



CHILD SAFE POLICY

NQS

Element	1.1.2	Child-centred -Each child's current knowledge, strengths, ideas, culture, abilities and interests are the foundation of the program.
	1.2.3	Child directed learning - Each child's agency is promoted, enabling them to make choices and decisions that influence events and their world.
	2.2.3	Child Protection - Management, educators and team members are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.
	3.2.1	Inclusive environment - Outdoor and indoor spaces are organised and adapted to support every child's participation and to engage every child in quality experiences in both built and natural environments
	5.1.1	Positive educator to child interactions - Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included
	5.1.2	Dignity and rights of the child - The dignity and rights of every child are maintained
	5.2.1	Collaborative learning - Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.
	6.1.3	Families are supported - Current information is available to families about the service and relevant community services and resources to support parenting and family wellbeing.
	7.2.1	Continuous improvement - There is an effective self-assessment and quality improvement process in place.
	7.2.3	Development of professionals - Educators, co-ordinators and team members members' performance is regularly evaluated and individual plans are in place to support learning and development

National Law

Section	162A	Persons in day-to-day charge and nominated supervisors to have child protection training
	165	Offence to inadequately supervise children
	166	Offence to use inappropriate discipline
	167	Offence relating to protection of children from harm and hazards
	169	Offence relating to team membersing arrangements

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	170	Offence relating to unauthorised persons on education and care service premises
	173	Offence to fail to notify certain circumstances to Regulatory Authority
	174	Offence to fail to notify certain information to Regulatory Authority
	175	Offence relating to requirement to keep enrolment and other documents

National Regulations

Reg	12	Meaning of serious incident
	82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
	84	Awareness of child protection law
	87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record
	100	Risk assessment must be conducted before excursion
	102B	Transport risk assessment must be conducted before service transports child
	120	Educators who are under 18 to be supervised
	123	Educator to child ratios—centre-based services
	145	Team members record
	146	Nominated Supervisor
	147	Team members members
	166	Children not to be alone with visitors
	168(2)(h)	Education and care services must have policies and procedures in relation to providing a child safe environment
	175	Prescribed information to be notified to Regulatory Authority
	177	Prescribed enrolment and other documents to be kept by approved provider

Aim

To ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children through organisational culture, values and practices that embed a culture of child safety. We support and respect our children, their families and our workers. We are committed to upholding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Related Policies

Additional Needs Policy

Child Protection Policy

Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy

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Educator and Management Policy
Excursion Policy
Governance Policy
Grievance Policy
Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
Parental Interaction and Involvement in the Service Policy
Policy and Procedure Review Policy
Photography Policy
Privacy and Confidentiality Policy
Recruitment Policy
Relationships with Children Policy
Social Media Policy
Staffing Arrangements Policy
Technology Usage Policy
Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy

Implementation

All managers, team members and volunteers are committed to implementing the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The safety, health and wellbeing of children is the number one priority of all team members and volunteers who understand children's safety is a shared responsibility. We have zero tolerance for any form of harm to children and are committed to acting in children's best interests. Our policies and procedures support and inform this commitment, and our leaders and managers regularly review team members and volunteer practices and understanding, prioritising training or taking other relevant action if required.

Our policies and procedures also support and comply with the Education and Care National Law and Regulations, and the National Quality Standard (NQS), whose guiding objective and principles outlined in section 3 include ensuring "the safety, health and wellbeing of children attending education and care services", "the rights and best interest of children are paramount", the principles of equity, inclusion and diversity underlie this Law", "that Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are valued", and "that the role of parents and families is respected and supported." These objectives and principles are embedded in many of the Laws and Regulations which we must comply with. The Laws, Regulations and NQS elements which are particularly relevant to child safety are listed above.

Approved Providers at canopy Early Education create and maintain a child safe culture in all aspects of centre operations for both physical and online environments.



All team members, students and volunteers understand the risks and indicators of child maltreatment, abuse and neglect as part of their daily practices with children. We aim to establish and maintain strong relationships with children, families and communities to help identify and prevent abuse.

canopy Early Education is committed to being a child safe education and care organisation who:

- Puts children's rights first and promotes their dignity, rights and cultural safety
- Proactively identifies, monitors and mitigates child safety risks
- Protects children from child maltreatment, abuse and neglect
- Responds appropriately to disclosures and suspicions of harm
- Embeds a culture that prioritises reporting, where everyone feels safe to report concerns
- Reflects on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Aims for children to be active and informed members of their communities, informed by Goal 2 of the Alice Springs (Mparntje) Education Declaration

Reviews will occur at least annually, and also where we identify new risks for children, there's been a critical incident, or concerns are raised by any employee, volunteer, family or community member.

canopy Early Education adopts the ten Child Safe Principles within policies and practices. These include **child safeguarding** practices that focus on proactive measures ensuring all team members understand their responsibilities prior and after commencement of employment, in creating a child safe environment, both physically and online, while also supporting children and families at the centre. These practices focus on preventing harm before it occurs. canopy Early Education also has processes in place for responding to **child protection** matters which addresses instances of child abuse or neglect after it has occurred.

canopy Early Education has a strong cultural focus on safeguarding from recruitment, through induction and an inclusion in our contracts of employment requiring all employees to comply with canopy Early Education policies and procedures.

Wheel of Child Safety



Wheel of Child Safety *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations* Australian Human Rights Commission (accessed online July 2025)
[National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)

Principle 1 Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

We strongly support a child safe organisational culture which drives the way things are done and how issues and risks are managed. Strong, transparent and accountable leadership can deter perpetrators of harm, and ensure employees understand and comply with their obligations to report suspicions or disclosures of harm. Our managers and leaders regularly review practices to ensure ongoing compliance with canopy Early Education policies and procedures, and to promote a child safe culture.

We promote and uphold this Principle by:

- Displaying our commitment to child safety, sharing this with families and the community
- Displaying the NAPCAN child friendly United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Completion of risk assessments for child safety and wellbeing and cultural safety
- Ensure team members and volunteers complete training and understand Child Safety and Child Protection and are supported to implement child safe practices and identify indicators of child harm

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canopy Early Education policies which support this Principle include:

- **Child Protection Policy** which clearly outlines the responsibilities and obligations of all employees and volunteers under State child protection legislation. It also outlines our Child Protection Risk Management Strategy, including our Code of Conduct, recruitment procedures which ensure potential employees fully understand and support the child safe canopy Early Education culture, procedures for managing disclosures or suspicions of harm and breaches of the Strategy, and risk management for high risk activities
- **Educator and Management Policy** which includes our Code of Conduct and Management Responsibilities.
The Code includes clear expectations of appropriate interactions with children, and examples of appropriate and inappropriate interactions, and the requirement for compliance with all canopy Early Education policies and procedures. The Code also guides the behaviour of families and visitors, indicating they will not have physical contact with other children canopy Early Education unless a team member is present. *Management responsibilities* include ensuring team members meet qualification requirements, mandated educator to child ratios are maintained, all team members understand their responsibilities under the National Law, Regulations and NQS, all team members, visitors and volunteers comply with the Code of Conduct, organising or providing appropriate team training and performance reviews, and regularly implementing documented team members meetings
- **Governance Policy** which includes the Governance Principle "recognise and manage risk to children." This Principle is evident in the regular risk assessments completed by educators and team members as they assess and manage the potential risk of harm to children during activities and events, and in the regular formal and informal training educators and team members receive to refresh their skills and understanding of practices that ensure the safety of children including but not limited to child protection and child safe practices such as adequate supervision, managing incidents and complaints, privacy requirements, implementing risk assessments, and safe excursion and transport practices
- **Grievance Policy** which includes our complaint handling procedures and guidelines, including potential outcomes
- **Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy** which requires team members maintain records that enable us to monitor, review and report incidents as required under the National Law (see also Principle 6)
- **Privacy and Confidentiality Policy** which outlines how our practices are consistent with the Australian Privacy Principles



- **Relationships with Children Policy** which covers positive interactions with children by educators, team members and other children (in cases of bullying for example)
- **Staffing Arrangements Policy** which includes procedures for supervising children to ensure their safety and remove any potential for harm to children, and requirements for clear/not prohibited Working with Children Checks.

Our Child Safe Policy is available to all families in the policy section in the KinderM8 portal or current hard copy on request at the centre.

Principle 2 Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

Educators promote a culture of participation and inclusion, viewing all children as active participants and decision makers as they seek to include the interests, ideas, strengths, culture, abilities etc of each child. They understand this is an essential part of effectively implementing the NQS and the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) which promote each child's agency, perspective and participation, and require that educators are responsive to each child's ideas, interests and needs.

As part of this process, educators regularly empower children to take part in discussions about their safety and decisions that affect them, and value their ideas, suggestions and feedback. Educators are attuned to babies' and younger children's non-verbal cues to plan curriculum and respond in ways that empowers them. Educators also promote friendship and kindness, role modelling this and encouraging it among the children. They acknowledge and respect First Nations culture and the identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island children ensuring access to culturally appropriate resources.

Our Educational Leader regularly reviews educators' practices and supports them to continually improve.

canopy Early Education policies which support this Principle include:

- **Child Protection Policy** which requires educators, as part of the 'Strategies for Communication and Support' component of the Child Protection Risk Management Strategy, to regularly include age appropriate learning about the way adults should behave from a child safety perspective, including their right to make decisions about their body and privacy, that they have a right to feel safe at all times, how to keep themselves safe, and what to do if they feel unsafe



- **Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy** which outlines practices which implement the EYLF, including regularly involving children in decision making about their learning and environment as part of the assessment and planning cycle
- **Relationships with Children Policy** which contains detailed guidelines and examples about children's inclusion, agency and peer support. The Policy also contains information and example of appropriate Behaviour Guidance strategies which support children to express and meet their needs.

Principle 3 Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

Educators constantly build partnerships with families and community members, which provides many opportunities for discussion and feedback about safety practices. Educators and team members regularly encourage families to contribute to decisions about canopy Early Education practices as well as their child's learning through questionnaires, information nights, face to face conversations and our 'Open Door Policy.' Families know they can locate canopy early Education policies and procedures in Kinder M8 and are asked for feedback when we review our policies. Providing information about canopy Early Education operations is also a requirement under NQS Element 6.1.3 'Families are supported.'

Child safe information is provided to families in various formats including displays and brochures and is discussed in more detail with families the week our professional development covers element 2.2.3 Child Protection.

Our response to child safety, including in cases of harm, suspected harm or complaints, is also culturally sensitive. For example we engage with families and/or community members to improve our understanding of cultural behaviours and inform our responses.

canopy Early Education policies which support this Principle include:

- **Child Protection Policy** as discussed above
- **Educator and Management Policy** which includes our Code of Conduct as discussed above
- **Governance Policy** which includes canopy Early Education structure and identifies the people in leadership and management positions
- **Grievance Policy** which includes our complaint guidelines and the name of our Complaints Officer.
- **Parental Interaction and Involvement in the Service Policy** which highlights our 'Open Door' approach to facilitating transparent, two-way communication



- **Policy and Procedure Review Policy** which outlines how and when families will be encouraged to provide feedback on policies and procedures

Principle 4 Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

Educators regularly plan and implement learning which promotes the benefits of cultural diversity, and the unique abilities and strengths each person has regardless of any additional needs, personal preferences or orientations, or family structure. Educators focus daily on ensuring *each child* can reach their potential in an inclusive environment which supports their participation identity, connection to their world and sense of wellbeing. These practices underpin the NQS and the EYLF which promote equity, diversity and inclusion. Educators also use the indicators under the EYLF Learning Outcomes and age appropriate development assessments to help identify children with vulnerabilities and additional needs.

In addition, where possible our team members profile reflects the diversity at canopy Early Education and in the local community, as this assists in building relationships with children and families, and in building the cultural competence of all educators and team members.

canopy Early Education policies which support this Principle include:

- **Additional Needs Policy** which discusses how we design or adapt the environment to ensure each child can participate and achieve meaningful learning outcomes, and how we work with external professionals, families and children to help achieve this outcome
- **Child Protection Policy** which includes the indicators of harm, the practices to effectively manage a suspicion or disclosure of harm, including where children may be unwilling to discuss this, and regular activities and experiences which teach children about their right to privacy, safety and who to approach for help if they don't feel safe
- **Education, Curriculum and Learning Policy** which outlines additional strategies educators use to promote each child's inclusion and participation, including establishing links with local cultural groups and using intentional teaching strategies to promote cultural customs, stories, traditions, history, inviting families and community members to visit and complete activities with children
- **Relationships with Children Policy** which covers inclusive practices as outlined in Principle 2 and also outlines practices to help support children through traumatic events



Principle 5 People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

Our managers do not rely solely on clear/not prohibited Working with Children Checks. Our human resource practices support the recruitment and ongoing management of employees who implement strong child safe practices every day. For example our employment advertising includes a Statement of Commitment to Child Safety, interview questions establish the suitability of team members, referees are contacted, our Induction process requires all team members to demonstrate knowledge of the Child Protection Policy and Code of Conduct, job descriptions set clear expectations about child safety, and we implement probationary periods. The Nominated Supervisor also implements an ongoing training program tailored to each team member's needs and goals which are identified through regular performance reviews.

Our employee and volunteer induction processes include reviewing child safe policies, procedures and expectations, and educators and team members regularly review one or two policies as part of their professional development. Volunteers are required to comply with all canopy Early Education policies and procedures and code of conduct.

canopy Early Education policies which support this Principle include:

- **Child Protection Policy** which includes Recruitment practices that clearly describe the expectations for employees to provide a child safe environment
- **Educator and Management Policy** which, in line with NQS Element 7.2.3 Development of professionals, requires the performance of educators and team members to be regularly evaluated against their position description, and training plans devised and implemented where there is an identified need, including for example in child safe practices. Training may occur through a recognised face to face or on-line training course, mentoring and at team members meetings. The Policy also outlines orientation practices to ensure new or returning team members are aware of current canopy Early Education policies and procedures, including those ensuring they meet their child protection obligations
- **Recruitment Policy/Procedure** which contains screening processes, use of position descriptions and interviews. This includes ensuring new team members are supported as they establish relationships with other educators, families and children, that new team members are monitored and able to demonstrate growing understanding of their responsibilities with regular meetings to identify opportunities for training or improvement



- **Staffing Arrangements Policy** which contains qualification requirements, including those consistent with state working with children requirements, and Supervision procedures with a child safety focus
- **Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol Policy** which clearly states educators and team members must not drink alcohol or take drugs at canopy Early Education centres and must not attend if adversely affected by alcohol or drugs, including prescription medication.

Principle 6 Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused

Complaints are taken very seriously at canopy Early Education, and children's safety and wellbeing is always our number one priority. Our child safety practices emphasise a child focus rather than focusing on adult intent, and as mentioned under Principle 3, we engage with families and/or community members to respond in culturally sensitive ways where appropriate.

canopy Early Education policies which support this Principle include:

- **Child Protection Policy** which contains a clear step by step procedure for reporting harm or suspected harm, for example to Police, Child Protection, and the ECEC Regulatory Authority. It also includes information about referrals to family support services
Where team members are the subject of child safety complaints, the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor must review their duties, decide if it's safe for them to continue working with children while the complaint is investigated, and if so ensure they're appropriately supervised at all times
- **Grievance Policy** which contains clear and transparent investigation guidelines including time frames, review processes, privacy and confidentiality requirements and potential outcomes of complaints including disciplinary action. The Policy clearly requires educators and team members support children to access the complaints process for all complaints alleging their safety or wellbeing is or could be harmed, if not already implementing the procedures in the Child Protection Policy.
- **Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy** which includes requirements under the National Law and Regulations to document and promptly notify the Regulatory Authority any 'Serious Incidents,' complaints alleging a Serious Incident has occurred, complaints that the National Law or Regulations have been breached, any circumstances arising at canopy Early Education that pose a risk to the health, safety and wellbeing of a child, and of any incident, complaint or allegation that physical or sexual abuse of a child has occurred.



Principle 7 Team members and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training

canopy Early Education is committed to a culture of ongoing learning and continuous improvement (as required under NQS element 7.2.1). This includes a commitment to ensuring all educators and team members know how to identify and respond to all forms of child harm and are aware of current child safe knowledge and practices.

canopy Early Education managers, for example, ensure they and all educators and team members participate in annual refresher training on their child safe obligations, the importance of taking a child-focused approach, the indicators of harm and patterns of behaviour that indicate a risk to children, record keeping and reporting procedures, and canopy Early Education child safe practices, policies and resources. Training may be provided in-house, or by external providers where appropriate. Child safety is also regularly included on team members meeting agendas. Child safe training always includes case studies and examples to support the development of practical skills and 'real-life' child safe responses.

canopy Early Education policies which support this Principle include, as previously discussed:

- **Child Protection Policy** (see all principles)
- **Educator and Management Policy** (see Principle 5)

Principle 8 Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children to be harmed

We comply with child safety requirements under the National Education and Care Law and Regulations (refer those listed at the front of this policy). Employees and volunteers regularly complete risk assessments prior to implementing activities or events that could potentially expose children to harm from a child protection and environmental perspective. Risk assessments always involve identifying and assessing risks, and implementing measures to eliminate risks or to reduce them to acceptable levels, and ongoing monitoring. There are also the notification requirements outlined in our Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy to promptly notify the Regulatory Authority of child safety issues which we discussed under Principle 6.

Managers, team members and educators understand the physical environment can provide opportunities for harm to occur and implement supervision practices that reduce this risk. Where possible, physical environments are altered to increase natural lines of sight while respecting a child's right to privacy, and their need for risky play which allows them to temporarily 'disappear' (refer Sandseter's categories



of risky play.) There is an increased focus on higher-risk locations including nappy change areas, and during events, transitions and excursions. This is reflected in our risk assessments, including those required under the National Regulations prior to conducting excursions or transporting children.

We also consider and protect children's safety in the online environment in an age appropriate way. Educators may discuss with younger children, for example, how there's no way to be sure who they're interacting with online. With older school age children, educators may cover risks like sharing intimate images, cyberbullying, and meeting in person with online contacts. If needed, team members are provided with training on online risks to children, and families are provided with relevant information to support their parenting and children's wellbeing in line with NQS Element 6.1.3.

canopy Early Education policies which support this Principle include:

- **Educator and Management Policy** which includes our Code of Conduct and the requirements when visitors attend canopy Early Education. These include ensuring visitors are never left alone with children, and have a current child protection clearance (unless exempt)
- **Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy** as discussed under Principle 6
- **Photography Policy** which promotes children's privacy and safety by requiring parents to consent before photos/videos are taken of their child, and before these are posted on any social media platforms, websites or used in canopy Early Education or third party publications
- **Social Media Policy** which also promotes children's privacy and safety by banning educators and team members from using personal cameras or phones to take photos/video at the service, and from posting children's private information, photos or videos to their personal social media accounts.
- **Staffing Arrangements Policy** which discusses issues affecting the adequacy of supervision (these include the visibility and accessibility of areas where children are playing), supervision practices including the need for educators to position themselves to see as much of the play area as possible and to follow any playground supervision plans, particular activities that require focused supervision (including in bathrooms/toilets and higher risk activities). Other practices which support Regulation requirements include ensuring educator to child ratios are always met and educators under 18 are always supervised
- **Technology Usage Policy** which requires devices only be used to support children's learning, only age appropriate websites are accessed, and that educators directly supervise children when they're on-line.



Principle 9 Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved

We are committed to a culture of continuous improvement, and we strive to reach or maintain an Exceeding rating under the NQS. We continually review our child safe practices and policies, and review any incidents and complaints to identify systemic causes which we address where possible. Regular training to embed child safety practices, and identify emerging trends and knowledge is a priority (reflected in training plans), and where relevant we seek a specialist external provider to facilitate this.

To support our continuous improvement, all managers, educators and team members also regularly engage in documented critical reflection of canopy Early Education practices and policies, interactions with children and families, and children's learning and development. This involves considering issues from multiple perspectives including those of children, families, colleagues and theorists, considering social justice and power imbalances, and often implementing changes in practice as a result.

canopy Early Education policies which support this Principle include our:

- **Policy and Procedure Review Policy** which requires all canopy Early Education policies and procedures to be regularly reviewed and updated in a scheduled, documented process. Regulatory authorities implementing the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations require all policies be reviewed at least annually
- **Relationships with Children Policy** which contains extensive guidelines and examples to support positive interactions with children and behaviour management guidance. The Policy also clearly states team members must not isolate or intimidate children, or use corporal punishment to guide behaviour.

Principle 10 Policies and procedures document how the organisation is child safe

As discussed above, we have many policies and procedures that support our child safe focus. These are accessible to employees and families in hard copy and electronic versions and where possible bilingual team members discuss relevant policies with families in their home language.

Managers implement a robust performance management procedure where non-compliance with the National Law, Regulations or canopy Early Education policies and procedures is identified, for example through reporting and feedback arrangements between room/group leaders, the Educational Leader and the Nominated Supervisor, or through our complaint handling process.

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Any questions about child safety or this policy may be directed to a Responsible Person at the service (the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor or Person in Day to Day Charge). If employees, volunteers and families have concerns about the Approved Provider or Nominated Supervisor's ability to provide or maintain a child safe environment, they should first discuss their concerns with another Responsible Person who will investigate and if substantiated contact Child Protection Line (see Child Protection Policy), the Regulatory Authority (contact number on ACECQA website), or the Police on 000 for advice. Employees, volunteers and families may contact these organisations directly if they believe the Responsible Person has not taken appropriate action.

Source

Early Years Learning Framework
Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations
National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
National Quality Standard
United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
See also sources Child Protection Policy

Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by:

- Management
- Employees
- Families
- Interested Parties