



Child Safe Code of Conduct

Adoption Date:	10 July 2023 by Council Resolution
Last Reviewed:	09 May 2024
Next Review Date:	09 May 2026
Division/Department:	Corporate Performance/ Governance & Risk
Responsible Officer:	Manager - Governance & Risk
HPE CM Record Number:	23/132603

1 Policy Statement

The purpose of this Code of Conduct is to outline Woollahra Municipal Council's expectations for how adults at Council should behave around children and to support Council's commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe organisation.

2 Application

Purpose

The Child Safe Code of Conduct identifies positive child safe behaviours that we encourage all adults to support and identifies behaviours that we consider unacceptable. Engaging in unacceptable behaviour is a breach of this Child Safe Code of Conduct and may result in formal disciplinary action including termination of employment.

Scope

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies to all paid and unpaid employees of Woollahra Municipal Council (Council), including contractors, sub-contractors, trainees, work experience participants, volunteers and grant recipients. This Code of Conduct also applies to elected representatives (Councillors).

The Code of Conduct applies regardless of whether the employee or elected representative is in child-related employment.

The Child Safe Code of Conduct applies in all council venues and situations, including direct service delivery, Council events, programs and activities, and in the use of digital technology and social media.

3 Definitions

Term	Meaning
Adult	Anyone over the age of 18.
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.
Child or young person	In this Code, the terms 'child', 'children', and the terms 'young person' or 'young people' mean a person or persons under the age of 18.

4 Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan

This Policy relates to Focus Areas, Goals and Strategies outlined in Council's Community Strategic Plan Woollahra 2032 and Priorities outlined in Council's Delivery Program and Operational Plan, specifically:

Focus Area:		Social
Goal:	2	A supported, enabled and resilient community
Strategy:	2.2	Understand needs of our community so that we can facilitate access to support services.
Priority:	2.2.1	Collaborate with a range of services to provide support for vulnerable members of our community.

5 Relevant Legislation

Children's Guardian Act 2019.
 Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013.
 Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012.
 Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998.
 Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2022.
 Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011.

6 Commitment to Child Safety

Woollahra Municipal Council is committed to safeguarding all children's sense of wellbeing, keeping children safe from harm and abuse whilst supporting them in reaching their full potential.

Council will work to empower children to find their own voices and understand that children play an important role in creating vibrant, positive communities, and are our communities of the future.

We recognise that disrespect, harm and abuse can have long-lasting effects on healthy development, and that these can lead to serious lifelong consequences. We know that abuse that occurs within an organisational context is not just a problem of the past, it continues today.

Woollahra Municipal Council has zero tolerance for child abuse, whether across the broader community or within its own organisation. Council will ensure that policies and systems are in place and accessible to protect children and young people, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated seriously.

7 Policy Content

All full-time, part-time, fixed contract employees, casual and agency staff, trainees, volunteers, work experience participants, contractors, sub-contractors, grant recipients and Councillors **must**:

- Comply and adhere with the Woollahra Municipal Council Child Safe Policy, this Child Safe Code of Conduct and all Australian and New South Wales (NSW) legislation.
- Treat all children and young people with respect and value their ideas and opinions and create a culture that supports questioning and feedback around child safe practices.
- Provide an open, safe and supportive environment for all children and young people to interact and socialise including face to face and online environments.
- Act as role models in their conduct with children and young people.
- Actively promote cultural safety and inclusion.
- Report any misconduct or inappropriate behavior relating to members of the public to a Supervisor, Manager, Director or the General Manager.
- Report any misconduct or inappropriate behavior relating to a Woollahra employee confidentially to the Child Protection Coordinator (Manager People, Safety and Performance) or the General Manager.
- Contact the police if a child is at immediate risk of abuse - phone 000.
- Respect the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information about child protection concerns confidential.
- Participate in ongoing child safety training as directed.

All full-time, part-time, fixed contract employees, casual and agency staff, trainees, volunteers, work experience participants, contractor, sub-contractors, grant recipients and Councillors **must not**:

- Condone or participate in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour or language towards children, including physical, sexual or psychological abuse, ill-treatment, neglect or grooming.
- Ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse.
- Show favouritism through the provisions of gifts or inappropriate attention.
- Initiate or engage in unwarranted and inappropriate physical contact involving a child or young person.
- Be alone with a child or young person unnecessarily in a private setting.
- Work with children or young people while under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs.
- Use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children or young people.
- Have in possession and/or show children or young people pornographic images.
- Have any contact including online contact with a child or young person outside of the Woollahra Municipal Council's services, programs and activities.
- Photograph or video a child or young person without the consent of the parent or guardians.

8 Reporting Obligations

All full-time, part-time, fixed contract employees, casual and agency staff, trainees, volunteers, work experience participants, contractor, sub-contractors, grant recipients and Councillors must immediately report a breach of this Child Safe Code of Conduct or any concerns about the safety of children or young people in accordance with the Reportable Conduct (Child Protection) Procedure 23/41563.

Documentation/References

	HPECM Reference
Child Safe Standards - 2023	https://ocg.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-12/g_CSS_GuidetotheStandards.pdf

Related Policies and Procedures

	HPECM Reference
Child Safe Policy	23/132600
Reportable Conduct (Child Protection) Procedure	23/41563
Recruitment and Selection Policy	18/172599

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed every two years or in accordance with legislative requirements. Any amendment (other than minor administrative amendments) to this Policy must be by way of a Council Resolution. Administrative amendments can be made with the approval of the General Manager.

Child Safe Code of Conduct Amendments

Date	Responsible Officer	Description
29 April 2024	Corrine Avins	Updated HPE reference numbers in document
08.05.2024	Gemma Maher	Updated date of Regulation
13 December 2023; May & October 2024	Policy Officer	Updated in new policy template, quality assurance, review and content manager updates