



Child Safety Commitment Statement

Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC) is committed to promoting and protecting the safety, wellbeing, and empowerment of all children in our care. We believe every child has the right to feel safe, happy, respected, and supported to reach their full potential.

WVELC has established policies, procedures, and practices that align with, meet, and exceed the National Quality Standard, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, and all relevant ACT child protection laws and regulations.

As a community-based early childhood education and care service, we are committed to embedding child safety and wellbeing in our leadership, governance, and daily practice. Every staff member, volunteer, student, and contractor is expected to understand and fulfil their obligations to keep children safe.

At WVELC, we:

- Have zero tolerance for child abuse, harm, or neglect in any form.
- Treat all allegations and safety concerns seriously, following our established child protection and safeguarding procedures.
- Contact the relevant authorities whenever we are concerned about the safety or wellbeing of a child, in line with our legal obligations as mandatory reporters.
- Promote diversity, inclusion, equity, and cultural safety for all children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, LGBTIQ+ children, children with disabilities, children who are unable to live at home, and children experiencing vulnerability.
- Actively involve children and families in creating and maintaining a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment.
- Provide regular training and guidance to all staff to ensure they understand their individual and collective responsibility for child safety.

Every person engaged with WVELC—whether as an educator, volunteer, student, or contractor—plays an important role in ensuring the safety, wellbeing, and empowerment of children. This commitment is central to who we are, what we do, and the high standards of care we uphold.

Woden Valley Child Care Centre Association Incorporated

Safeguarding policy

Date Reviewed:

August 14, 2025

Regulation:

Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)
Working with Vulnerable People (Background
Checking) Act 2011 (ACT)
National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
Regulations: 168(2)(h), 170, 171, 84

Standards:

2.2.3; 4.2.2; 7.1.2; 7.1.3

1. Policy Statement

1.1 All children, regardless of age, gender, race, religious beliefs, disability, sexual orientation, family circumstances, or social background, have equal rights to protection from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm.

1.2 Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC) is committed to promoting and protecting the welfare, rights, and wellbeing of all children and families who interact with, or are affected by, our service. We have zero tolerance for abuse, neglect, or exploitation in any form. We take a child-centred, survivor-focused approach in all that we do.

1.3 WVELC recognises that safeguarding is both proactive and preventative — involving all the policies, procedures, and organisational culture that protect children from all types of harm before it happens. Safeguarding at WVELC covers:

- Wellbeing and emotional safety
 - Inclusion and respect for diversity
 - Cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
 - Supervision and safe environments
 - Online and digital safety
 - Safe recruitment and screening of staff, volunteers, and contractors
 - Ongoing staff training in child safety
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- Empowerment of children to speak up and be heard

1.4 All educators, staff, students, volunteers, contractors, and visitors share responsibility for safeguarding and protecting children. Some individuals have specific duties that must be carried out without exception.

1.5 WVELC has established processes for identifying, responding to, and managing safeguarding incidents, which must be followed in every case.

2. Purpose

This policy exists to:

- a. Protect all children and young people who engage with WVELC.
- b. Define key safeguarding and child protection terms for clarity and shared understanding.
- c. Outline how WVELC manages safeguarding risks.
- d. Detail the specific roles and responsibilities of all people connected to WVELC.
- e. Ensure incidents are managed safely, promptly, and effectively.
- f. Support a positive, proactive organisational culture where every child feels safe, respected, and valued.

3. Definitions

Safeguarding

Protecting the welfare, rights, and wellbeing of children and young people who engage with WVELC, particularly those who may be at higher risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation. It refers to any responsibility or measure undertaken to prevent harm, create safe environments, and uphold children's rights.

Child Protection

The specific legal and procedural steps taken when there is a concern, suspicion, disclosure, or allegation of abuse or neglect.

Abuse, Neglect, or Exploitation

Includes all forms of physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, neglect, coercion, discrimination, or mistreatment, such as:

- Sexual harassment, grooming, or abuse
 - Physical violence
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- Bullying, intimidation, or humiliation
- Racial, cultural, sexual, or gender-based discrimination
- Coercion, exploitation, or abuse of power

Duty of Care

A legal and ethical obligation requiring all WVELC staff, volunteers, and representatives to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety, wellbeing, and protection of children in our care. This includes anticipating and preventing risks of harm, acting promptly when concerns arise, and always acting in the best interests of the child.

Reasonable Grounds to Suspect

A belief based on factual information, observations, or disclosures that a child is, or may be, at risk of harm. No proof is required, but suspicion should be able to be explained to another person.

Child-Centred, Survivor-Focused Approach

Prioritising the rights, needs, and safety of the child, considering their wishes and feelings where appropriate, and acting in their best interests at all times.

4. Legislative & Standards Framework

This policy has been developed in line with the following legislation, standards, and best practice principles:

National Quality Framework

- *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, including:
 - Regulation 84 – Awareness of child protection law
 - Regulation 168(2)(h) – Policies and procedures in relation to providing a child-safe environment
 - Regulation 170 – Policies and procedures to be followed
 - Regulation 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available

National Quality Standard (NQS)

- Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety
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- Element 2.2.3 – Management, educators, and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.
- Quality Area 4 – Staffing Arrangements
 - Element 4.2.2 – Professional standards guide practice, interactions, and relationships.
- Quality Area 7 – Governance and Leadership
 - Element 7.1.2 – Systems are in place to manage risk and enable effective management and operation of a quality service.
 - Element 7.1.3 – Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, understood, and support effective decision-making.

ACT Legislation

- *Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)* – Defines abuse, neglect, and mandatory reporting obligations.
- *Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT)* – Requires clearance for all staff, volunteers, and contractors.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

- Principle 1: Child safety is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.
 - Principle 2: Children are informed about their rights and participate in decisions affecting them.
 - Principle 3: Families and communities are informed and involved.
 - Principle 4: Equity is upheld, and diverse needs are respected.
 - Principle 5: People working with children are suitable and supported.
 - Principle 6: Processes to respond to complaints are child focused.
 - Principle 7: Staff are equipped with knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe.
 - Principle 8: Physical and online environments promote safety.
 - Principle 9: Implementation is continuously reviewed and improved.
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- Principle 10: Policies and procedures document child safety and wellbeing.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

Approved Provider / Management Committee

- Ensure WVLC has effective systems for safeguarding and child protection.
- Promote a culture of safety and respect across the service.
- Ensure compliance with all ACT legislation and the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*.
- Oversee the implementation of this policy and all related procedures.

Director / Nominated Supervisor

- Lead the implementation of safeguarding practices across WVLC.
- Ensure mandatory reporting obligations are understood and met.
- Provide training and resources to staff to maintain high awareness of child safety.
- Report incidents to external authorities as required.

Safeguarding Lead (Director or delegated senior educator)

- Receive and manage reports of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Ensure staff, volunteers, and contractors understand relevant laws, WVLC policies, and their reporting obligations.
- Support staff in fulfilling their safeguarding responsibilities.

All Pedagogical Leaders & Team Leaders

- Promote safeguarding within their rooms and areas of responsibility.
- Ensure risks are identified and controls are in place.
- Support and monitor staff compliance with this policy.

All Staff, Students, and Volunteers

- Familiarise themselves with this policy, the Child Safety Code of Conduct, and all related procedures.
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- Act in accordance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and NQS requirements.
- Immediately report any suspected or actual incidents of abuse, neglect, or exploitation.
- Create and maintain a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment for all children.

Contractors & Visitors

- Comply with WVELC's safeguarding requirements when on-site.
- Report any concerns to the Director or Nominated Supervisor.

6. Managing Safeguarding Risks

WVELC manages safeguarding risks by:

- Conducting regular risk assessments and updating them as needed.
- Implementing strong recruitment and induction practices, including Working with Vulnerable People (WWVP) registration checks.
- Maintaining clear policies, procedures, and a Child Safety Code of Conduct.
- Providing regular child protection training for all staff.
- Ensuring both overt and confidential reporting processes are available.
- Reviewing incidents to improve practice.

7. Managing Incidents (please refer to flow chart below)

- Abuse, neglect, harassment, and exploitation are considered serious misconduct and may lead to disciplinary action, termination, and/or referral to police.
 - All suspected criminal offences will be reported to the ACT Policing and Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPs).
 - Incident management will follow WVELC's Incident Response Procedure and the requirements of the *Education and Care Services National Regulations*.
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8. Reporting Suspected Incidents

Reports can be made to:

- Director / Nominated Supervisor (Safeguarding Lead)
- Management Committee representative
- ACT CYPS: 1300 556 729
- ACT Policing: 000 (immediate danger) or 131 444 (non-urgent)

Reports should be made as soon as practicable. Where a child is in immediate danger, emergency services must be contacted first.

9. Privacy & Data Protection

All personal information will be handled in line with WVELC's Privacy and Confidentiality Policy. Information will only be shared with authorised parties or as required by law.

*** Disclaimer: Private Babysitting and Nannyng Arrangements**

Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC) acknowledges that families may at times engage staff for private babysitting or nannyng outside of WVELC hours. While staff are free to accept such work, these arrangements are entirely private and independent of WVELC.

Families enter into these agreements at their own discretion and accept full responsibility for all associated risks, obligations, and liabilities. WVELC does not monitor, endorse, insure, or accept responsibility for any issues, incidents, or disputes arising from private arrangements.

Staff engaged in private babysitting or nannyng must not discuss, share, or act on matters concerning WVELC within these arrangements.

References:

- Child Safeguarding Policy
 - Child Safety Recruitment & Process
 - Child Safety Statement
 - Organisation Risk Assessment - Child Safeguarding
 - Safeguarding incident response plan
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Woden Valley Child Care Centre Association Incorporated

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Date Reviewed:	Regulation:	Standards:
August 14, 2025	Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT) Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011 (ACT) National Principles for Child Safe Organisations Regulations: 168(2)(h), 170, 171, 84	2.2.3; 4.2.2; 7.1.2; 7.1.3

Introduction

Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC) is committed to promoting and protecting the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children and young people in our care. We have zero tolerance for any form of child abuse, neglect, exploitation, or harm.

A Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines the minimum expected behaviours between all people engaged with WVELC and the children in our care. It is a central part of our commitment to creating safe environments and meeting our obligations under the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*, the *Children and Young People Act 2008 (ACT)*, and the *Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations*.

We provide a copy of this Code to every employee, volunteer, contractor, and student, and also make it available to families so they can understand and explain it to their children. This is done before employment, or engagement begins and before any contact with children occurs.

Purpose

This Code:

- Sets out clear expectations for acceptable and unacceptable behaviour when interacting with children, in both physical and online environments.
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- Supports a child-safe culture by embedding respect, safety, and wellbeing in our daily practice.
- Links to WVELC's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy, complaint handling procedures, and reporting obligations.
- Provides guidance on how to respond if you believe the Code has been breached.

Scope

This Code applies to:

- All WVELC staff (permanent, part-time, casual)
- Volunteers and students on placement
- Contractors engaged to work in the service
- Visitors who interact with children on site

It applies in all WVELC environments and in all interactions with children, including:

- On-site, indoors and outdoors
- During excursions, incursions, and community events
- Over the phone, online, or via digital communication platforms (e.g., Storypark)

This Code applies regardless of:

- A child's age or developmental stage
 - The location or time of the interaction
 - Whether the interaction is inside or outside operating hours
 - Whether the child or family initiates the interaction
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Declarations

I Will:

- Act in accordance with WVELC's child protection and safeguarding policies at all times.
- Behave respectfully, courteously, and ethically towards all children, families, and colleagues.
- Listen and respond to the views, concerns, and feelings of children, including non-verbal communication, particularly when they express they do not feel safe or well.
- Promote the human rights, safety, participation, and wellbeing of every child.
- Maintain appropriate personal and professional boundaries at all times.
- Consider and respect the diverse backgrounds, abilities, and needs of children, including cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
- Create a welcoming, inclusive environment that enables children's participation and is free from discrimination, bullying, or harassment.
- Involve children, where appropriate, in decisions about activities, policies, and processes that affect them.
- Identify and mitigate risks to children's safety and wellbeing as required by WVELC's risk assessment processes.
- Respond promptly to any concerns, complaints, or allegations of child harm in line with WVELC procedures.
- Report all suspected or disclosed child harm to the Director/Nominated Supervisor and to Child and Youth Protection Services (CYPS) as required by law.
- Comply with WVELC protocols on communication with children, including online and social media guidelines.
- Follow all legislative and policy requirements for record keeping, privacy, and information sharing.

I Will Not:

- Engage in any unlawful or harmful behaviour with or towards a child.
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- Discriminate against a child or family based on age, gender identity, race, disability, religion, cultural background, or sexual orientation.
- Be alone with a child unnecessarily or in a way that cannot be observed by others.
- Arrange personal or online contact with a child for purposes unrelated to WVELC activities.
- Disclose personal or sensitive information about a child, including photographs or videos, without proper consent from parents/guardians and authorisation from WVELC, unless required by law.
- Use inappropriate or offensive language in the presence of children.
- Show or provide children with access to inappropriate images or material.
- Work with children while under the influence of alcohol or prohibited drugs.
- Ignore or fail to report a suspicion, disclosure, or allegation of abuse.
- Engage in any form of grooming behaviour.
- Use physical discipline or any form of corporal punishment.
- Initiate unnecessary physical contact or perform personal tasks for a child they can do themselves, except where necessary for their safety or care.

If I Believe This Code Has Been Breached

If I suspect or observe that another person at WVELC has breached this Code, I will:

- Act to prioritise the best interests and safety of children.
 - Take immediate steps to ensure the child is safe.
 - Report my concerns promptly to the Director/Nominated Supervisor or Child Safety Officer.
 - Follow WVELC's complaint handling and incident reporting procedures.
 - Comply with all legislative reporting requirements and WVELC's internal and external reporting processes.
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Implementation & Review

WVELC ensures this Code is:

- Published and displayed in visible areas at the service.
- Provided to all staff, volunteers, contractors, and families before engagement with children.
- Signed and dated by each person to acknowledge understanding and agreement, with copies kept in personnel or volunteer files.
- Reviewed annually and updated to remain current, relevant, and compliant with legislative and best-practice requirements.
- Reinforced through induction and ongoing professional development.

Acknowledgement

I have read, understood, and agree to abide by the Woden Valley ELC Child Safety Code of Conduct. I understand that breaches of this Code may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, cancellation of volunteer engagement, or referral to external authorities.

Full Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

References:

- Child Safeguarding Policy
 - Child Safety Recruitment & Process
 - Child Safety Statement
 - Organisation Risk Assessment - Child Safeguarding
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Woden Valley Child Care Centre Association Incorporated

Child safe environment policy

Date Reviewed:

May 12, 2025

Regulation:

168 (2)(h)

Standards:

2.3, 3.1 & 7.1

Aim

To provide an overview of steps taken by the Woden Valley Early Learning Centre (WVELC) to ensure safe environments for children to play, explore, and investigate their world, thereby fostering their overall well-being and development.

Policy

Fencing

- WVELC will ensure fences are in good order and that gates and doors are locked and in good working order.
- Regular inspections of all fences and gates will be conducted to ensure they are secure and free from damage.
- Any necessary repairs will be carried out promptly to maintain the integrity of the security barriers.
- Staff will be trained to check locks and doors regularly to ensure they are functioning correctly.

Furniture

- WVELC supplies child-sized furniture in all rooms and adult-sized furniture in the staffroom. There is also a large lounge in the baby room for breastfeeding mothers.
 - Child-sized furniture helps to ensure the safety and comfort of children, promoting independence and reducing the risk of accidents.
 - The adult-sized furniture in the staffroom provides a comfortable and ergonomic environment for staff, supporting their well-being.
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- The breastfeeding lounge in the baby room offers a private and comfortable space for mothers, promoting a supportive environment for breastfeeding.
- WVELC will keep all furniture in clean and working order.
- Regular cleaning schedules will be followed to maintain hygiene standards.
- Any broken or worn-out furniture will be repaired or replaced promptly to ensure safety and functionality.

Hygiene

- WVELC promotes good hygiene through the explicit teaching of the importance of hand washing before eating, after toileting, or blowing your nose.
- Children will be taught proper handwashing techniques through demonstrations and regular reminders.
- Visual aids and posters will be used to reinforce the importance of hygiene practices.
- WVELC has procedures in place for training educators in hygiene, the cleaning of unhygienic areas, and blood or faecal matter.
- Staff will receive regular training on hygiene protocols, including the correct use of cleaning products and procedures for handling bodily fluids.
- Detailed guidelines will be provided for the cleaning and sanitization of all areas, ensuring a consistently high standard of cleanliness.
- Continued education in these areas is ongoing.
- WVELC will provide ongoing professional development opportunities for staff to stay updated on best practices in hygiene and sanitation.
- Regular audits will be conducted to ensure compliance with hygiene standards.
- For more information, please see the WVELC infectious disease policy.
- The infectious disease policy outlines specific measures to prevent and manage the spread of infectious diseases within the centre.

Kitchen

- The kitchen is locked from the inside and all knives are kept in a locked drawer.
 - Access to the kitchen will be restricted to authorized personnel only to prevent accidents.
 - Knives and other sharp objects will be securely stored to prevent access by children.
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- Educators and kitchen staff are aware of the need for safety when children are in or around kitchens.
- Staff will receive training on kitchen safety protocols, including supervision and risk management strategies.
- Clear guidelines will be in place to ensure that children are never left unsupervised in kitchen areas.

Repairs

- All repair work carried out in WVELC is done by certified professionals who meet WVELC's child security requirements.
- Only qualified and vetted professionals will be contracted to carry out repair and maintenance work.
- Repairs will be scheduled during times when children are not present to minimize disruption and ensure safety.

Resources/Toys

- All resources and toys are to be kept in safe working order. Any chipped or broken toys are to be removed from the room and the Director notified.
- Regular inspections of toys and resources will be conducted to identify any damage.
- Immediate action will be taken to remove and replace damaged items to prevent accidents.
- Outdoor toys need to be in good working order and set up in a safe way (e.g., mats placed under elevated toys).
- Outdoor play equipment will be checked regularly to ensure it is safe for use.
- Safety mats and other protective measures will be used to minimize the risk of injury from falls.

Nappies/Toilets

- Bathrooms are to be kept clean and as dry as possible.
 - Staff will follow a regular cleaning schedule to maintain bathroom hygiene and prevent the buildup of moisture.
 - Toilets need to be checked after each child has toileted and cleaned if necessary.
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- Staff will monitor bathroom use and ensure that toilets are clean and sanitary after each use.
- For more information, please see the WVELC nappy changing policy.
- The nappy changing policy provides detailed guidelines on safe and hygienic nappy changing practices.

Shade

- Shade will be provided in accordance with SunSafe requirements.
- Outdoor play areas will be equipped with adequate shade structures to protect children from excessive sun exposure.
- Staff will ensure that children use shaded areas during outdoor activities, especially during peak UV times.
- Sails and shade structures will be maintained and in working order.
- Regular inspections and maintenance of shade structures will be carried out to ensure their effectiveness and safety.

Sleeping/Bedding

- All beds are to be checked daily for tears, breakages, or soiling. If damage is present, the bed is either removed or its use stopped and the Director is notified.
- Daily inspections of beds will be conducted to ensure they are safe and clean for use.
- Any damaged or soiled bedding will be promptly addressed to maintain hygiene and comfort.
- Bedding is checked for rips, thinning, or soiling at each wash and removed if needed.
- Bedding will be inspected during each wash cycle to ensure it meets cleanliness and safety standards.
- Worn or damaged bedding will be replaced to ensure a safe sleeping environment.

Online Safety and Educational Content

- WVELC will ensure that any online content accessed by children is educational, age-appropriate, and safe.
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- Educators will curate and supervise the selection of online content to ensure it aligns with educational goals and is suitable for young children.
 - Internet safety measures, such as filtering software and secure networks, will be in place to protect children from inappropriate content.
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