**Child Safe Standards Requirements**

Macedon Ranges Shire Council is committed to a zero tolerance approach to child abuse, through actively promoting child safety and ensuring compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards. As a Child Safe organisation, Council reviews all agreements that will likely involve either direct or incidental contact with children.

Any individual or organisation who enters into an agreement with Council must demonstrate compliance with Victorian Child Safe Standards and be committed to upholding the standards in Council’s Child Wellbeing and Safety Code of Conduct and Policy available for reading from www.mrsc.vic.gov.au. Any non-compliance can result in the terms of your agreement being invalidated and the termination clauses to take effect.

This is to ensure that all organisations/individuals (regardless of whether there is likely to be direct contact with children) are aware of their responsibilities and practice child safety.

For any further enquiries, please see [Information for Organisations](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/resources/child-safe-standards/) …

**Background Information**

All children have the right to feel safe and be safe, but safety does not just happen. Victorian organisations that provide services or facilities for children (anyone under 18 years old) are required by law to implement Child Safe Standards to protect children from harm.

A child safe organisation takes deliberate steps to safeguard children from physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse and neglect. It puts children’s safety and wellbeing first and embeds a commitment to child safety in every aspect of the organisation. Victoria’s mandatory Child Safe Standards (the Standards) have been in effect since 2016.

Following the Royal Commission, the Victorian Government reviewed the Standards. The review found strong support for the Standards and recommended a number of changes to better align the Standards with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, and to strengthen administration of the Standards. In line with these recommendations, the new Standards were released by the Victorian Government in 2021. They consist of 11 updated Standards and apply from 1 July 2022.

More information on the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme can be found on the Commission for Children and Young People website or at <https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/child-safety/> and in Council’s Child Safe Standards Policy and Code of Conduct.

**Agreement**

*I confirm that:-*

* *Any contact with children and young people under the age of 18 will be compliant with legislation and regulations relating to child safety including but not limited to the Child Wellbeing Safety Act (2005). In addition, I have read and understand Council’s Child Wellbeing and Safety Policy and I agree to work in compliance with Macedon Ranges Shire Council’s requirements and Victorian Child Safe Standards.*
* *All staff, committee or board members, and volunteers who have contact with children as a result of our agreement with Macedon Ranges Shire Council understand the Child Safe Standards and their requirements and will have a Working With Children Check (WWCC) in place prior to the agreement taking effect. Routine systems are also in place to monitor WWCC’s including that your organisation details are registered on individuals WWCC.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Organisation/ Individual Name: |  |
| Contact Person: |  |
| Signature |  |
| Date |  |

**Child Safe Standards Checklist**

Please complete the following checklist, you must tick yes or no to each Standard.

| **Child Safe Standard** | **An organisation must be able to demonstrate:** | **Compliant**  **Yes/ No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **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. | 1.1 A child’s ability to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights is encouraged and actively supported.  1.2 Strategies are embedded within the organisation which equip all members to acknowledge and appreciate the strengths of Aboriginal culture and understand its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children and young people.  1.3 Measures are adopted by the organisation to ensure racism within the organisation is identified, confronted and not tolerated. Any instances of racism are addressed with appropriate consequences.  1.4 The organisation actively supports and facilitates participation and inclusion within it by Aboriginal children, young people and their families.  1.5 All of the organisation’s policies, procedures, systems and processes together create a culturally safe and inclusive environment and meet the needs of Aboriginal children, young people and their families. | **Yes  No** |
| **Standard 2**  Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture | 2.1 The organisation makes a public commitment to child safety.  2.2 A child safe culture is championed and modelled at all levels of the organisation from the top down and bottom up.  2.3 Governance arrangements facilitate implementation of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at all levels.  2.4 A Code of Conduct provides guidelines for staff and volunteers on expected behavioural standards and responsibilities.  2.5 Risk management strategies focus on preventing, identifying and mitigating risks to children and young people.  2.6 Staff and volunteers understand their obligations on information sharing and record keeping.  See [Reportable Conduct Scheme](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/reportable-conduct-scheme/) and [Code of Conduct template](https://ccyp.vic.gov.au/assets/Uploads/child-safe-code-of-conduct.pdf) | **Yes  No** |
| **Standard 3**  Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously. | 3.1 Children and young people are informed about all of their rights, including to safety, information and participation.  3.2 The importance of friendships is recognised and support from peers is encouraged, to help children and young people feel safe and be less isolated. 3.3 Where relevant to the setting or context, children and young people are offered access to sexual abuse prevention programs and to relevant related information in an age-appropriate way.  3.4 Staff and volunteers are attuned to signs of harm and facilitate child-friendly ways for children and young people to express their views, participate in decision-making and raise their concerns.  3.5 Organisations have strategies in place to develop a culture that facilitates participation and is responsive to the input of children and young people.  3.6 Organisations provide opportunities for children and young people to participate and are responsive to their contributions, thereby strengthening confidence and engagement. | **Yes  No** |
| **Standard 4**  Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing. | 4.1 Families participate in decisions affecting their child.  4.2 The organisation engages and openly communicates with families and the community about its child safe approach and relevant information is accessible.  4.3 Families and communities have a say in the development and review of the organisation’s policies and practices.  4.4 Families, carers and the community are informed about the organisation’s operations and governance. | **Yes  No** |
| **Standard 5**  Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice. | 5.1 The organisation, including staff and volunteers, understands children and young people’s diverse circumstances, and provides support and responds to those who are vulnerable.  5.2 Children and young people have access to information, support and complaints processes in ways that are culturally safe, accessible and easy to understand.  5.3 The organisation 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. 5.4 The organisation pays particular attention to the needs of Aboriginal children and young people and provides/promotes a culturally safe environment for them. | **Yes  No** |
| **Standard 6**  People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice. | 6.1 Recruitment, including advertising, referee checks and staff and volunteer pre-employment screening, emphasise child safety and wellbeing.  6.2 Relevant staff and volunteers have current Working With Children Checks or equivalent background checks.  6.3 All staff and volunteers receive an appropriate induction and are aware of their responsibilities to children and young people, including record keeping, information sharing and reporting obligations.  6.4 Ongoing supervision and people management is focused on child safety and wellbeing. | **Yes  No** |
| **Standard 7**  Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused | 7.1 The organisation has an accessible, child-focused complaint handling policy which clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of leadership, staff and volunteers, approaches to dealing with different types of complaints, breaches of relevant policies or the Code of Conduct and obligations to act and report.  7.2 Effective complaint handling processes are understood by children and young people, families, staff and volunteers, and are culturally safe.  7.3 Complaints are taken seriously and responded to promptly and thoroughly. 7.4 The organisation has policies and procedures in place that address reporting of complaints and concerns to relevant authorities, whether or not the law requires reporting, and co-operates with law enforcement.  7.5 Reporting, privacy and employment law obligations are met. | **Yes  No** |

| **Child Safe Standard** | **An organisation must be able to demonstrate:** | **Complied**  **Yes/ No** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **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. | 8.1 Staff and volunteers are trained and supported to effectively implement the organisation’s Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.  8.2 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to recognise indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and young people.  8.3 Staff and volunteers receive training and information to respond effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and support colleagues who disclose harm.  8.4 Staff and volunteers receive training and inform | **Yes  No** |
| **Standard 9**  Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed. | 9.1 Staff and volunteers identify and mitigate risks in the online and physical environments without compromising a child’s right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.  9.2 The online environment is used in accordance with the organisation’s Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and practices.  9.3 Risk management plans consider risks posed by organisational setting, activities and the physical environment.  9.4 Organisations that contract facilities and services from third parties have procurement policies that ensure the safety of children and young people. | **Yes  No** |
| **Standard 10**  Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved. | 10.1 The organisation regularly reviews, evaluates and improves child safe practices.  10.2 Complaints, concerns and safety incidents are analysed to identify causes and systemic failures to inform continuous improvement.  10.3 The organisation reports on the findings of relevant reviews to staff and volunteers, community and families, and children and young people. | **Yes  No** |
| **Standard 11**  Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people. | 11.1 Policies and procedures address all Child Safe Standards.  11.2 Policies and procedures are documented and easy to understand.  11.3 Best practice models and stakeholder consultation informs the development of policies and procedures.  11.4 Leaders champion and model compliance with policies and procedures. 11.5 Staff and volunteers understand and implement policies and procedures. | **Yes  No** |