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| <b>Title</b>               | <b>Child Safe Environment Policy</b> |
| <b>Policy Category</b>     | Childrens Programs                   |
| <b>Policy Type</b>         | Mandatory                            |
| <b>NQF Standard</b>        | NQS: Quality Area 2, 3 and 7         |
| <b>Related Legislation</b> | See legislation map                  |

### Background and Context

This policy provides a clear set of guidelines and procedures for Glen Education to:

- provide a safe environment for all children which ensures their safety, health and wellbeing
- promote the cultural safety of all children
- identify, reduce and remove risks of child abuse
- intervene when a child may be at risk of abuse or neglect
- involve children in child safety including listening to children and incorporating their views about how to provide a safe environment (risk assessment)
- make Representatives aware of their legal and duty of care obligations to report child abuse and neglect
- manage water safety, including safety during any water-based activities at Glen Education.

Glen Education:

- is committed to the rights of all children to feel safe, and be safe at all times, including:
  - promoting the cultural safety of Aboriginal children
  - promoting the cultural safety of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
  - promoting the safety of children with a disability
- valuing, respecting and caring for children
- fostering opportunities for each child to participate, express their views and to learn and develop
- always acting in the best interests of each child and has zero tolerance of child abuse
- taking all reasonable steps to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of children at all times, whilst also promoting their learning and development
- actively managing the risks of abuse or harm to each child, including fulfilling our duty of care (refer to *Definitions*) and legal obligations to protect children and prevent any reasonable, foreseeable risk of injury or harm
- continuously improving the way our service identifies risks of and responds to child abuse, and encourages reporting and improved responses to allegations of abuse
- providing opportunities for children to explore their natural environment including through water play, and ensuring that children are protected from the risks associated with drowning or non-fatal drowning experiences.

Under the *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011*, Glen Education must ensure that all Representatives are familiar with current policies and procedures with regard to child safety and protection, including state and territory legislative responsibilities and their obligations under these laws (Regulation 84).

Glen Education and its Representatives have legal and duty of care obligations to protect children under their supervision and care.

Duty of care obligations (refer to *Definitions*) require Glen Education, Nominated Supervisors, Glen Education Leaders and Representatives to take reasonable steps to protect children from injury that is reasonably foreseeable.

In addition, organisations have a duty of care to take reasonable precautions to prevent the abuse of a child by an individual associated with the organisation while the child is under its care, supervision or authority (refer to Organisational duty of care in *Definitions*).

The duty will relate to individuals associated with an organisation, including but not limited to committee members, employees, volunteers and contractors.

*The Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* provides the legislative basis for the provision of services to vulnerable children, young people and their families, and places children's best interests at the heart of decision-making and service delivery.

Any person who forms a reasonable belief (refer to *Definitions*), that a child is in need of protection may report their concerns to Child Protection and/or Orange Door, the Police or Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP), as per the Reportable Conduct Scheme (refer to *Definitions*).

Early childhood teachers are required to be registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching and are mandatory reporters (refer to *Definitions*). All mandatory reporters must make a report to Victoria Police and/or Child Protection (refer to *Definitions*) as soon as practicable if, during the course of their roles and responsibilities they form a reasonable belief that:

- A child is likely to suffer, or has suffered, significant harm as a result of physical abuse and/or sexual abuse, **and**
- The child's parents have not protected, or are unlikely protect, the child from harm of that type.

Victorian organisations that provide services to children are required under the *Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005* to ensure that they implement compulsory minimum Child Safe Standards to protect children from harm. The standards aim to drive continuous improvement in the way services prevent and report child abuse and respond to allegations of child abuse. Standard 2 requires services to have a child safe policy or statement of commitment to child safety.

Three **criminal offences** in the *Crimes Amendment (Protection of Children) Act 2014* protect children from child abuse:

- **Failure to disclose:** All adults (not just those working with children) have a legal duty to report information about child sexual abuse to Victoria Police. The offence applies to any adult who forms a reasonable belief that a sexual offence has been committed by an adult against a child under 16 and fails to report that information to the Victoria Police.
- **Failure to protect:** The offence applies to people within organisations who hold positions of authority within an education and care service, such as Glen Education and Nominated Supervisors and who know of the substantial risk that another adult associated with the organisation may commit a sex offence and they have the power or responsibility to remove or reduce the risk but negligently fail to do so.

- **Grooming offence:** The offence targets predatory conduct by an adult with the intent of committing child sexual abuse. Conduct may include communication, including online communication, with a child under the age of 16 or their parents.

## Scope

This policy applies to all Glen Education employees, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and other visitors attending the programs and activities of Glen Education, including during offsite excursions and activities.

## Definitions

**Abuse:** see 'child abuse' definition below.

**Adequate supervision:** (In relation to this policy) supervision entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate Supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- number, age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

**Approved first aid qualification:** A list of approved first aid qualifications, anaphylaxis management and emergency asthma management training is published on the ACECQA website: [www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)

**Child:** A child or young person is a person under 18 years of age.

**Child abuse:** (In the context of this policy) refers to an act or omission by an adult that endangers or impairs a child's physical and/or emotional health or development. Child abuse can be a single incident but often takes place over time. Abuse, neglect and maltreatment (refer to *Definitions*) are generic terms used to describe situations in which a child may need protection. Child abuse includes any and all of the following:

- **Physical abuse:** When a child suffers or is likely to suffer significant harm from an injury inflicted by a parent/guardian, caregiver or other adult. The injury may be inflicted intentionally, or be the consequence of physical punishment or the physically aggressive treatment of a child. Physical injury and significant harm to a child can also result from neglect by a parent/guardian, caregiver or other adult. The injury may take the form of bruises, cuts, burns or fractures, poisoning, internal injuries, shaking injuries or strangulation.
- **Sexual abuse:** When a person uses power or authority over a child, or inducements such as money or special attention, to involve the child in sexual activity. It includes a wide range of sexual behaviour from inappropriate touching/fondling of a child or exposing a child to pornography, to having sex with a child and grooming with the intent of committing child sexual abuse.
- **Emotional and psychological abuse:** When a child's parent or caregiver repeatedly rejects the child or uses threats to frighten the child. This may involve name calling, put downs or continual

coldness from the parent or caregiver, to the extent that it significantly damages the child's physical, social, intellectual or emotional development.

- **Neglect:** The failure to provide a child with the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, shelter, medical attention or supervision, to the extent that the child's health and development is, or is likely to be, significantly harmed.
- **Family violence:** When children and young people witness or experience the chronic, repeated domination, coercion, intimidation and victimisation of one person by another through physical, sexual and/or emotional means within intimate relationships. Witnessing episodes of violence between people they love can affect young children as much as if they were the victims of the violence. Children who witness regular acts of violence have greater emotional and behavioural problems than other children.
- **Racial, cultural, religious abuse:** Conduct that demonstrates contempt, ridicule, hatred or negativity towards a child because of their race, culture or religion. It may be overt, such as direct racial vilification or discrimination, or covert, such as demonstrating a lack of cultural respect (attitude and values) and awareness (knowledge and understanding) or failing to provide positive images about another culture.
- **Bullying:** Repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Bullying occurs when one or more people deliberately and repeatedly upset or hurt another person, damage their property, reputation or social acceptance.

**Child FIRST:** Child FIRST (Child and family information, referral and support teams) are the entry point into family services. Child FIRST teams are located in sites across Victoria and is delivered in local areas by community service organisations. Child FIRST, as the access point for family services, is progressively transitioning to The Orange Door.

**Child Safe Standards:** The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) are compulsory minimum standards for all organisations that provide services to children. The aim of the Standards is to ensure organisations are well prepared to protect children from abuse and neglect.

**Child sex offender:** Someone who sexually abuses children, and who may or may not have prior convictions.

**Child protection:** The term used to describe the whole-of-community approach to the prevention of harm to children. It includes strategic action for early intervention, for the protection of those considered most vulnerable and for responses to all forms of abuse.

**Child protection report:** A report to the Child Protection Service by a person who believes that a child is in need of protection.

**Child Protection Service** (also referred to as Child Protection): The statutory child protection service provided by the Victorian Department of Health and Human Services, to protect children and young people at risk of abuse and neglect. This service also works closely with Family Services (including Child FIRST) to support the assessment and engagement of vulnerable children and families in community-based services.

**Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS):** the Child Information and Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme allows Early Childhood Services to freely request and share relevant information with Information Sharing Entities to support a child or group of children's wellbeing and safety when the threshold test has been met.

**Code of conduct:** A set of rules or practices that establish a standard of behaviour to be followed by individuals and organisations. A code of conduct defines how individuals should behave towards each other and towards other organisations and individuals in the community (refer to *Code of Conduct Policy*).

**Commission for Children and Young People (CCYP):** an organisation that is responsible for administering the reportable conduct scheme (see *definition*). This includes:

- supporting and guiding organisations that receive allegations in order to promote fair, effective, timely and appropriate responses
- independently overseeing, monitoring and, where appropriate, making recommendations to improve the responses of those organisations.
- The Commission can share information where appropriate, including with the Working with Children Check Unit, relevant regulators and Victoria Police, to better prevent and protect children from abuse.

**Contractor:** A person or company that undertakes a contract to provide materials or labour to perform a service or do a job. Examples include photographer, tradesperson, people contracted to provide an incursion.

**Disclosure:** (In the context of this policy) refers to a statement that a child or young person makes to another person that describes or reveals abuse.

**Duty of care:** A common law concept that refers to the responsibilities of organisations and Representatives to provide people with an adequate level of protection against harm and all reasonable foreseeable risk of injury. In the context of this policy, duty of care refers to the responsibility of education and care services and their Representatives to provide children with an adequate level of care and protection against foreseeable harm and injury.

**Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS):** enables authorised organisations and services to share information to facilitate assessment and management of family violence risk to children and adults. Find more information on family violence information sharing

**Glen Education Leader:** A person who is nominated by Glen Education Management to provide leadership and mentoring (operational and educational) across the organisation, that aligns with the National Early Years Framework and who actively promotes and ensures adherence to all Glen Education practices, policies and procedures

**Hazard:** A source or situation with a potential for harm in terms of human injury or ill health, damage to property, damage to the environment or a combination of these.

**Maltreatment:** (In the context of this policy) refers to physical and/or emotional mistreatment, and/or lack of care of the child. Examples include sexual abuse, the witnessing of family violence and any non-accidental injury to a child.

**Mandatory reporting:** The legal obligation of certain professionals and community members to report when they believe, on reasonable grounds, that a child is in need of protection from harm.

A broad range of professional groups are identified in the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005* as 'mandatory reporters'. From 30 September 2015 this list includes VIT registered early childhood teachers. Mandated Representatives must make a report to Victoria Police and/or Child Protection as soon as is practicable if, during the course of acting out their professional roles and responsibilities, they form a belief on reasonable grounds (refer to *Definitions*) that:

- a child has suffered, or is likely to suffer, significant harm as a result of physical and/or sexual abuse (refer to *Definitions*) and
- the child's parents/guardians have not protected, or are unlikely to protect, the child from harm of that type.

Mandatory reporters must also follow processes for responding to incidents, disclosures or suspicions of child abuse to fulfil all their legal obligations.

**Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM):** the Family Violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management Framework (MARAM) ensures services are effectively identifying, assessing and managing family violence risk.

**Nominated Supervisor:** A person who has been nominated by Glen Education under Part 3 of the Act and who has consented to that nomination in writing can be the Nominated Supervisor. All services must have a Nominated Supervisor(s) with responsibility for the service in accordance with the National Regulations (Section 5 and 161).

**Neglect:** see Child abuse definition above.

**Negligence:** Doing or failing to do something that a reasonable person would, or would not do in a certain situation, and which causes another person damage, injury or loss as a result.

**Notifiable complaint:** A complaint that alleges a breach of the Act or Regulation, or alleges that the safety, health or wellbeing of a child at the service may have been compromised. Any complaint of this nature must be reported by Glen Education to the secretary of DET within 24 hours of the complaint being made (Section 174(2) (b), Regulation 176(2) (b)).

Written notification of complaints must be submitted via the ACECQA portal [National Quality Agenda \(NQA\) IT System](#). If Glen Education is unsure whether the matter is a notifiable complaint, it is good practice to contact DET for confirmation.

**Notifiable incident:** An incident involving workplace health and safety that is required by law to be reported to WorkSafe Victoria. Notification is required for incidents that result in death or serious injury/illness, or dangerous occurrences. For a complete list of incidents that must be reported to WorkSafe Victoria, refer to the *Guide to Incident Notification* on the WorkSafe Victoria website: [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au)

**Orange Door** - The Orange Door is support and safety hub for women, children and young people who are experiencing family violence; and families who need support with the care, wellbeing and development of the children or young people. The Orange Door is not Child Protection, but provides support for families that may be vulnerable, and is an entry point into the broader service support system. The Orange Door provides:

- a more visible contact point so that people know where to go for support
- a connection to a wide range of supports across the spectrum of prevention, early intervention and response
- an immediate response for people in crisis (during business hours) by linking them to specialist services, medical treatment and care, accommodation and practical assistance
- specialist support and tailored advice for victim survivors, families and children, with a strong focus on perpetrator accountability, based on the best available information and latest risk assessment tools.

**Organisational duty of care:** The statutory duty organisations have to take reasonable precautions to prevent sexual and/or physical abuse of a child.

**Offender:** A person who mistreats and/or harms a child or young person.

**Perpetrator:** A person who mistreats and/or harms a child or young person.

**Police:** the civil force of a state, responsible for the prevention and detection of crime and the maintenance of public order.

**Reasonable belief/reasonable grounds:** A person may form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child or young person is in need of protection after becoming aware that the child or young person's safety, health or wellbeing is at risk and the child's parents/guardians are unwilling or unable to protect them. There may be reasonable grounds for forming such a belief if:

- a child or young person states that they have been physically or sexually abused
- a child or young person states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be referring to themselves)
- someone who knows the child or young person states that the child or young person has been physically or sexually abused
- a child shows signs of being physically or sexually abused
- the person is aware of persistent family violence or parental substance misuse, psychiatric illness or intellectual disability or other factors that are impacting on the child or young person's safety, stability or development
- the person observes signs or indicators of abuse, including non-accidental or unexplained injury, persistent neglect, poor care or lack of appropriate supervision
- a child's/young person's actions or behaviour may place them at risk of significant harm and the parents/guardians are unwilling or unable to protect the child.

**Reportable allegation:** any allegation that an employee, volunteer or student has committed child abuse (refer to *Definitions*)

**Reportable Conduct Scheme:** The Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme seeks to improve organisations' responses to allegations of child abuse and neglect by their workers and volunteers. The scheme is established by the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (the Act). The Reportable Conduct Scheme has been designed to ensure that the Commission will be aware of every allegation of certain types of misconduct involving children in relevant organisations that exercise care, supervision and authority over children.

**Representative:** refers to paid staff, volunteers and contractors, including the Board of Directors, PAG members and students on work experience placements.

**Serious incident:** A serious incident (regulation 12) is defined as any of the following:

- the death of a child while being educated and cared for at the service or following an incident at the service
- any incident involving serious injury or trauma while the child is being educated and cared for, which
  - a reasonable person would consider required urgent medical attention from a registered medical practitioner; or
  - the child attended or ought reasonably to have attended a hospital e.g. a broken limb\*
- any incident involving serious illness of a child while that child is being educated and cared for by a service for which the child attended, or ought reasonably to have attended, a hospital e.g. severe asthma attack, seizure or anaphylaxis\*.
  - NOTE: In some cases (for example rural and remote locations) a General Practitioner conducts consultation from the hospital site. Only treatment related to serious injury or illness or trauma are required to be notified, not other health matters.
- any emergency for which emergency services attended.
  - NOTE: This means an incident, situation or event where there is an imminent or severe risk to the health, safety or wellbeing of a person/s at an education and care service. It does not mean an incident where emergency services attended as a precaution.
- a child appears to be missing or cannot be accounted for at the service
- a child appears to have been taken or removed from the service in a manner that contravenes the National Regulations
- a child was mistakenly locked in or out of the service premises or any part of the premises.

Examples of serious incidents include amputation (e.g. removal of fingers), anaphylactic reaction requiring hospitalisation, asthma requiring hospitalisation, broken bone/fractures, bronchiolitis, burns, diarrhoea

requiring hospitalisation, epileptic seizures, head injuries, measles, meningococcal infection, sexual assault, witnessing violence or a frightening event.

If Glen Education is not aware that the incident was serious until sometime after the incident, they must notify the regulatory authority within 24 hours of becoming aware that the incident was serious.

Notifications of serious incidents should be made through the NQA IT System portal ([www.acecqa.gov.au](http://www.acecqa.gov.au)). If this is not practicable, the notification can be made initially in whatever way is best in the circumstances.

**Volunteer:** Parent/guardian, family member or community member who attends the service to assist the service in some capacity.

**Young person:** In Victoria, under the *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*, a child or young person is a person under 18 years of age.

**Water hazard:** (in relation to this policy) can lead to drowning or non-fatal drowning incidences. Drowning hazards include large bodies of water such as swimming pools, rivers, creeks, dams and ponds. Smaller bodies of water, including nappy buckets, water containers, pet water bowls and poor drainage which allow water to collect can also present drowning hazards for young children.

## Policy

### 1. Child Safety Responsibilities

#### 1.1 Glen Education is responsible for:

- providing leadership for an organisational culture of accountability for child safety, including child safe standards (see *definition*) which is open to scrutiny and is continuously reviewed and improved
- advising Representatives of current child protection legislation, and their legal and duty of care obligations (Regulation 84)
- undertaking child safety reviews and developing an action plan in consultation with Representatives, parents/guardians and children to maintain Child Safe Standards accreditation
- ensuring recruitment and induction processes for Representatives is in line with this policy
- undertaking safety screening of Representatives in line with their roles at Glen Education
- ensuring that Representatives, parents/guardians and other visitors to the service are not left with sole supervision of individual children or groups of children
- ensuring that contact is prevented or responding if it has occurred, when the service has been notified of a court order prohibiting an adult from contacting an enrolled child
- ensuring staff, and where appropriate, contractors, volunteers and students undertake appropriate training on child safety, including recognising the signs and symptoms of child abuse (refer to *Definitions*), knowing how to respond, and understanding responsibilities and processes for reporting
- ensuring procedures for reporting and responding to suspected child abuse or neglect are promoted across the service and regularly reviewed in partnership with staff and parents/guardians, and where appropriate contractors, volunteers, students and children
- offering support to the child and their family, and to Representatives in response to concerns or reports relating to the safety, health and wellbeing of a child at Glen Education
- maintaining co-operative relationships with appropriate services and/or professionals (including Child FIRST/Orange Door) in the best interests of children and their families
- ensuring processes for responding to and reporting are followed when there are significant concerns for the safety, health or wellbeing of a child at the service
- notifying DET within 24 hours of a serious incident (refer to *Definitions*) occurring at the service
- notifying DET within 24 hours in writing of becoming aware of a notifiable complaint (refer to *Definitions*) or allegation regarding the safety, health and/or welfare of a child at the service



- notifying the Commission for Children and Young People within three business days of becoming aware of a reportable allegation (refer to *Definitions*)
- investigating an allegation (subject to police clearance on criminal matters or matters involving family violence), advising the Commission for Children and Young People who is undertaking the investigation
- managing the risks to children whilst undertaking the investigation
- updating the Commission for Children and Young People within 30 calendar days with detailed information about the reportable allegation and any action
- notifying the Commission for Children and Young People of the investigation findings and any disciplinary action taken (or the reasons no action was taken)
- maintaining confidentiality at all times (refer to *Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*)
- reviewing this policy in consultation with staff, volunteers, parents/guardians, and children
- providing appropriate resources and training to assist Representatives to implement this policy
- protecting the rights of children and families, and encouraging their participation in decision-making
- keeping Representatives and parents/guardians informed of any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy
- ensuring all Representatives, parents/guardians and visitors abide by the *Code of Conduct Policy*
- ensuring an explicit statement of Glen Education's commitment to child safety is included in all advertising promotion for the organisation.
- ensuring a greater awareness to family and understanding of family violence and the associated frameworks (MARAM):
  - by promoting consistent and collaborative practice between agencies
  - adherence to responsibilities for risk assessment
  - management and by providing regular review of systems and outcomes to improve practice
- complying with the legislation under the FVISS and the CISS

### **1.2 The Nominated Supervisor/Glen Education Leader is responsible for:**

- keeping up to date and complying with any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy
- ensuring continuous improvement in the implementation of the Child Safe Standards to promote an organisational culture of accountability for child safety which is open to scrutiny and is continuously reviewed and improved
- ensuring the implementation of strategies to prevent child abuse in consultation with Glen Education and its Representatives
- providing appropriate resources and training to assist Representatives to implement this policy
- ensuring processes for responding to and reporting are followed when there are significant concerns for the safety, health or wellbeing of a child at the service
- notifying Glen Education management immediately on becoming aware of a concern, complaint or allegation regarding the safety, health and welfare of a child at Glen Education
- offering support to the child and their family, and to Representatives in response to concerns or reports relating to the safety, health and wellbeing of a child at Glen Education
- making all Representatives aware of this policy, the Code of Conduct Policy and the Interactions with Children Policy and holding them to account for the behavioural expectations identified.
- implementing and reviewing this policy in consultation with the Glen Education, Representatives and parents/guardians and children
- planning so that no child is left alone (or is out of sight) with a contractor, volunteer, student, parent/guardian or visitor, at the service.

- ensuring a greater awareness to family and understanding of family violence and the associated frameworks (MARAM)
- complying with the legislation under the FVISS and the CISS

### 1.3 All staff, are responsible for:

- fulfilling their legal responsibilities and duty of care to protect children and to keep children safe and to maintain their rights
- keeping up to date and complying with any relevant changes in legislation and practices in relation to this policy
- contributing to an organisational culture of child safety
- identifying the potential for child abuse at Glen Education, and developing and implementing effective prevention strategies in consultation with Glen Education management and the Nominated Supervisor
- following processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse
- undertaking appropriate training on child protection, including recognising the signs and symptoms of child abuse (*refer to Definitions*), knowing how to respond, and understanding responsibilities and processes for reporting
- supporting the maintenance of Child Safe Standards at Glen Education in consultation with the Nominated Supervisor
- notifying the Nominated Supervisor or Glen Education management immediately on becoming aware of any concerns, complaints or allegations regarding the safety, health and welfare of a child at Glen Education
- offering support to the child and their family in response to concerns or reports relating to the safety, health and wellbeing of a child at Glen Education
- co-operating with other services and/or professionals (including Child FIRST/Orange Door) in the best interests of children and their families
- informing families of support services available to them (such as Child FIRST/Orange Door), and of the assistance these services can provide
- conducting activities so that no child is left alone (or is out of sight) with a contractor, visitor, volunteer, student or parent/guardian at the service
- following Glen Education's processes where the service has been notified of a court order prohibiting an adult from contacting an enrolled child
- maintaining confidentiality at all times (*refer to Privacy and Confidentiality Policy*)
- contributing to a review of this policy in consultation with the Glen Education and the Nominated Supervisor
- educating and empowering children to talk about events and situations that make them feel uncomfortable
- ensuring that children at the service are not subjected to any form of corporal punishment, or any discipline that is unreasonable or excessive in the circumstances
- using appropriate resources and undertaking training to assist with the implementation of this policy
- providing or seeking information in relation to family violence that prevents or lessens a serious threat to a person's life, safety, health or welfare
- abiding by the service's *Code of Conduct Policy and Interactions with Children Policy*.

### 1.4 Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- reading and complying with this policy
- reporting any concerns, including in relation to potential child abuse, to the appropriate child protection authorities or the police if immediate police attention is required

- abiding by the service's *Code of Conduct*.

## 2. Water Safety Responsibilities

The supervision and safety of children with and around water is of paramount importance. Water safety relates to access to water in the building, the playground or on excursions, and also to the availability of drinking water for children. It is imperative that educators remain vigilant in their supervision of children in and around water, and are alert to potential risks in everyday practice in the learning environment.

### 2.1 Glen Education is responsible for:

- ensuring that children are adequately supervised (refer to Definitions) at all times when near water hazards (refer to Definitions)
- ensuring that educator-to-child ratios are maintained at all times (Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010: Sections 169(1)&(3), Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 123, 355, 357, 360)
- conducting a risk assessment in relation to any water hazards on or near the premises that may be accessible to children
- ensuring permission is obtained from parents/guardians for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard (refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy)
- ensuring that water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other offsite events (Regulation 101)
- ensuring increased levels of supervision for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard (refer to Supervision of Children Policy)
- conducting a regular safety check of the service premises (refer to Occupational Health and Safety Policy)
- ensuring any water hazards that are not able to be adequately supervised at all times are isolated from children by a child-resistant barrier or fence (particularly large bodies of water including swimming pools, rivers, ponds etc.)
- ensuring that an educator with a current approved first aid qualification (refer to Definitions) is in attendance and immediately available at all times children are being educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 136)
- ensuring that details of current approved first aid qualifications (refer to Definitions) are filed with each staff member's record
- reporting serious incidents (refer to Definitions) to DET
- reporting notifiable incidents (refer to Definitions) to WorkSafe Victoria
- ensuring that water safety awareness is embedded in the curriculum
- providing current information to parents about water safety.

### 2.2 The Nominated Supervisor/Glen Education Leader is responsible for:

- assisting Glen Education to implement the Water Safety Policy
- ensuring parents/guardians are informed of the Water Safety Policy on enrolment
- ensuring permission is obtained from parents/guardians for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard (*refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy*)
- ensuring information on water safety is incorporated into the educational program
- ensuring that children are adequately supervised (*refer to Definitions*) and protected from hazards and harm at all times
- ensuring that water hazards and risks associated with water-based activities are considered in a risk assessment prior to conducting excursions and other offsite events (Regulations 100, 101)

- ensuring permission is obtained from parents/guardians for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard (*refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy*)
- ensuring increased levels of supervision for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard (*refer to Supervision of Children Policy*)
- ensuring that an educator with a current approved first aid qualification (*refer to Definitions*) is in attendance and immediately available at all times children are being educated and cared for by the service
- ensuring that all educators' current approved first aid qualifications meet the requirements of the National Regulations and are approved by ACECQA (*refer to Administration of First Aid Policy*)
- informing Glen Education immediately if any serious or notifiable incidents (*refer to Definitions*) occur at the service.

### **2.3 All staff, are responsible for:**

- providing adequate supervision (*refer to Definitions*) at all times
- undertaking a risk assessment prior to an excursion to a location where there is a significant water hazard (*refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy*)
- adjusting supervision strategies to suit the activities being undertaken (*refer to Supervision of Children Policy*)
- obtaining parental permission for an excursion to a location where there is a water hazard (*refer to Excursions and Service Events Policy*)
- maintaining a current approved first aid qualification (*refer to Definitions*)
- ensuring gates and other barriers restricting access to water hazards are closed at all times and that fences are kept clear at all times
- ensuring that containers of water (including nappy buckets and cleaning buckets) are sealed with child-proof lids
- ensuring wading/paddling pools, water play containers and portable water courses are emptied immediately after each use and stored in a manner that prevents the collection of water when not in use
- checking the outdoor learning environment at the beginning and end of each day for puddles or filled containers that could pose a potential risk to small children after heavy rain
- providing water safety education as a part of the service's program
- informing Glen Education immediately if any serious or notifiable incidents (*refer to Definitions*) occur at the service.

### **2.4 Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

- supervising children in their care, including siblings, while attending or assisting at the service
- ensuring that doors, gates and barriers, including playground gates, are closed after entry or exit to prevent access to water hazards
- informing themselves about water safety
- ensuring their children understand the risks associated with water
- recognising when resuscitation is required and obtaining assistance
- considering undertaking approved first aid qualifications, as resuscitation skills save lives

## Approvals and Revision

| Date           | Version     | Author                           | Revision Description                                 |
|----------------|-------------|----------------------------------|--|
| <i>Q3 2012</i> | <i>1.00</i> | <i>Glen Education Management</i> | <i>New Policy</i>                                    |
| <i>Q2 2022</i> | <i>6.00</i> | <i>Glen Education Management</i> | <i>Policy updated due to rebranding<br/>May 2022</i> |
| <i>Q1 2024</i> | <i>7.00</i> | <i>Glen Education Management</i> | <i>Annual Review</i>                                 |