



SOMERVILLE KINDERGARTEN INCORPORATED

CHILD SAFE STANDARDS 2023

Child Safety Standard 1 - Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued

Support a child or student's ability to express their culture in the following ways:

- equip staff, students, volunteers, and the service community to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children
- adopt measures to ensure racism is identified, confronted, and not tolerated
- address any instances of racism within the services environment with appropriate consequences
- actively support participation and inclusion in the service by Aboriginal children, students, and their families
- ensure policies, procedures, systems, and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, and their families

Build a strong Service culture to support cultural inclusion by:

- Begin events and meetings with an Acknowledgement of Country as a standing agenda item. Children are involved every morning with our own acknowledgment to country.
- Make Aboriginal voice part of decision making in matters that affect Aboriginal students.
- Celebrate the local Aboriginal community in communications with students, staff, volunteers, and families.
- Build Service knowledge of Aboriginal histories, cultures, perspectives, values, skills, and attitudes
- Our policies reflect inclusive environments to meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and families.
 - Child Safe Environments and wellbeing
 - Code of Conduct
 - E-safety for children
 - Family violence & support
 - Inclusion & Equity
 - Mental health & wellbeing.
- We used SRF for Staff to:
 - attend a Professional Development opportunity by Yarn Strong Sida Indigenous Education Consultancy with Aboriginal elder Aunty Faye Muir. Explore new ways to embed Aboriginal culture into our environment through storytelling, reflective practice, and authentic materials and artwork.
 - attend a Professional Development Bush/Nature kindergarten Program -Rose Chipperfield and Jess Lia visited Balnarring Kinder and observed their groups at Beach Kinder. Karen Anderson was our guide, and we spent the day observing how the children care for country and how we can embed this into our own Bush Program using the School oval at Somerville Primary School.

- Involve the children and community in a smoking ceremony with the Somerville Primary School on the Bunurong land that the pre-school resides on.
- Encourage staff to imbed Aboriginal culture into the learning environment and provide and read stories to children that include diverse and unique identities ie stories that include pictures and words about Indigenous Australians or other cultures. This will encourage children who identify with different cultures to feel included and recognised.

What are our next steps?

- Incursions from an Aboriginal Elder to educate the children about the Indigenous Culture – dance, words, and help them create their own art work. Explaining to the meaning of Caring for Country.
- Appoint a Diversity Leader. The role is to ensure Indigenous focus is present for students and families.
- Ask for feedback from Aboriginal students and their families about what the service does well, and what can be improved.
- Develop resources that support the inclusion of Aboriginal and content from other cultures content across the curriculum.

Child Safety Standard 2 - Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

What we have achieved:

- Our public commitment is on display in our foyer
- Child safety is an agenda item at all committee meetings and staff meetings. • All staff are up to date with mandatory reporting. • Contacts of organisations are displayed in office areas for staff to use to seek advice. • Staff would speak to director about any concerns and then together they would take the necessary steps forward. • Committee are updated regularly about any changes in policies, and they are posted on Teams for their reference.

What are our next steps?

- Add the public Commitment to our website and in all information packs in our kindergarten.
- The role of child safe leader at the kinder as currently this is a shared responsibility between all staff and committee.
- Appoint a Child Safe Leader to provide updates as each committee meeting to highlight role the kinder plays in protecting children so committee and staff remain informed.

Child Safety Standard 3 - Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

What we have achieved:

- Inform students of their rights and special protections including the right to; live and grow up healthy, have a say about decisions affecting them, be safe and not harmed by anyone.
- Children are involved in group discussions both formally and informally about learning and the setting of class rules.
- • Facilitate child-friendly ways for students to express their views about how they are feeling, how they can feel safe and how they can self regulate their emotions.
- All staff sign a code of conduct which stipulates how they are expected to behave at the Kinder.
- All parents and additional helpers, allied health professionals and incursion facilitators must provide a copy of a current Working With Children Card to be kept for our records.

- Discuss healthy boundaries for friendships. Point out that the risk of harm can occur in child-to-child interactions, as well as adult-to-child interactions.
- All Staff must complete the Protecting Children-Mandatory Reporting training annually to ensure they are up to date with recognising signs of harm and risk factors in students and know who to report our concerns to.

What are our next steps?

- Declaration of the rights of the child displayed in foyer area.
- All committee Members will read and sign a Code of Conduct. All staff and committee members sign a code of conduct which stipulates how they are expected to behave at the Kinder.
- All parents on “stay and play” also sign a code of conduct.
- Code of Conduct will be included in our enrolment packs and all Committee Members and
- Provide training to staff and volunteers to be attuned to signs of harm and risk factors in students
- Provide contact information for independent children’s advocacy services or helplines.
- The code of conduct will be sent to families with enrolment documents and will need to sign that this has been read.
- Compliments & Complaints policy will be sent to families in the Enrolment packs

Child Safety Standard 4 - Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

What we have achieved:

- Create a welcoming and safe environment (reception, foyer and grounds).
- Policies are reviewed on yearly basis by staff and committee.
- Parent teacher conferences are offered to families at the end of term two
- Our committee meetings are open to all Kinder family members to attend. There are meeting dates are up on the notice board.
- Stay and Play where we invite families to come in and see what kinder is all about. It is the best way for teachers and parents to connect on a more personal level.
- AGM – where committee provide information about how the kinder runs and gives families an opportunity to become more involved in the organisation.
- Policies – Compliments & Complaints Policy. We also have details in our foyer directing families to this policy and they are encouraged to follow the complaints policy.
- Complaints policy is being sent out with the code of conduct with the 2023 enrolment forms.
- Our families are encouraged to participate in our user surveys.
- Ask parents and carers about their children during parent information sessions, open nights, parent/teacher interviews, individual record forms and during chance meetings at pick-up and drop-off
- Encourage volunteer positions from families from diverse backgrounds, including people with a disability, Aboriginal people, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

What are our next steps?

- Provide new enrolments with information that include child safety, and complaints policy.
- Make child safety a standing item at committee meetings.
- Add a child safe item to termly newsletters that are sent to our Kinder community.

- Attempt to engage the parent community in decisions related to child safety.
- Future surveys to ask families if they feel involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- Our child safety policies and procedures will be available for students and parents on site and on the service website.
- Conduct community events, such as welcome picnic to families and the broader community.

Child Safety Standard 5 - Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

What we have achieved:

- Respond to family violence in a way that is accessible, culturally responsive, safe, child centred, inclusive, and non-discriminatory. • Check in with vulnerable students and their families to confirm their needs are being met. at pick-up or drop-off, at parent teacher interviews or through informal discussions.
- Developed an Equity and Diversity Policy with strategies and actions to uphold diversity and equity
- Ensure staff and volunteers understand the diverse circumstances of students, provides support, and responds to vulnerable students
- Provide the community access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible, and easy to understand
- Ensure the Kinder environments are welcoming and inclusive for young people.
- Provide child safety information in accessible, child-friendly language and formats.
- Seek out expert advice as needed to support inclusion, such as an occupational therapist, speech pathologist and allied health professionals
- Staff have informal discussions with children about safety and who you can talk to if you don't feel safe.

What are our next steps?

- Survey staff, either formally or informally to measure equity, to ensure that staff feel they can contribute, have a role and feel valued.
- Compile a range of age-appropriate instructional materials for exploring differences and similarities in class.

Child Safety Standard 6 - People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

What we have achieved:

- Updated the child safety policy
- We have a process in place to check WWWC and VIT (kept in administration)
- We ensure all staff are up to date with mandatory reporting and are aware of where information is and who to go to (director of the Kinder), if needed.
- All staff have yearly review meetings where staff and management discuss
- Code of conduct is signed by all staff.
- New staff are given copies of the child safety and wellbeing policies.
- All qualifications, WWWC and VIT registrations are checked and on file
- Advise successful job applicants about the child safety practices of the school, including the Code of Conduct
- Make volunteers aware of the school's Child Safety Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Provide refresher child safe training for staff and volunteers.

What are our next steps?

- Ensure job advertisements have clear statements about: the job's requirements, duties and responsibilities regarding child safety and wellbeing
- We will create a document to ask referees when employing
- A separate document that reflects child safe standards and suitability to work with children.
- 2022 review process will ask staff about child safe standards.
- New staff are given copies of the child safety and wellbeing policies
- Include child safety and wellbeing as a regular agenda item for staff meetings
- Communicate regularly with staff and volunteers about the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct at staff meetings, in newsletters and staff updates.

Child Safety Standard 7 - Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused

What we have achieved:

- This policy is reviewed on a yearly basis. Committee and staff undertake these reviews.
- Complaints and compliments policy is accessible to parents (in foyer area with contacts of who to address these complaints to)

What are our next steps?

- Complaints and compliments policy is available for parents to view on our website
- Parents to be informed about when these policies are up for review and give them the opportunity to have input into the process

Child Safety Standard 8 - Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training

What we have achieved:

- Mandatory reporting
- Staff meetings around child safety, where we are at and what we are working towards.
- All volunteers sign a code of conduct and we have an induction process for the them before working in the room with the children.
- Providing training and information to volunteers engaged in child-connected work that is appropriate to their role that will equip them with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe.
- Keep a record of all staff and volunteers who complete child safety training to ensure all are appropriately trained and training is refreshed as required.

What are our next steps?

- Updating our staff handbook
- Induction process for new staff members will now include have a separate child safety induction with the child safety leader.
- Attendance of any available online webinars held by relevant organisations to update staff knowledge
- Provide an induction for new staff, volunteers, and new committee members on child safety, appropriate to the person's role
- Direct staff to PROTECT for guidance on: information to assist them to recognise indicators and risk factor of child harm, including harm caused by other children and young people to the processes to follow if a concern is raised.

Child Safety Standard 9 - Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed

What we have achieved:

- Staff conduct regular checks of playgrounds and surrounding areas to ensure safety of children whilst playing outdoors

- Internal areas are monitored to ensure spaces are safe from damage or areas that can cause harm to children.
- Any areas that arise that are seen as unsafe are rectified as soon as possible.
- Committee conduct regular maintenance of the outside grounds to ensure the space is safe for children. They also regularly report any major issues to the council and follow them up to ensure they are being rectified.
- Staff and committee are conscious not to post the faces of any children in any online space such as social media to protect their safety online.

What are our next steps?

- Purchase new equipment to replace any that is outdated or damaged to ensure safety of children while playing

Child Safety Standard 10 - Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved

What we have achieved:

- We have adopted ELAA policies and therefore we are sent regular updates and these will be amended as they come through.
- Observe and monitor any concerns regarding child safety incidents and safety to ensure families at risk are being offered support.
- Use complaints and incidents as a learning opportunity to inform continuous improvement.
- Identify ways to involve staff, volunteers, students, families and community members in review processes.

What are our next steps?

- Agenda item in staff and committee meetings
- We will continue to stay informed about any new updates around child safety.
- Staff to attend online webinars when provided regarding Child Safety Standards, inform committee and parents and update documentation accordingly
- Monitor and manage child safety risks using a risk register.

Child Safety Standard 11 - Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

What we have achieved:

- All staff and volunteers sign a code of conduct and we discuss with them where policies can be accessed (online website and in the foyer folder)
- Yearly reviews of policies and updates made as per ELAA documents.

What are our next steps?

- To continue to inform families about what our Kinder is doing to ensure child safety is our number one priority. This will be through term newsletters, email messages, teacher reflections.
- Display child safe signs in foyer with links to further information for staff and parents to access