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**Policy Document**

**Child Safe Environments**

**July 2022**

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## National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

- 1) Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- 2) Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- 3) Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- 4) Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- 5) People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- 6) Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.
- 7) Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- 8) Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- 9) Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
- 10) Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.



## 2. Purpose

This policy is to outline the requirements and obligations of Norwood Out of School Hours Care Inc. and is to promote and enhance the safety and welfare of children.

All NOSHC educators will act in a positive way to develop a safe environment for children in their care and will take the action required to fulfil their duty of care.

*“All children have the right to be safe at home, at school and in their childcare service. The provision of safe environments for children is essential to prevent injury and enable them to grow and develop. The management and staff of each service have a duty of care to provide safe child-care environments”. (NCAC)*

## 3. Statement of commitment to the safety and protection of children and young people

Norwood Out of School Hours Care Inc. is committed towards building and maintaining environments where children and young people are protected, respected, valued, heard, and encouraged to reach their individual potential. We support all children to feel safe and confident to express themselves free from bullying, harassment, gender inequality and any form of discrimination.

We are dedicated to creating a child safe environment which is underpinned by the “National Principles for Child Safe Organisations” (see page 3) endorsed by the Commonwealth, and by all state and territory governments.

To support this commitment, the service, in consultation with Norwood Primary School, will follow the requirements set by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 (SA) and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, to keep children and young people safe from harm and risk of harm.

## 4. Scope

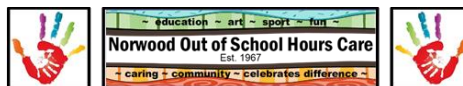
The scope of this policy includes all management committee members, management, educators, contractors, volunteers, and consultants who work with children and/or have access to their records. All personnel shall be obliged to abide by this policy and assist in always creating and maintaining a child safe environment.

## 5. Children and young people’s participation

Norwood OSHC values and respects the choices and views of children and young people accessing our services. Children and young people are to be involved in making decisions that affect them.

Any concerns or opinions raised by the children, young people, their carers, or families shall be listened to and acted upon. They shall be made aware of the organisation’s complaints and feedback management processes.

To achieve this, the service has developed and implemented a Student Committee comprising of students and senior educators facilitating the opportunity for open discussion.



## 6. Code of Conduct

All members of the management committee, management, educators, volunteers, and contractors must adhere to the Organisation’s Code of Conduct which specifies standards of care when dealing and interacting with children and young people.

Non-compliance to the Code may result in disciplinary measures whereby the actions or lack of action of a responsible person, subject to the code, results in harm or risk of harm to a child or young person.

### Code of Conduct

Caring for children and young people brings additional responsibilities for management, educators, contractors and volunteers of this organisation.

All responsible persons of this organisation must promote the safety and well-being of children and young people by:

- Adhering to this organisation’s Child Safe Environments Policy at all times, and taking all reasonable steps to ensure the safety and protection of children and young people.
- Treating everyone with respect and honesty (this includes staff, volunteers, students, children, young people and parents).
- Remembering to be a positive role model to children and young people in your conduct with them.
- Setting clear boundaries about appropriate behaviour between yourself and the children and young people in this organisation. Boundaries help everyone to perform their roles well.
- Listening and responding appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people.
- Ensuring another adult is always present or in sight when conducting one to one coaching, instruction or other activities with children.
- Reporting suspected child abuse and neglect to the **Child Abuse Report Line** (13 14 78) as soon as practicable.
- Responding quickly, fairly and transparently to any serious complaints made by a child, young person or their parent/guardian.
- Encouraging children and young people to ‘have a say’ on issues that are important to them.
- Providing feedback to both children and parents/guardians.

Employees and volunteers must not:

- Engage in rough physical games
- Develop any ‘special’ relationships with children and young people that could be seen as favouritism such as the offering of gifts or special treatment.
- Do things of a personal nature that a child or young person can do for themselves, such as toileting or changing clothes.
- Discriminate against any child or young person because of age, gender, cultural background, religion, vulnerability or sexuality.

I agree to abide by this code of conduct;

Name:.....

Signature:..... Date:.....



## 7. Recruitment practices/processes (or policy) for staff and volunteers

Norwood OSHC undertakes employment screening and clearance procedures that comply with requirements under the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016. Upon application for a position, potential engagements MUST provide a copy of a current Working with Children Check - "Not Prohibited" from the DHS Screening Unit.

Additionally, either of the following certificates MUST be provided before commencement; Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care fundamentals course; or Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care masterclass.

The engagement process also includes an appropriate review of work history, suitability of individuals for the position, referee checks and includes a probationary period and induction process upon commencement. The Code of Conduct, Behaviour Management, Operational Procedures and the service Philosophy are also included.

All reportable documentation for the engagement of educators and volunteers is provided to the Department for Education via Norwood Primary School.

## 8. Supervision, training, development and support provided for staff/volunteers

Norwood OSHC is committed to promoting a supportive environment which encourages all personnel to work towards continuous improvement and accountability.

### 8.1 Supervision

The organisation will have procedures in place to supervise, train and support educators and volunteers to understand their mandatory reporting obligations and their responsibilities to creating and maintaining a child safe environment.

### 8.2 Staff Induction program

All educator, contractor and volunteer orientation shall include induction promoting awareness of our Child Safe Environment Policy, Code of Conduct, Risk Management procedures, and mandatory reporting requirements (Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect).

All new educators, contractors and volunteers will receive a copy of our organisation's Child Safe Policy, Code of Conduct and Grievance Procedure, and are guided by senior staff through the process during their induction.

### 8.3 Training and Development

Norwood OSHC will offer continuous development opportunities and training, around child safety topics, to educators and also provides support in making mandatory notifications where required.

Educators are expected to update Responding to Risks of Harm Abuse and Neglect – Education and Care (**RRHAN-EC**) every 3 years in line with Department for Education requirements for all employees on department sites. All educators will be given the opportunity to access web-based resources about issues concerning child safety and wellbeing.



## 9. Reporting and responding to a reasonable belief that a child or young person is or may be at risk of harm

Norwood OSHC will ensure children and young people are kept safe from harm and risk of harm. All educators, contractors and volunteers working with children shall be responsible for reporting a “*reasonable belief*” that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm.

All educators within the organisation shall be trained and made aware about their legal obligation to report a “*reasonable belief*” that a child or young person has been harmed or is at risk of harm through the

- **Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78** as soon as possible; or
- if at immediate risk, report to **South Australia Police on 000**.

Any failure to report a reasonable suspicion that a child has or is being harmed or is at risk of harm is in breach of the Child Safe Environments Policy and may result in disciplinary action being initiated against the concerned educator/contractor/volunteer.

## 10. Reporting and responding to complaints about a person involved in your organisation, and how you manage feedback about your organisation

Norwood OSHC takes all concerns and complaints seriously. Non-harm related complaints are to be handled in line with the organisation’s Grievance Procedures for parents, children and educators.

If an issue is raised in relation to an educator, children and parents and encouraged to apply the procedures identified in the policy which are provided as part of the Enrolment Package and the Staff Induction Package.

If a parent/caregiver feels they have a grievance, or are unhappy or uncomfortable with any aspect of their child’s care or environment, they are encouraged to discuss the concern with the Director. Concerns may relate to any issue and should be dealt with as soon as possible to ensure that the problem does not worsen or is left unresolved.

The service also conducts an annual “Parent Survey” providing all parents with an opportunity to submit a formal response to our service provision, child safety, educator conduct and other matters.

## 11. Risk Management

Child safety risks shall be included in the organisation’s detailed risk management policy and processes. This includes risks in physical and online environments relevant to the services provided by Norwood OSHC, people in contact with children, and any specific vulnerabilities of the children.

All educators, contractors and volunteer staff dealing with children shall endeavour to reduce the risk of harm to children and identify ways to promote child protective factors in the context of the service.

## 12. Communication

Norwood OSHC will communicate this policy via regular information sessions with educators, contractors and volunteers, and it will also be available on the organisation's website for easy access to children and their families. This policy is included in the parent enrolment package.

## 13. Related policies and procedures

### 13.1 Risk Management

Risk Management is to identify and assess any possible risk to children in our care while undertaking activities both within and outside of the OSHC environment, or with providers hired to attend our Service during After School Care and Vacation Care.

### 13.2 Infectious Diseases & Infestations

Every child has a right to feel safe and secure within the OSHC environment. The OSHC service will take steps to prevent the transmission and spread of infectious diseases and infestations. In the event that an educator suspects that a child in attendance at the service is suffering from an infectious disease, documented procedures will define the required action.

### 13.3 Security and Collection of Children

The safety and security of all children is a matter of utmost importance to Norwood OSHC and to all the families/caregivers that use the Service. Documented procedures are practiced by all users of the Service in an effort to maintain a safe environment for all children.

### 13.4 Emergency Procedures

Norwood OSHC considers the safety of our families, children and educators as paramount. Pivotal to our overall safety procedures is the management of emergency situations. Our evacuation and invacuation procedures are tested during Before School Care, After School Care and Vacation Care.

## 14. Policy Review

Norwood OSHC shall review this policy within a five-year period and/or after the occurrence of a critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement with the Service.

Policy will also be reviewed upon Identification of any added risks for children or young people, or any concerns raised regarding their safety or welfare.

Policy reviews will also be undertaken upon changes in legislation to ensure continued compliance and improvement. Any changes made to the policy will be approved by the Management Committee of the Service.





## 15. Reference

### National Law & Regulations:

Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017  
Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 (SA)  
National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

Section: 21, 51(1)(a), 51(2), 56, 56A, 161, 161A, 162, 162A, 162(a), 165-7, 168-75, 188  
Regulations: 82-4, 97-102, 155, 158, 161-2, 167-74, 174A, 175-6, 176A, 177, 180-1, 183-5

### Resources / References:

- QIAS Factsheet #2 – National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC)
- Responding to Abuse & Neglect Education and Care Training 2015-2017 online training
- “Keeping Children Safe Program” Folder
- Creating Child Safe Environments, August 2010 at [www.dfc.sa.gov.au](http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au)
- Department for Education Responding to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect  
<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/rrhan-ec/fundamentals-course-responding-risks-harm-abuse-and-neglect-education-and-care>
- Department for Education Policy: Child Protection in Education and Early Childhood Services Policy [www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ChildProtectioninSchoolsE.pdf](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/docs/documents/1/ChildProtectioninSchoolsE.pdf)
- Protective Practices for Staff in Their Interactions with Students (April 2009)  
Department for Education at <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/working-us/volunteers/what-volunteers-need-know/protective-practices-education-and-care-staff-and-volunteers>

### National Quality Standard:

- 2.2 Each Child is Protected
- 4.2 Management, educators and staff are collaborative, respectful and ethical
- 5.1.2 The dignity and rights of every child are maintained
- 7.1.2 Systems are in place to manage risk and enable the effective management and operation of a quality service Norwood
- 7.2 Effective leadership builds and promotes a positive organisational culture and professional learning community