



## Administrative Policies

### 2.15 Child Safe Awareness Policy

## Administrative Policies - 2.15 Child Safe Awareness Policy

**Policy** Administrative Policies - 2.1 Record Keeping Policy

**Purpose** The purpose of this Policy is to establish clear guidelines and practices that promote child safety awareness and cyber safety within the Shire. It aims to ensure that children and young people are kept safe from harm, both in physical and digital spaces.

**Status** Administrative - Statutory

## Policy

The Shire of Peppermint Grove is committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment for children and young people who visit the Shire. This policy extends to the Shire Offices, Depot and the Grove Library.

## Background

Staff at the Shire that work with children, acknowledge recommendation 6.12 of the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. The Shire supports organizations to be child safe and to protect children and young people from harm and/or abuse. Further to this, the Shire acknowledges the General Principles developed in response to the Royal Commission which are:

- The rights of children and young people are upheld.
- Children and young people are respected, listened to, and informed about their rights.
- Children and young people have the fundamental right to be safe and cared for.
- Children and young people have the right to speak up, be heard and taken seriously without the threat of negative consequences.



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- The safety and best interests of children and young people are a primary consideration when making decisions that concern them.
- Access to trusted and reliable information, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organizations, helps support organizations to understand what they must do to help reduce the risk of harm and abuse.
- Communities are informed and involved in promoting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people including protection from harm.

## Compliance with National Principles

The Shire will also support the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations that include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring that Child Safety and wellbeing is embedded in organizational leadership, governance and culture;
- Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children to be harmed; and
- People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

## Policy Functions

The Shire will promote the safety and wellbeing of children across the community through various communication platforms. This extends to using the Grove Library website and message boards within the Shire to:

- Raise Awareness – to deliver child safe messages such as promoting cyber safety.
- Connect and support local community groups, organisations and stakeholders to child safe resources such as disclosing information on how to find assistance or make a complaint.
- Report - how to take action that can help prevent harm and abuse.



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## **Child Safety Officer**

The CEO will designate an Officer to be responsible for overseeing this policy and handling any child safety concerns within the Shire.

## **Responsibilities for Child Safety within the Grove Library**

### **Library Staff**

- Staff working with children will have a current 'Working with Children Check'.
- Staff members will be vigilant and attentive to the needs and behaviours of children and young people using the library.
- Any concerns about a child's well being or safety will be reported to the designated Child Safety Officer.

### **Supervision**

Parents, guardians or caregivers are responsible for the supervision of their children while in the library. The library staff cannot assume the role of caregivers and are not responsible for supervising children.

### **Unaccompanied Children**

Children under 12 must be accompanied by a responsible adult or caregiver at all times.

### **Lost Children**

Library staff will assist lost children in a sensitive and supportive manner.

A designated safe area will be established for lost children to wait until their parent or guardian arrives.

## **Cyber Safety Measures**

### **Internet Access:**

Access to the internet will be filtered to prevent access to inappropriate material.

### **Cyber Safety Education**

Cyber safety programs will be promoted on the library website and notice boards.



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#### Privacy and Data Security

The library will follow best practices to protect the privacy and data security of children and young people using digital resources.

#### Reporting and Responding to Concerns within the Shire

Any Shire staff member who has concerns about the safety or well-being of a child must report it to the designated Child Safety Officer.

The Child Safety Officer will respond to the child safety concerns by notifying the appropriate authorities such as the local police or child protection services.

#### Communication and Awareness

This policy will be on the Grove Library Website and Shire of Peppermint Grove Website.

Brochures promoting child safety measures will be promoted throughout the library and Shire reception.

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#### Scope

This Child Safe Awareness policy applies to all, employees, volunteers, trainees, work experience students, interns, and anyone else who undertakes work on behalf of the Shire, regardless of their work related to children or young people

#### Related Procedures

Consistent with the National Principles for Child Safe Organizations and Commonwealth Child Safe Framework, this policy provides a framework that outlines the role of the Shire in supporting communities to be child safe through access to resources, awareness raising and sharing relevant information.

The Child Safety Risk Management Resources, July 2023, provides further resources on risk mitigation strategies.

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#### Amended Authority Level

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#### Related Delegation

Chief Executive Officer



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#### *Related legislation includes:*

- Child Care Services Act 2007
- Children and Community Services Act 2004
- Civil Liability Act 2002
- Corruption, Crime and Misconduct Act 2003
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984

#### *Related Policy includes:*

- Aboriginal / First Nations / Cultural Policy
- Child Safety Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct
- Corporate Communications Policy
- Community Signage Policy
- Employee Complaints Management Policy
- Engagement Policy
- Information Technology Policy
- Record Keeping Policy
- Strategic Community Plan
- Strategic and Operational Risk Plans
- Volunteer Policy
- Working with Children Checks Policy
- Youth Policy

#### Related Local Law/Legislation

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#### Adopted/Amended

October 2023

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#### Review Date

October 2025

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