months, and whenever significant



changes are made to the child protection law or reporting requirements. Employees must comply with our Child Safe Code of Conduct at all times.

### **Scope of Policy**

This policy applies to the approved provider (being the Service), the Board of the Service, persons with management and control (being the Centre Director), nominated supervisors (being the Centre Director and Centre Manager), employees, students, volunteers, families, children and others attending the programs and activities of the Service.

### **Application of policy**

This policy applies to all activities of Hawthorn Early Years, including on the Service premises and while undertaking excursions and activities away from the Service premises.

### **Implementation of policy**

This policy will be implemented through adherence to all relevant procedures relating to this policy.

### **Procedures relating to this policy**

1. Child Safety and Wellbeing Procedure
2. Child Safe Code of Conduct
3. Reportable Conduct Scheme Procedure
4. Information Sharing Procedure