

CHILD SAFE POLICY



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COUNCIL POLICY

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CHILD SAFE POLICY



1. Purpose

Lismore City Council is committed to the safety, rights, wellbeing and empowerment of all children and young people who engage with our services, programs, and facilities. We have zero tolerance for child abuse, neglect, or harm and will act promptly to address any concerns.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Council staff (permanent, temporary, and casual).
- Volunteers, students, and work experience participants.
- Contractors and subcontractors engaged by Council.

3. Guiding Principles

Lismore City Council will:

- act in the best interests of children and young people at all times.
- create safe, supportive and inclusive environments where every child feels valued and respected.
- ensure staff, volunteers, and contractors understand and meet their responsibilities for child safety.
- empower children and young people to have a voice in matters that affect them.
- respond quickly, fairly, and confidentially to all concerns or allegations.

4. Responsibility

- Council Leadership – embed child safety across Council culture and practice.
- Managers and Supervisors – ensure staff understand and apply child safe standards.
- all Staff, Volunteers, and Contractors – act in accordance with this policy, the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and legal obligations.

5. Policy

All children and young people who interact with Council have the right to feel and be safe. Council will:

- ensure rigorous recruitment and screening, including Working with Children Checks for child-related roles.
- provide child safety education and training to all relevant staff and volunteers.
- uphold clear processes for raising and responding to concerns.
- promote respect, fairness, and inclusion for all children and families, without discrimination.

6. Standards

All Council workers are expected to:

- treat children with dignity and respect.
- act in their best interests and prioritise their wellbeing.
- create safe and supportive spaces that encourage participation and inclusion.
- avoid behaviours that could cause harm or put children at risk.

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7. Definitions

Term	Definition
Child	A person under the age of 18 years as defined by the Children's Guardian Act 2019 .
Child abuse	Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse; neglect; exploitation; ill-treatment; and exposure to family violence as outlined in the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 .
Child Safe organisation	An organisation that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people in its operations. The NSW Office of Local Government (OLG) requires local councils to implement the Child Safe Standards to safeguard children and young people as outlined in the Children's Guardian Act 2019 .
Child Safety Concern	In NSW, a child safety concern refers to situations where a child is at risk of significant harm, including abuse, neglect or failure to meet basic needs. These concerns are defined under the Children's Guardian Act 2019 .
Child Safe Standards	Ten standards introduced by the Office of the Children's Guardian to guide organisations in creating child-safe practices. In NSW, implementation of these Standards is governed under the Children's Guardian Act 2019 including amendments made by the Children's Guardian Amendment (Child Safe Scheme) Bill 2021 and detailed in the Guide to the Child Safe Standards .
Child-related work	Work that involves direct, face-to-face contact with children as a normal and integral part of the work, such as services provided to children under 18 as defined by the Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012 .
Mandatory Reporting	A legal requirement for individuals in specific roles (e.g. council staff, volunteers, contractors) to report any suspected child abuse, harm, or exploitation to relevant authorities as outlined in the Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 .
Worker/s	In New South Wales, under SafeWork NSW guidelines, a worker is defined as any person who carries out work in any capacity for a person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU). This includes employees, trainees, apprentices, work experience students, volunteers, outworkers, contractors, subcontractors, employees of contractors or subcontractors and employees of a labour hire company.
Working with Children Check (WWCC)	A mandatory check for anyone working in child-related roles in NSW, providing clearance or barring individuals from working with children.

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8. Key References

Internal:

- Lismore City Council Code of Conduct.
- Lismore City Council Child Safe Code of Conduct.

External:

- [Children's Guardian Act 2019.](#)
- [Children's Guardian Amendment \(Child Safe Scheme\) Act 2021](#)
- [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Regulation 2013](#)
- [Child Protection \(Working with Children\) Act 2012](#)
- [Child Protection \(Offenders Registration\) Act 2000](#)
- [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Act 1998](#)
- [Children and Young Persons \(Care and Protection\) Regulation 2012](#)
- [Children's Guardian Act 2019](#)
- [Civil Liability Amendment \(Organisational Child Abuse Liability\) Act 2018](#)
- [Crimes Act 1900](#)
- [Government Information \(Public Access\) Act 2009](#)
- [Local Government Act 1993](#)
- [Guide to the Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Children \(Education and Care Services National Law Application\) Act 2010](#)
- [Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998](#)
- [State Records Act 1998](#)
- [United Nations Convention on the rights of the Child \(1990\)](#)

Document History and Version Control

Document History and Version Control		
Version	Summary of Changes / Consultation	Date
1.0	Policy created	February 2025
1.1	Policy reviewed against management policy	August 2025
1.1	Council adopted	October 2025