

## CHILD PROTECTION

**Policy Number: CP100-19 (R2021)**

### Overview

This policy describes the scope of obligations that must be met to maintain child safe environments in department schools, early childhood education and care services, including through the provision of child protection curriculum.

This policy describes the roles and responsibilities of education and care staff and volunteers in establishing and maintaining child safe environments, including through the provision of child protection curriculum.

### Scope

This policy applies to all staff and volunteers working in the department's schools and early childhood education and care services as well as departmental education and care leaders and corporate leaders

### Principles

- Protecting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people is a fundamental responsibility that cannot be compromised by other considerations.
- Children and young people have a right to:
  - be treated with respect and to be protected from harm
  - be asked to express their views and wishes about matters affecting their lives and to have those views appropriately considered by adults
  - feel and be safe in their interactions with adults and other children and young people
  - understand, as early as possible, what is meant by 'feeling and being safe'
  - the support of school based counsellors or designated staff in their education or care environment whose role includes being an advocate for their safety and wellbeing.
- Children and young people are entitled to the rights above irrespective of their special needs, gender, race, sexual orientation or cultural, religious or family circumstances.
- Preventing and intervening in the abuse and neglect of children and young people are moral and legal obligations. They contribute to improving safety and health of current and future generations.
- Safety and wellbeing concerns arise within family, community and institutional settings. The actions and efforts of people from within and outside the education and care setting are needed so that interventions on behalf of children and young people are successful and sustained.
- Maintaining children and young people's attendance at, and engagement with education and care environments is a key contributor to their long-term health, safety and wellbeing.

### Roles and Responsibilities

#### **Education and early childhood service leaders must ensure:**

- screening of adults working or volunteering at the education or early childhood service complies with the department's approved screening policy
- volunteers receive approved child protection induction which is recorded at the education or early childhood service
- 3-yearly approved staff child protection training is recorded on the HR system
- concerns raised about staff or volunteer conduct are responded to in accordance with approved protective practice guidelines

- children and young people in preschools and schools access the approved child protection curriculum each year
- emerging staff performance concerns are responded to proactively
- staff follow all record keeping requirements
- counsellors and staff in designated advocacy positions can fulfil their roles and access required training, counselling and advocacy networks
- conduct and practice at the education or early childhood service is monitored to ensure it meets the obligations outlined in this policy
- provide ongoing monitoring of their compliance with this policy and will, when required by the department, provide reports on elements of that compliance.

**Staff must:**

- act in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy
- raise concerns when barriers or threats to the protection of children and young people's safety and wellbeing are identified, including through the conduct of other adults at the education or early childhood service.

**Volunteers must:**

- act in accordance with the obligations outlined in this policy and the approved child protection induction for volunteers
- raise concerns when barriers or threats to the protection of children and young people's safety and wellbeing are identified, including through the conduct of other adults at the education or early childhood service.

