

P-8.27 ECTARC TRAINING SERVICES CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that ECTARC Training Services (ETS) provides a safe and supportive environment for children and young people, fostering their wellbeing and protecting them from harm. This policy outlines the organisation's commitment to complying with child safety legislation, promoting the rights of children, and embedding a culture of child safety across all RTO operations including, but not limited to School Based Apprentices and Trainees (SBAT's) and External Delivery of VET (EVET) students.

Scope

This policy applies to all individuals who conduct work for, ETS in a paid or unpaid capacity, including board directors, executive leadership, all RTO personnel, volunteers, contractors and consultants, third-party providers, students, and visitors at ETS. It encompasses all activities and environments related to training, assessment and/or professional development where children and young people may be involved, including on ECTARC premises, off-site, and online delivery. This policy must be read in conjunction with, and does not replace, the organisational policies, procedures and statements of ECTARC. Whilst this policy relates to students under the age of 18, ETS is also committed to the protection of all children in education and care services that we may visit during our work and will respond as appropriate to concerns.

Deployment

ETS is committed to the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people who engage with ETS. ETS upholds its duty of care by implementing robust child safety policies, procedures, and practices, ensuring compliance with relevant legislation and promoting a culture of safety and respect.

All children and young people are embraced regardless of their abilities, sex, gender, or social economic or cultural background and equity is upheld. A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation.

Bullying and harassment is not tolerated.

All students under eighteen (18) years of age who are supported by ETS have a right to feel and be safe, happy and empowered.

ETS has zero tolerance of child abuse, harm and racism. All allegations and safety concerns are treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures. We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety and wellbeing.

ETS is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early and removing and reducing these risks. We have robust human resources and recruitment practices for all personnel and committed to regularly training and education our personnel on child abuse risks.

This policy applies to all activities undertaken by ETS which involve, result in, or relate to contact with children, and is communicated widely and accessibly including in this policy, our Student Handbook and via publishing on our website.

ECTARC has established a comprehensive Child Safe Organisation Policy and Code of Conduct that aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and complies with legislative frameworks. This policy is designed to create and maintain an environment where children and young people feel safe, supported, and empowered.

To uphold these principles, ETS implements a range of robust practices, including clear governance structures which oversees the development, implementation, and review of child safety policies and procedures. The ECTARC Governance committee ensures compliance with legal obligations, risk management strategies, and the delivery of training and supervision to personnel. A designated Child Safety Officer provides a central point of contact for concerns and advice, further strengthening the organisation's capacity to support and safeguard young students.

ETS fosters a culture of child safety by actively engaging children, families, and communities in decision-making processes that affect them. The organisation informs children of their rights and ensures their voices are heard in service delivery and organisational planning.

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Recruitment practices prioritise child safety by requiring Working with Children Checks, National Criminal Checks, and robust referee assessments for all personnel. Additionally, personnel undergo annual child safety training to enhance their understanding of mandatory reporting obligations, risk identification, and the creation of culturally safe environments.

ETS processes relates to risks in both physical and online environments, ensuring these spaces promote safety and minimise opportunities for harm. Incident reporting systems are well-established, with a focus on timely and thorough responses to any safety concerns or allegations of abuse. Records of incidents, concerns, and complaints are securely maintained, and all investigations are conducted transparently and in accordance with legal requirements.

Legislative Framework

ETS complies with all national legislative requirements, including state relevant legislation where we work, but not limited to:

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998 (Cth),
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations,
- Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT),
- Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT),
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 (NSW),
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 (NSW),
- Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000 (QLD),
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (QLD).

ETS is committed to establishing and maintaining child safe environments and has designed services with a particular focus on:

- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations,
- Keep Them Safe: A Shared Approach to Child Wellbeing framework (NSW), and
- Child Safe Standards.

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. Personnel 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.

As a child safe organisation, ETS:

- Has established a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued.
- Has embedded child safety and wellbeing in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- Informs and empowers children and young people about their rights, supporting participation in decisions affecting them.
- Informs and involves families and communities in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- Upholds equity and respects diverse needs in policy and practice.
- Has inclusive approaches for children with a disability, Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds.

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- Ensures people working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- Maintains child-focused processes for services delivery and the management of complaints and concerns.
- Ensures personnel and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- Has actively considered risks of abuse within the organisation.
- Ensures physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- Has well-articulated policies and procedures documenting how ETS has implemented and maintains its child safe approach.
- Regularly reviews and improves processes used for the implementation of Child Safe Standards.

Governance Committee

ECTARC has a Governance Committee and ETS has a Compliance Subcommittee that is responsible for implementing, and complying with, all aspects of ETS's child safety and wellbeing requirements including:

- ECTARC and ETS policies, procedures and statements
- Recruitment and screening practices
- Personnel induction, training, supervision and support
- The policy and procedure for receiving and responding to complaints
- Risk assessment and management processes
- All policies and procedures on external reporting, record keeping and information sharing, and
- The Code of Conduct.

Children's safety is prioritised, and action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.

The ECTARC Leadership team champions and models a child safe culture, encouraging anyone involved with the organisation to report a child safety concern, working to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns.

Child Safety Officer

ETS has appointed a child safety officer for its RTO operations, being the designated person be informed about all allegations or concerns and providing support to other personnel.

ETS Child Safety Officer - General Manager – Training Services.

The Child Safety Officer provides a single contact for children, parents and personnel to seek advice and support the safety and wellbeing of our students under the age of 18.

Children's Empowerment and Participation

ETS actively seek to include children's views and ideas in our organisational planning and delivery of services. We encourage children to be supportive of each other and does not tolerate bullying or abusive behaviour between children and act if this occurs.

The organisation respects the rights of children and provides them with information about their rights including the right to be safe at ETS. The organisation regularly communicates with children about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

ETS pays particular attention to the needs of children and young people with disability, children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex children and young people.

ETS values the voices of children and will act on safety concerns raised by children or their families. The organisation supports children's participation and provides information to children and families about ETS operations, personnel and programs in relation to child safety and wellbeing topics.

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Families and communities

ETS recognises the important role of families and involves parents and carers when making significant decisions about their child. Parents, families and communities are welcome to provide feedback at any time through our contact email address and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with us.

The organisation provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices including through publishing this Policy and ETS Code of Conduct and Child Safe Organisation Policy on our website, including information about our child safety approach in Student Handbooks and effectively addressing support for children in our operational processes.

From application for enrolment processes onwards, ETS ensures that families participate in services delivery decisions affecting their child.

Creating culturally safe environments for all Aboriginal children and their families

ETS is committed to creating environments where Aboriginal culture is celebrated and aboriginal children, families and community members are welcomed and included. Strategies to embed cultural safety for Aboriginal children include:

- An Acknowledgement of Country at major events.
- Supporting children who wish to explore their culture, including consulting with their family and relevant Aboriginal organisations.
- Providing training for personnel and volunteers on the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children.
- Celebrating National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week and acknowledging significant events including National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week.
- Seeking feedback from Aboriginal children, families and communities on their experiences.

Valuing diversity

ETS values diversity and equity for all children. To achieve this, the organisation:

- Provides training for all management committee members, personnel and volunteers on understanding diversity and how to support inclusion and cultural safety.
- Welcomes and supports participation of all children, including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ+ children and Aboriginal children and their families.
- Offers students and families through our application for enrolment process the opportunity to provide information about themselves, including any specific needs to participate fully in our programs.
- Has zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and act when discrimination or exclusion is identified.
- Commits to ensuring our facilities and online activities promote inclusion of children of all abilities, including the implementation of processes in line with the Disability Standards for Education 2005.

Child Abuse

Child / Children means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Child abuse means:

- A sexual offence committed against a child.
- An offence committed against a child, such as grooming.
- Physical violence against a child.
- Causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child.
- Serious neglect of a child.

Harm is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

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Reporting child abuse is a community-wide responsibility. Child abuse includes any act committed against a child involving:

- Physical violence,
- Sexual offences,
- Serious emotional or psychological abuse, and
- Serious neglect.

Concerns and Complaints

A **concern** refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

A **complaint** is an expression of dissatisfaction related to one or more of the following:

- Our services or dealings with individuals.
- Allegations of abuse or misconduct by a personnel member, a volunteer or another individual associated with ETS.
- Disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person.
- The conduct of a child or young person at ETS.
- The inadequate handling of a prior concern.
- General concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.

Call the police on 000 if you have immediate concerns for a child's safety.

All ETS personnel are required to report to police if they know or reasonably believe that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under the age of 16.

It is a criminal offence (failure to disclose) to fail to comply with this obligation across jurisdictions.

What is a 'Reasonable Belief'?

A 'reasonable belief' is not the same as having proof. A reasonable belief is formed if a reasonable person in the same position would have formed the belief on the same grounds. For example, a 'reasonable belief' might be formed when:

- A child states that they have been sexually abused,
- A child states that they know someone who has been sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves),
- Someone who knows a child states that the child has been sexually abused,
- Observations of the child's behaviour or development leads to a belief that the child has been sexually abused, or
- Signs of sexual abuse leads to a belief that the child has been sexually abused.

A reasonable belief is a deliberately low threshold. This enables authorities to investigate and take action.

If a person sixteen (16 years) or older provided you with the information and they do not have an intellectual disability and they do not want the information reported to the police, an individual is then not required to report to police.

ETS will not tolerate incidents of child abuse. All personnel understand their obligation to notify relevant authorities as soon as practicable if they have a reasonable suspicion that a minor has been, or is being, abused or neglected by a member of their family or any other individual:

- **ACT** Child and Youth Protection Services: **1300 556 729**
- **NSW** Child Protection Helpline: **132 111**
- **NT** Child Protection Hotline: **1800 700 250**
- **QLD** Child Safety Services:
 - Brisbane and Moreton Bay: **1300 682 254**
 - Far North Queensland: **1300 684 062**
 - North Queensland: **1300 706 147**
 - South East (Logan, Gold Coast, and Bayside): **1300 679 849**
 - South West (Darling Downs) Toowoomba: **1300 683 390**
 - South West (West Moreton) Ipswich: **1800 316 855**

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- Sunshine Coast and Central Queensland: **1300 703 762**
- After Hours Child Safety Service Centre: **1800 177 135**
- **SA** Child Abuse Report Line: **13 14 78**
- **TAS** Child Safety Service: **1800 000 123**
- **VIC** Child Protection:
 - North Division: **1300 598 521**
LGAs Covered: Banyule, Buloke, Darebin, Campaspe, Central Goldfields, Gannawarra, Greater Bendigo, Hume, Loddon, Macedon Ranges, Mildura, Moreland, Mount Alexander, Nillumbik, Swan Hill, Whittlesea, Yarra.
 - South Division: **1300 555 526**
LGAs Covered: Bass Coast, Baw Baw, Bayside, Cardinia, Casey, East Gippsland, Frankston, Glen Eira, Greater Dandenong, Kingston, Latrobe, Mornington Peninsula, Port Phillip, South Gippsland, Stonnington, Wellington.
 - East Division: **1300 360 452**
LGAs Covered: Alpine, Benalla, Boroondara, Greater Shepparton, Indigo, Knox, Manningham, Mansfield, Maroondah, Mitchell, Moira, Monash, Murrindindi, Strathbogie, Towong, Wangaratta, Whitehorse, Wodonga, Yarra Ranges.
 - West Division: **1300 360 462**
LGAs Covered: Ararat, Ballarat, Brimbank, Colac-Otway, Corangamite, Glenelg, Golden Plains, Greater Geelong, Hepburn, Hobsons Bay, Hindmarsh, Horsham, Maribyrnong, Melbourne, Melton, Moonee Valley, Moorabool, Moyne, Northern Grampians, Pyrenees, Queenscliffe, Southern Grampians, Surf Coast, Warrnambool, West Wimmera, Wyndham, Yarriambiack.
 - After Hours Child Protection Emergency Service: **13 12 78**
- **WA** Department for Child Protection:
 - Central Intake Team: **1800 273 889**
 - Crisis Care (after hours): **1800 199 008**

Risk Management

ETS ensures the protection of children when a risk is identified. In addition to general occupational health and safety risks, we proactively manage risks of abuse to children.

ECTARC has risk management strategies in place to identify, assess, and take steps to minimise child abuse risks, which include risks posed by physical environments and online environments, without compromising a child's right to privacy, access to information and social connections.

Recruiting Personnel and Volunteers

ETS puts child safety and wellbeing at the centre of recruitment and screening processes for personnel and volunteers. We only recruit personnel and volunteers who are appropriate to engage with children.

ETS requires relevant Working with Children Check(s), National Criminal Checks and referee checks for all personnel and volunteers who have a role with children or have access to children's personal information. The organisation requires personnel to have appropriate qualifications for their roles and check to make sure these qualifications are valid.

To ensure ETS engages the most suitable people to work with children and young people, the organisation has the following recruitment practices in place:

- Our commitment to child safety is included in all job advertisements.
- Clear position descriptions that include our commitment to child safety and wellbeing.
- Evidence of relevant Working with Children Checks to be submitted within application.
- At least two (2) referee checks and qualification checks.

Training and Supervision

ETS culture aims for all individuals to feel confident and comfortable in discussing any allegations of child abuse or child safety concerns.

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ETS has specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team and personnel to achieve these commitments. The organisation supports personnel through ongoing supervision to ensure they understand our organisation's commitment to child safety and that everyone has a role to play in protecting children from abuse, as well as checking that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

All management, personnel and volunteers are required to complete annual child safety training. Training undertaken is recorded in each individual's Professional Development Plan and HR file.

ETS has strategies in place to supervise, train and support workers to understand our organisation's child safe policy, their mandatory reporting obligations (where applicable), how to build culturally safe environments and their responsibilities to create a child safe and friendly environment. Strategies include regular supervision sessions that include a focus on child safety and wellbeing.

Support includes:

- Online training on the ECTARC Employee Training Portal Go1.
- Professional discussions at team meetings.
- Completion of an accredited Child Protection unit for relevant roles.
- The appointment of a child safety officer who has an educative role within the organisation.

Recordkeeping

ETS is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns. All child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and near misses are recorded in the incident reporting system.

Records that assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern are identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records are kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint. We record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Records related to the safety of a child are stored securely and kept by ETS for at least forty-five (45) years.

Government Authorities

Jurisdiction	Authority
Australian Capital Territory	ACT Ombudsman www.ombudsman.act.gov.au
New South Wales	NSW Office of the Children's Guardian www.ocg.nsw.gov.au
Northern Territory	NT Office of the Children's Commissioner www.nt.gov.au
Queensland	Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) www.qfcc.qld.gov.au
South Australia	Department for Child Protection SA www.childprotection.sa.gov.au
Tasmania	Commissioner for Children and Young People Tasmania www.childcomm.tas.gov.au

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Jurisdiction	Authority
Victoria	Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP) www.ccyp.vic.gov.au
Western Australia	Ombudsman WA www.ombudsman.wa.gov.au

Communicating this Policy

This and related documents are available on our website, on request and provided as part of our Student Handbook.

This policy and related documents are readily available in the ECTARC Computer network and provided to all personnel as part of their induction following recruitment.

ETSs encourages and respects the views of children and young people and involve them in decision making as appropriate. ETS provides clear age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanations to children and young people including their right to safety, their right to be listened to and that they can provide feedback or make a complaint if they have a concern, to any worker or ask their parent/guardian to do this on their behalf. ETS listens to and acts upon any complaints or concerns that a child or young person raises.

Policy Review

ETS at a minimum, reviews this policy and the related procedures annually, and when:

- New or added risks are identified for children or young people, which may require a change in the policy or procedures.
- A critical incident where a child or young person has experienced harm through involvement in the organisation.
- Concerns are raised by anyone involved in our organisation about child safety or welfare in the organisation.
- Awareness or compliance to the child safe policy and/or procedures is considered to be low.
- Legislative changes/requirements are identified.

Monitoring and Evaluation

ETS monitors and evaluates child safe framework processes to ensure performance is effective and outcomes are met.

VERSION CONTROL	DATE RELEASED	NEXT REVIEW	APPROVED BY	AMENDMENT
Version 1	June 2025	June 2026	ECTARC Leadership	New Policy