

Y Whittlesea

Child Safe Environment Policy

1. Purpose

This policy provides clear guidelines to ensure:

- All children attending Y Whittlesea services are provided with environments where they **are safe and feel safe**
- All reasonable steps are taken by management, educators, and staff to promote the **health, safety, and wellbeing** of children
- Timely and effective intervention occurs for children and young people who may be at **risk of abuse or neglect**

2. Scope

This policy applies to all Y Whittlesea employees, volunteers, contractors, board members, labour hire staff, secondees, individual business owners who engage staff, and directors performing work for the organisation.

3. Our Commitment to Child Safety

Y Whittlesea is committed to the **safety and wellbeing of all children and young people** in our care. Offering safe spaces for children to learn, grow, and be themselves is a privilege and a responsibility we uphold through:

- **Zero tolerance of child abuse**
- Promoting children's participation, agency, and empowerment
- Listening to and respecting children's voices, suggestions, and ideas
- Responding promptly to concerns, disclosures, allegations, or suspicions of harm
- Complying with the **Victorian Child Safe Standards**, Reportable Conduct Scheme, and ACECQA requirements to prevent and respond to abuse
- Upholding **inclusive, culturally safe practices** recognising the strengths and identities of all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and children with disability

4. Safe Environments

Physical Environment

Y Whittlesea will provide environments that are:

- Safe, clean, and well maintained
- Designed to minimise risks of injury or harm
- Supervised effectively at all times
- Inclusive and accessible for all children

Online Environment

Y Whittlesea will ensure:

- Online platforms used for communication and learning are secure and approved
- Children's images, recordings, and personal information are shared only with consent and in line with privacy legislation
- Staff model safe and respectful online practices and teach children digital safety skills appropriate to their age

Culturally Safe Environment

Y Whittlesea is committed to:

- Embedding culturally safe practices in programs and interactions
- Valuing and celebrating the cultural identities, languages, and beliefs of children and families
- Providing opportunities for children to express their cultural identity safely and confidently

5. Responsibilities

Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor

- Ensure compliance with child safety legislation and standards
- Provide training and resources to build child safe practices
- Promote a culture of child safety, participation, and empowerment
- Oversee implementation and regular review of this policy

Educators and Staff

- Maintain safe physical and online environments
- Promote children's rights, agency, and cultural identity
- Follow procedures to report concerns, disclosures, or allegations of harm immediately
- Complete child protection awareness training annually and when legislation changes

Families and Community

- Work in partnership to uphold children's safety and wellbeing
- Share cultural knowledge to strengthen inclusive and culturally safe environments
- Raise concerns about child safety to staff or management promptly

6. Related Policies and Procedures

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Child Safety Commitment Statement
- Code of Conduct
- Safe and Responsible Use of Digital Devices Policy
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- [Safeguarding children and young people policy](#)
- [Student and volunteers policy and procedure](#)
- [Whistleblower policy and procedure](#)
- [Incident, Illness, injury and trauma policy](#)
- [Investigation Overview](#)
- [Reportable Conduct Scheme Information Sheets x 14](#)
- [Safeguarding Children and Young People Procedure](#)
- [For more details Commission for child and young people \(CCYP\)](#)

7. Legislative and Industry Requirements: [Link](#) to Legislative Compliance Register

8. Consequences of breaching this policy: All elements of this policy must be adhered to, and any breach will be dealt with in accordance with the [YMCA Whittlesea Disciplinary and Termination Policy](#).

9. Policy owner: The GM Early Years is responsible for keeping this policy current - including making amendments as required, and regular reviews as scheduled.

10. Document Control: Review of this policy will be undertaken every two years, or prior as required by law, in consultation with appropriate Y People.

Version:	Description of Amendment	Amended by	date	Release Date
3.0	General review	R Davis	10/7/25	July 2025
2.0	Separate Policy from Procedure	Farryn Burrill	1/10/24	Oct 2024
1.0	Reviewed and approved	leadership team	29/03/2019	March 2019