

## ▲ FROEBEL CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING

### ▲ NQS

**Element 2.3:** Each child is protected

**Element 2.3.1:** Children are adequately supervised at all times

**Element 2.3.2:** Every reasonable precaution is taken to protect children from harm and any hazard likely to cause injury

**Early Childhood and Care Services National Regulations:** 103, 104; 136; 165

**Child Safe Standards NSW:** [Office of Children's Guardian Child Safe Scheme](#)

**Child safe standards VIC:** [Department of Health and Human Services, Victoria](#)

### ▲ PURPOSE

*"As of February 2019, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations have been endorsed by members of the Council of Australian Governments, including the Prime Minister and state and territory First Ministers. The principles aim to provide a nationally consistent approach to creating organisational cultures that foster child safety and wellbeing.*

*The National Principles reflect ten child safe standards recommended by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse and are the vehicle for giving effect to recommendations relating to the standards. The National Principles have a broader scope that goes beyond child sexual abuse to cover other forms of potential harm to children and young people."*

<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/national-principles>

FROEBEL Australia is committed to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children. We have zero tolerance for child abuse. Everyone working at FROEBEL Australia, is responsible for the care and protection of children and reporting information about child abuse to protect a child's right to be safe from abuse of any kind.

All children, regardless of their gender, race, religious beliefs, age, disability, sexual orientation, family, or social background have equal rights to safety and protection.

Everyone working at FROEBEL Australia is responsible for the safety and wellbeing of the children within our care and reporting information when safety and wellbeing are compromised.

Child safety and wellbeing is a shared responsibility between FROEBEL Australia services, all employees, workers, contractors, associates, and members of the FROEBEL Australia community.

Employees of FROEBEL are aware of their obligations under the law, regarding the welfare of children and always uphold their obligation. In addition to this, our organisation aims to provide regular training to all employees. Volunteers and students are made aware of the child protection policies and the child safe standards embedded within each setting to ensure that, in the event a child has suffered abuse, the service can act quickly in the best interests of the child.

FROEBEL Australia supports and respects all children, employees, and volunteers. FROEBEL Australia is committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children, and those from culturally and/ or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children living with a disability.

At FROEBEL Australia, we intend to empower children who are vital and active participants in our organisation. We involve children when making decisions, especially about matters that directly affect them. We listen to their views and respect what they have to say.

Each FROEBEL service provides a curriculum and program which supports educators' critical reflection for embedding child safe standards and supports children's learning and development in a way that keeps them safe from harm.

FROEBEL aims to educate all parties about their roles in child safety and wellbeing to ensure all children are safe from harm. The following actions are woven throughout FROEBEL policies, procedures, and practice, (See list of related policies and procedures page 5) and support FROEBEL to:

- facilitate the prevention of child abuse occurring within FROEBEL Australia services
- work towards an organisational culture of child safety
- ensure all parties are aware of their responsibilities for identifying possible occasions for child abuse, and for establishing controls and procedures for preventing such abuse and/or detecting such abuse when it occurs
- provide guidance to staff/volunteers/contractors, as to action that should be taken where they suspect any abuse within or outside of the organisation
- facilitate an understanding of and prevention of child safety and wellbeing within Little Scientists workshops. (Little Scientists professional development sessions are aimed at adults. Within course material and workshops, it is emphasised that development of materials and all explorations must be done with the age of the children in mind and that caution has to be used when using certain materials in early learning environments.
- provide a clear statement to staff/volunteers/contractors forbidding such abuse
- provide assurance that all suspected abuse will be reported and fully investigated.

## **Responsibilities**

FROEBEL's Governance and Leadership structure is formed under a distributed leadership model. FROEBEL's head office team is responsible for developing, consulting, and disseminating information in relation to processes and procedures. Ongoing consultation occurs between FROEBEL head office and FROEBEL services to ensure policies and procedures reflect national law, regulations, best practice, community, and stakeholder voices.

- ▲ **Policy development** occurs through reflection of law and regulations nationally and within NSW and Victoria. All policies are reviewed at least annually with opportunities for all stakeholders to participate in the review process. Stakeholders are invited to comment, ask questions, or make suggestions. These are reviewed and discussed further before an updated document is published.
- ▲ **Recruitment and screening practices** are conducted through Human Resources, and collaboration occurs between the HR Manager and Centre Directors to place appropriate advertisements whilst also clearly stating that FROEBEL is a child safe organisation.

Recruitment includes appropriate screening for each state to ensure correct qualifications and experience as well as being the 'right fit' for the organisation. Working with Children Checks, Police Checks and reference checks form a significant part of the recruitment process.

Staff induction and training is shared between HR and the Centre Directors with onboarding occurring electronically through an employee management system to ensure all steps are taken to provide a new employee with adequate knowledge of policies and procedures and codes of conduct. Further inductions occur on site between the Centre Director and the new employee.

- ▲ **Complaints process** A grievance can be made following the steps in the feedback and grievance management policy. Additionally notifiable complaints are monitored and addressed within the required time frames with the relevant regulatory authority.

### ▲ **Definitions**

**Child/ children** NSW a child / Children is defined under : *Section 3 of the [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Acts 1988](#) (NSW) defines a child as a person who is under the age of 16 years and a young person as a person who is aged 16 years or above but who is under the age of 18 years.*

**Child/ Children** In Victoria *Section 3 of the [Children, Youth and Families Act 2005](#) (Vic.) defines a child as including:*

*'(a) in the case of a person who is alleged to have committed an offence, a person who at the time of the alleged commission of the offence was under the age of 18 years but of or about the age of 10 years but does not include any person who is of or above the age of 19 years when a proceeding for the offence is commenced in the Court; and*

*(b) in any other case, a person who is under the age of 17 years or, if a protection order, a child protection order within the meaning of Schedule 1 or an interim order within the meaning of that Schedule continues in force in respect of him or her, a person who is under the age of 18 years.'*

**Child harm or abuse.** *All forms of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.*

**Mandatory reporting** *a legislative requirement for a number of professional groups to report a reasonable believe of suspected child abuse and neglect to government authorities.*

**Cultural safety** *an environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe as well as physically safe for people; where there is not assault, challenge of denial of their identity of why they are and what they need.*

## ▲ Relevant legislation and standards

- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Children's Guardian Act 2019
- Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference (2005). Creating safe environments for children: Organisation, employees and volunteers: National framework
- Community and Disability Services Ministers' Conference (2005). Schedule: Guidelines for building the capacity of child-safe organisation. Creating safe environments for children: organisation, employees and volunteers: National framework:
- The Commission for Children and Young People Act 1998
- Child Protection (Prohibited Employment) Act 1998
- Children Legislation Amendment (Wood Inquiry Recommendations) Act 2009 No 13
- Child Story Reporter  
<https://reporter.childstory.nsw.gov.au/s/>
- Education and Care Services National Regulations
- Early Years Learning Framework
- The Ombudsman's Act 1974 (with the relevant child protection amendment in the reprinted version)
- UNICEF Fact sheet: A summary of the rights under the Convention on the Rights of the Child: [www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights\\_overview.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf)

### ▲ ASSOCIATED POLICIES

Include but not limited to:

- Child safe environments and supervision
- Code of conduct and ethics
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Feedback and Grievance
- Interactions with children
- Privacy and Confidentiality
- Statement of Inclusion
- Students, Volunteers and Visitors
- Child Protection Victoria
- Child Protection NSW
- Staffing Arrangements Victoria
- Staffing Arrangements NSW

These and additional policies can be found <https://www.froebel.com.au/policies>

### ▲ POLICY REVIEW

- FROEBEL (together with stakeholders) will review this policy every 12 months.
- The Approved Provider and Nominated Supervisor ensure that all educators maintain and implement this policy and its procedures at all times.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the Centre to review the policy and procedures.
- **Last review:** 14.09.2023
- **Next review:** 14.09.2024