

CHILD SAFE ENVIRONMENT AND PROTECTION POLICY

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCR) outlines that children and young people have a right to be safe and cared for, no matter where they are or who they are with. Children have the right to be protected from harm, violence or neglect. When working with children and young people, it is important to understand children's rights and needs.

We are advocates for children and have a strong commitment to child safety and establishing and maintaining a child safe environment. Children's safety and wellbeing are paramount in our Association. Our Association follows the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. We promote a culture of safety and wellbeing to minimise the risk of harm to children, while promoting children's sense of security and belonging.

At all times, teachers, parents and volunteers will treat children with the utmost respect and understanding. Our Association fosters a culture of openness so that:

- Children and young people know what to do if they have been subject to inappropriate behaviour, placed at risk of, or have experienced harm.
- Teachers and volunteers can identify children and young people suspected to be at risk.
- Teachers and volunteers are aware of their duty to report children and young people suspected to be at risk to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL – 13 14 78) and take other measures to establish, promote and ensure child safe environments.

Department of Human Services - [Safe Environments for children and young people Mandatory Notification Information Booklet](#).

RELATED LEGISLATION

Children & Young People (Safety) Act 2017	Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016
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PURPOSE

Our Association has a legal and ethical responsibility to provide a safe and friendly environment where all children are respected, valued and encouraged to reach their full potential. Children's safety and wellbeing is paramount, and we aim to take all practical steps to protect children and young people from harm or risk of harm, ensuring a healthy and safe environment. When sponsoring events involving children and young people, our Association fosters an environment free from the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all council members, administrators, teachers and volunteers collectively referred to as workers throughout this policy. It also applies to children, families and visitors.

COMMITMENT TO THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (National Principles 1-10)

Our Association is committed to being a child safe organisation. We place the protection of children as a priority responsibility. Our *Child Safe Environment Policy* complies with the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 and the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations. The National Principles developed by the Human Rights Commission provide guidance for our Association to ensure our policies and procedures, strategies and attitudes, ensure children's safety is paramount.

Our Association has a zero tolerance to harm or risk of harm to a child, and we are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children. We promote diversity and tolerance and aim to form equitable and positive relationships with children. We ensure children participate in decisions affecting them and listen to, and respect their suggestions and ideas. We respond to any concerns, disclosures, allegations or suspicions of harm by reporting to the relevant authorities.

We are dedicated to promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children and those who are from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

Our Association will not tolerate bullying or harassment. Our priority is to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and encourage positive relationships.

COMMUNICATION (National Principles 2 and 3)

We aim to build and maintain positive and respectful relationships with children, families and teachers of our Association and prioritise a child safe environment.

We communicate regularly and clearly with our community, and ensure our policies and procedures are available to all. Our policy will be uploaded to our website, and the community will be able to give feedback. Workers will be provided a copy of this policy when they join the Association.

Families will be asked to educate their children on what harm is and help them to develop understanding of protective practices.

Teachers can provide Feedback and evaluation of our policies and procedures.

Issues raised will be reviewed by the Suzuki Music S.A. Council.

PARTICIPATION OF FAMILIES, CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (National Principle 2)

Our Association ensures families are always welcome and feel comfortable asking questions on how we prioritise child safety. We provide a range of opportunities for consultation and collaboration with decisions about their child's safety including:

- policy and procedure review
- child protection
- allegations/grievance procedures
- sun safety
- written authorisations- parenting orders
- code of conduct
- inclusivity and supporting children with diverse needs.

We encourage and respect the views of children and young people and involve them in decision making as appropriate. We provide clear age-appropriate or developmentally appropriate explanations to children and young people. These include their right to safety, their right to be listened to and that they can provide feedback or make a complaint if they have a concern. They can approach any teacher or ask their parent/guardian to do this on their behalf.

We promote a respectful, child safe culture where children's concerns are always responded to, and children feel empowered to participate in decisions and provide feedback to teachers.

CODE OF CONDUCT (National Principles 4 and 6)

Workers and students will adhere to our Association's *Code of Conduct*. All workers are made fully aware that breaches of the Code of Conduct and role responsibilities may result in disciplinary action, which could lead to termination of membership or participation in events/concerts.

Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct should be reported as soon as practicable to a member of the Suzuki Music S.A. Council, or the Administrator of the Association, either in person, or via email at info@suzukimusicsa.org.au. Breaches or suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct will be taken seriously and dealt with quickly, fairly and transparently. Anyone breaching the Code of Conduct may have their membership terminated.

We will:

- Always adhere to our Child Safe Environment Policy.
- Always provide adequate supervision of children.
- Take reasonable action to protect children and young people for risk of harm.
- Ensure the Association events involving children, are free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol.
- Be responsible for our own, and others health and safety.
- Be a positive role model to children and young people.
- Respect children's privacy and dignity always.
- Listen and respond appropriately to the views and concerns of children and young people.
- Report any allegations of harm or risk of harm to a child to CARL and make an internal report after you have reported to CARL.
- Notify a member of the Suzuki Music S.A. Council and/or the regulatory authority within 24 hours of any serious incident or complaint as per the National Regulations
- Encourage children and young people to 'have a say' on issues that are important to them.

Workers must:

- not discriminate against any child, because of age, gender, cultural background, race, ethnicity or disability
- not put children at risk of harm- making threats or exposing children to inappropriate language.

WORKING WITH CHILDREN CHECK (National Principle 5)

Working in conjunction with the Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children are paramount within our Association and community. A current, not prohibited Working with Children Check (WWCC) issued by the Screening Unit of the Department of Human Services is a requirement for workers who work with children and young people and the WWCC is to be renewed every 5 years. It involves a criminal history check and a review of findings of any workplace misconduct and child protection concerns. If the result of a Working with Children Check is “Not Prohibited” it means they can work with children. Cleared applicants are subject to ongoing monitoring and relevant new records could lead to the WWCC being revoked. The check is valid for 5 years.

In accordance with the Child Safety (prohibited persons) Act 2016, our organisation is registered with the DHS Screening Unit and we link all WWCCs.

The Administrator is responsible for the periodic review and maintenance of up-to-date records of workers’ Working with Children Check, including the Working with Children Check number and the date on which each WWCC expires. Once a worker provides their WWCC, the Administrator will verify the WWCC in the DHS Screening Unit online portal to ensure that it is valid and current. The WWCC will be placed in the individual’s file and continue to be updated as required.

The Administrator will immediately contact the Department of Human Associations Screening Unit when we become aware of certain information regarding any person involved with our organisation, including any serious criminal offence, child protection information, or disciplinary or misconduct information.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT – SUPERVISION AND SAFETY CHECKLISTS

Children’s safety is embedded in our practices. We ensure effective and adequate supervision is always provided to children. Teachers will employ ‘active supervision’ strategies within the Association Events environments.

Consideration will be made for the different ages and abilities of children and the activities that may require different levels of supervision.

Through conducting risk assessments, we assess and manage risks in the physical environment of our events. Children are made aware of appropriate behaviours to minimise risk.

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We believe that child safety is a shared responsibility at all levels within our Association. Children are encouraged to speak up about their safety and the safety of their friends by telling a teacher or parent if they feel unsafe in a particular situation or environment. Teachers should complete a safety inspection for all Association sponsored event premises.

Any findings that require attention will be either dealt with immediately or notified to the responsible authority for the event.

CHILD PROTECTION (National Principle 6)

Children and young people always have a right to be safe and protected. To comply with legislation and ensure a child safe environment, workers are asked to ensure they understand that *child safety is everyone's responsibility*. All teachers are mandatory reporters and have a legal obligation to report if they suspect on reasonable grounds, a child is at risk of harm to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) on 13 14 78 or if at immediate risk, report to South Australia Police (SAPOL) on 000.

We aim to ensure that children and young people are safe from harm and risk of harm. Section 17 of the Safety Act defines 'harm' to mean physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect. Mandated reporters in our organisation are teachers who provide education to children and young people.

Even if not a mandated reporter, any person can report harm or risk of harm to a child or young person. The individual who identifies the harm or risk of harm is encouraged to make the report to authorities and can request the support from another worker to do so if required.

Information about making appropriate reports of harm or risk of harm is available from the South Australian Department of Child Protection website: <https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/reporting-child-abuse>.

All adult workers (even if not a mandated notifier) have a legal obligation to report child sexual abuse to the police and to protect a child from sexual abuse. Failure to meet these obligations may be considered a criminal offence.

Following a report being made to CARL or SAPOL persons must make an internal report to the Administrator. We will be guided by the Department for Child Protection and/or SAPOL after a report has been made as to whether we should conduct an internal investigation. If a person is reported to CARL or SAPOL for causing harm or risk of harm to a child or young person, they will be removed from any role that involves working with any child or young person until authorities have concluded their investigation.

Following a report to CARL or SAPOL we will support the child or young person by:

- Referring the child, young person or their family to other appropriate support Agencies.
- Continuing to provide support to the child, young person and their family and monitor their circumstances.

We will document all information received regarding the report and store this securely in a separate file.

All teachers are provided with up-to-date training every 3 years via “safe environments through their eyes training” or “responding to risks of harm, abuse and neglect-education and care training” about child protection law and their obligations under this law and to ensure they are confident in following the reporting guidelines within South Australia. (Reg 84).

Through continual education and training, teachers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe. Training gives teachers confidence to identify, respond and report harm and risk of harm to a child.

To protect children and ensure their safety, welfare and wellbeing, the Association will be responsive to report allegations or convictions of harm or risk of harm to a child and child related misconduct by any worker, to the Department for Child Protection.

REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO GENERAL COMPLAINTS (National Principle 6)

We actively seek feedback from parents and members of our community, both positive and negative. Below is an outline of formal and informal ways to provide feedback information to the Association from a child, young person and parent's point of view. All workers seek open communication with children, young people and families and welcome feedback and complaints and airing of grievances and concerns so that we can agree on a course of action to resolve these issues and restore a positive happy environment for all.

We have a process in place to ensure all grievances and complaints are addressed, investigated fairly and documented in a timely manner.

Complaints can be emailed to the Administrator at info@suzukimusic.org.au.

If a person is unhappy with aspects of our Association, and it cannot be resolved by informal discussions he or she should follow the procedures in our Constitution.

PROCEDURES

Informal Feedback

All Council members and the Administrator are happy to receive comments from children, young people and parents on aspects of our Association.

Any negative feedback will be discussed with the person making the comments, and we will devise an action plan to address the issues. Persons will be followed up, after the plan has been put in place, to see if the issue is resolved.

Grievance Procedures

If a grievance arises which cannot be resolved by the above method, a Council Member or the Administrator should be notified. We will follow the procedure in our Constitution.

To assist with resolving the grievance the following guidelines are offered –

- Clarify and state the problem simply.
- Attack the problem, not the person.
- Suggest ways to resolve the problem.

Meetings with relevant parties will be convened with the Suzuki Music S.A. Council, and all relevant information gathered. We will always aim for a satisfactory outcome for all parties.

The Council will document and track all complaints, grievances, and their outcomes, and analyse them to identify possible patterns. This information may then be used to inform future Policy and Procedure changes.

RISK ASSESSMENT & RISK ASSESSMENT TOOL (National Principle 8)

It is a legislative requirement that teachers implement a risk management system where they identify and manage hazards and risks to ensure a child safe environment. Strategies are in place to make sure child safety (through the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations) and Education and Care National Regulations are embedded across our Association. The key principles of risk management include:

1. Identifying all hazards or potential hazards in the venue
2. Assess the risk of harm or potential harm for each hazard.
3. Control or manage the risk – Risk Rating Matrix
4. Monitor and improve safety – Risk Assessment Action Plan
5. Evaluate and Review

Identified risk	Actions to minimise risk
Physical contact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any physical contact must be appropriate to the delivery of services being provided • where physical contact is required, this is undertaken in a safe way by explaining why contact is required and what will happen, and asking the child/young person for their permission (or their family if this is more appropriate) before proceeding • unnecessary physical contact is not allowed
Online communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • workers must not communicate with children or young people via social media
Supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • younger children are to be supervised by parents/guardians at all times • if child/young person not collected by parent/guardian at end of class/training, stay with child/young person until they are collected
Taking images of children and young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consent of child young person and their parent/guardian required • disclosure will be made as to how the image is to be used and consent must be provided by the child, young person and parent/guardian • images must be presented in a way that de-identifies the child or young person
Physical environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain a risk register that is reviewed annually to ensure effectiveness • conduct risk assessments for all activities • ensure all equipment is in good working order
Privacy and confidentiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all documents containing confidential information will be stored privately in a locked filing cabinet (or similar place with restricted access) • digital files containing confidential information shall be protected electronically by restricting the access to only those requiring it to perform their duties • workers must not disclose information regarding any child or young person without written consent of the child, young person and their parent/guardian

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It is the responsibility of all teachers at the Association to complete a risk assessment of the venue where children's safety may be jeopardised. Children's safety must be incorporated into all practice within the Association's events. Common hazards within the Association events which may require a risk assessment include:

- non-compliance risk
- cross-infection and infectious disease
- anaphylaxis procedures and management
- building and equipment (including storage)
- inadequate space for conducting activities and experiences.
- hazardous chemicals
- electrical appliances
- environmental influences such as shade, noise etc
- sun safety.
- children's behaviours
- fire equipment
- inadequate supervision of children
- children's activities and experiences
- Work Health and Safety such as manual handling (e.g., safe lifting children or furniture)
- hot drinks

IDENTIFIED RISKS AT EVENTS

Risks of harm to a child Identified.

Toileting

Normal Association activities

Visitors including students, visiting teachers.

Parents or guardians in the venue

After hours social activities

Analysis of Risks

Public toilets.

Risks - Possibility of harm or risk of harm

Balancing the risk - It is rare for Suzuki Students to attend Association sponsored events unaccompanied by parents. This lessens the risk of harm to children.

If a child is to attend an event without a parent present, the child's parents should make arrangements for a teacher or other parent to supervise their

child/ren.

Manage risk – Remind parents to escort their young children to public toilets.

Risk Analysis - Moderate risk.

Visitors including students, visiting teachers.

Risks - Possibility of harm or risk of harm

Balancing the risk – We welcome the contribution of these people to our activities and ask them to abide by our Child Safe Policies and Procedures.

Manage the risk - Supervise visitors who engage in activities with children – visitors are never to be alone in the presence of children.

Educate children in protective behaviours.

Risk Analysis - Low risk.

Parents or guardians at Association Events

Risks - Possibility of harm or risk of harm to a child

Balancing the risk – We welcome the contribution of these people to our events.

Manage the risk – Educate parents and guardians about our policies.

Parents and guardians are not permitted to touch children other than their own child. Supervise parents and guardians who engage in activities with children.

Educate children in protective behaviours.

Risk Analysis - low risk due to presence of other parents and teachers at activities.

EMERGENCY AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

When booking venues for events, the Administrator will ask for a copy of the Emergency and Evacuation Procedures which are in place in that venue.

The procedures will be shared with the people in charge of running the event, who in turn will inform attending participants of these procedures.

SOURCES

Australian Human Rights Commission (2020). *Child Safe Organisations*.

<https://childsafe.humanrights.gov.au/>

Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017

Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016

Government of South Australia Human Associations [Child safe environments](#)

Government of South Australia. Department for Child Protection

<https://www.childprotection.sa.gov.au/>

Government of South Australia. Department of Child Protection. Information sharing guidelines.

National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

United Nations Convention of Rights of the Child, (1989). (UNCRC)

Previous Policy October 2019

CURRENT UPDATE: February 2024

We will at a minimum, review the policies and procedures once every 5 years as required by the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017. We will lodge a new child safe environment compliance statement each time we review and update this policy.

Next review date by: January 2029