

Log Cabin Camp

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Purpose

The Log Cabin Camp Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy demonstrates our businesses commitment to creating and maintaining a child safe and child-friendly organisation, where children and young people are safe and feel safe.

It informs our camp community of everyone's obligations to act safely and appropriately towards children and guides our processes and practices for the safety and wellbeing of students across all areas of our work.

Scope

This policy:

- applies to all camp staff, volunteers and contractors whether or not they work in direct contact with students and vulnerable people.
- should be read together with our other child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and codes – refer to the related camp policies section below.

Definitions

The following terms in this policy have specific definitions:

child safety -Child safety includes matters related to protecting all children from child abuse, managing the risk of child abuse, providing support to a child at risk of child abuse, and responding to suspicions, incidents, disclosures or allegations of child abuse.

child-connected work -Child-connected work means:

a) work authorised by the school governing authority and performed by an adult in a school environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present

b) for the purposes of a school boarding premises, work authorised by the provider of school boarding premises in a school boarding premises environment while children are present or reasonably expected to be present.

Note: Working with Children clearance is required by law only for people who engage in child-related work. Schools and school boarding premises may also choose to require suitability checks (including Working with Children clearance) for visitors and volunteers engaging in child-connected work.

child-related work - The Worker Screening Act 2020 defines 'child-related work' as work which usually involves (or is likely to involve) direct contact with a child, irrespective of whether that contact is supervised or not, and in any of the child-related occupational fields listed in the Act.

The definition of direct contact includes oral, written or electronic communication as well as face-to-face and physical contact. 'Child-related work' may be either paid or unpaid (voluntary).

There are exemptions from the Act including people under 18 years of age, parent volunteers whose child ordinarily participates in the activity, sworn police officers, teachers currently registered with the Victorian Institute of Teaching, and visiting workers who do not ordinarily reside and perform child-related work in Victoria, among others.

camp environment - Camp environment means any of the areas owned by Log Cabin Camp physical, online or virtual places, used during or outside normal business hours

camp staff - an individual working in a the camp environment who is:

1. directly engaged or employed by Log Cabin Camp or;
2. a contracted service provider (whether or not a body corporate or any other person is an intermediary) engaged by Log Cabin Camp to perform child-related work

child abuse - means:

- a sexual offence committed against a child
- an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming
- physical violence against a child
- causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child
- serious neglect of a child.

harm - is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.

child/children - means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

concerns and complaints

A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to Log Cabin Camp related to one or more of the following:

- our services or dealings with individuals
- allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, a volunteer or another individual associated with Log Cabin Camp
- disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person
- the conduct of a child or young person at Log Cabin Camp
- the inadequate handling of a prior concern
- general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity.

Statement of commitment to child safety

Log Cabin Camp is a child safe organisation which welcomes all children, young people and their families.

We are committed to providing environments where our campers are safe and feel safe, where their participation is valued, their views respected, and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives. Our child safe policies, strategies and practices are inclusive of the needs of all children and vulnerable people.

We have no tolerance for child abuse and take proactive steps to identify and manage any risks of harm to students in our camp environments.

We promote positive relationships between campers and adults and between campers and their peers. These relationships are based on trust and respect.

We take proactive steps to identify and manage any risk of harm to campers in our camp environment. When child safety concerns are raised or identified, we treat these seriously and respond promptly and thoroughly.

Particular attention is given to the child safety needs of Aboriginal campers, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, international campers, campers with disabilities, those unable to live at home, children and young people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and gender diverse, intersex and queer (LGBTIQ+) and other campers experiencing risk or vulnerability. Inappropriate or harmful behaviour targeting campers based on these or other characteristics, such as racism or homophobia, are not tolerated at our camp, and any instances identified will be addressed with appropriate consequences.

Child safety is a shared responsibility. Every person involved in our camp has an important role in promoting child safety and wellbeing and promptly raising any issues or concerns about a child's safety.

We are committed to regularly reviewing our child safe practices, and seeking input from our campers, families, staff, and volunteers to inform our ongoing strategies.

Roles and responsibilities

Log Cabin Camp leadership team

Our camp leadership team (comprising of Grant and Christine Laidlaw - Camp Managers) is responsible for ensuring that a strong child safe culture is created and maintained, and that policies and practices are effectively developed and implemented.

Camp Managers will:

- ensure effective child safety and wellbeing governance, policies, procedures, codes and practices are in place and followed
- model a child safe culture that facilitates the active participation of campers, families and staff in promoting and improving child safety, cultural safety and wellbeing
- enable inclusive practices where the diverse needs of all campers are considered
- reinforce high standards of respectful behaviour between campers and adults, and between campers
- promote regular open discussion on child safety issues within the camp community including at leadership team meetings and staff meetings
- facilitate regular professional learning for staff to build deeper understandings of child safety, cultural safety, student wellbeing and prevention of, and responding to abuse
- create an environment where child safety complaints and concerns are readily raised, and no one is discouraged from reporting an allegation of child abuse to relevant authorities.

Camp staff

All staff will:

- participate in child safety and wellbeing induction and training provided by the Log Cabin Camp and always follow the camps child safety and wellbeing policies and procedures
- act in accordance with our [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)
- identify and raise concerns about child safety issues in accordance with our [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures](#)
- ensure campers' views are taken seriously and their voices are heard about decisions that affect their lives
- implement inclusive practices that respond to the diverse needs of campers.

Specific staff child safety responsibilities

Log Cabin Camp has nominated a child safety champion to support the Camp Managers to implement our child safety policies and practices, including staff training.

The responsibilities of the child safety champion are outlined at [Guidance for child safety champions](#). In addition to these roles, our child safety champion is also responsible for:

- ensuring staff and volunteers hold a current Working with Children Check Victoria (WWCCV) or equivalent

Our Camp Managers and child safety champions are the first point of contact for child safety concerns or queries and for coordinating responses to child safety incidents.

- Camp Manager is responsible for monitoring the camp's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. Anyone in our camp community should approach Camp Manager if they have any concerns about the camp's compliance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
- Camp Manager is responsible for informing the Log Cabin Camp community about this policy, and making it publicly available
- Other specific roles and responsibilities are named in other child safety policies and procedures, including the Child Safety Code of Conduct, Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures, and Child Safety Risk Register.

Our camp has also established a Child Safety and Wellbeing Team (comprising of Camp Managers and child safety champions). The Child Safety and Wellbeing Team meet regularly to identify and respond to any ongoing matters related to child safety and wellbeing.

Our Risk Management Committee (comprising of the Camp Managers and child safety champions) monitors the Child Safety Risk Register.

Child Safety Code of Conduct

Our Child Safety Code of Conduct sets the boundaries and expectations for appropriate behaviours between adults and children. It also clarifies behaviours that are not acceptable in our physical and online environments.

We ensure that campers also know what is acceptable and what is not acceptable so that they can be clear and confident about what to expect from adults at Log Cabin Camp.

[The Child Safety Code of Conduct](#) also includes processes to report inappropriate behaviour.

Managing risks to child safety and wellbeing

At Log Cabin Camp we identify, assess, and manage risks to child safety and wellbeing in our physical and online camp environments. These risks are managed through our child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, and practices, and in our activity specific risk registers, such as those we develop for adventure activities and facilities and services.

Our [Child Safety Risk Register](#) is used to record any identified risks related to child abuse alongside actions in place to manage those risks. Log Cabin Camp leadership team will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions in the Child Safety Risk Register at least annually.

We will:

- Supervise campers properly in all camp settings
- Give particular attention to the safety, diverse needs and vulnerabilities of campers in each activity or setting. Consider whether there are any barriers that might prevent campers from raising concerns.
- Create a respectful, sensitive and safe environment for people who may be experiencing family violence.

Establishing a culturally safe environment

At Log Cabin Camp, we are committed to establishing an inclusive and culturally safe camp where the strengths of Aboriginal culture, values and practices are respected.

We think about how every camper can have a positive experience in a safe environment. For Aboriginal campers, we recognise the link between Aboriginal culture, identity and safety and actively create opportunities for Aboriginal campers and the Aboriginal community to have a voice and presence in our camping planning, policies, and activities.

We have developed the following strategies to promote cultural safety in our camp community:

- Display plaques and signs to Acknowledge Country and Traditional Owners.
- Lead on safety and inclusion for all Aboriginal students and their families. Learn more about Aboriginal histories and cultures, both locally and across Australia.
- Speak with respect about Aboriginal culture, knowledge systems and people.
- Build camp knowledge of Aboriginal histories, cultures, perspectives, values, Train staff to understand the importance of Aboriginal culture to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal campers.
- Work with the local Aboriginal community to build staff, and camper knowledge and respect for Aboriginal culture and to promote cultural inclusion.
- Support local Aboriginal businesses through camp procurement.
- Engage with local Aboriginal communities via Traditional Owner groups, corporations or the Registered Aboriginal Party to review cultural safety in camp environment, systems and processes.

Camper empowerment

To support child safety and wellbeing at Log Cabin Camp, we work to create an inclusive and supportive environment that encourages campers and families to contribute to our child safety approach and understand their rights and their responsibilities.

Respectful relationships between campers are reinforced and we encourage strong friendships and peer support at Log Cabin Camp to ensure a sense of belonging implementing our whole camp approach to Respectful Relationships.

We inform campers of their rights through our whole camp approach to Respectful Relationships and give them the skills and confidence to recognise unsafe situations with adults or other campers and to speak up and act on concerns relating to themselves or their peers. We ensure our campers know who to talk to if they are worried or feeling unsafe and we encourage them to share concerns with a trusted adult at any time. Students and families can also access information on how to report concerns at <https://www.logcabincamp.com.au/resources/parents/>

When Log Cabin Camp is gathering information in relation to a complaint about alleged misconduct or abuse of a child, we will listen to the complainant's account and take them seriously, check our understanding of the complaint, support the camper and keep them (and their parents and carers, as appropriate) informed about progress.

Family engagement

Our families and the Log Cabin Camp community have an important role in monitoring and promoting children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to raise any concerns.

To support family engagement, at Log Cabin Camp we are committed to providing families and community with accessible information about our camps child safe policies and practices and involving them in our approach to child safety and wellbeing.

We will create opportunities for families to have input into the development and review of our child safety policies and practices.

We do this by:

- Curating any parent feedback received about their child's camp experience into a document ([Parent Feedback – Child Safety & Wellbeing](#)) that will be reviewed annually and used to inform changes to our child safe policy. This feedback can be in the form of informal discussions.

- all of our child safety policies and procedures will be available for campers and parents at <https://www.logcabincamp.com.au/resources/parents/>
- make sure families participate in child safety and wellbeing decisions which affect their child
- Acknowledge the important role that families and communities play in monitoring children's safety and wellbeing and helping children to disclose concerns.
- Communicate with and appropriately involve families at all stages of the process if a concern or complaint is raised.

Diversity and equity

As a child safe organisation, we celebrate the rich diversity of our campers, families and community and promote respectful environments that are free from discrimination. Our focus is on wellbeing and growth for all.

We recognise that every child has unique skills, strengths and experiences to draw on.

We pay particular attention to individuals and groups of children and young people in our community with additional and specific needs. This includes tailoring our child safety strategies and supports to the needs of:

- Aboriginal children and young people
- children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people with disabilities
- children unable to live at home or impacted by family violence
- international students
- children and young people who identify as LGBTIQ+.

We value diversity and equity for all children. To achieve this, we:

- provide training for all Management and staff understanding diversity and how to support inclusion and cultural safety
- welcome and support participation of all children, including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and act when discrimination or exclusion is identified
- deliver programming that reflects the diversity of our campers, their interests, and cultures
- strive to reflect the diversity of our community through representation in our staff
- have a physical and online environment that actively celebrates diversity
- commit to ensuring our facilities and online presence promote inclusion of children of all abilities.

Suitable staff and volunteers

At Log Cabin Camp, we apply robust child safe recruitment, induction, training, and supervision practices to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

Staff recruitment

When recruiting staff, we follow the [Log Cabin Camp Human Resource Management Policy](#)

When engaging staff to perform child-related work, we:

- sight, verify and record the person's Working with Children clearance or equivalent background check such as a Victorian teaching registration
- collect and record:
 - proof of the person's identity and any professional or other qualifications
 - the person's history of working with children

- references that address suitability for the job and working with children.

Staff induction

All newly appointed staff will be expected to participate in our child safety and wellbeing induction program. The program will include a focus on:

- the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document)
- the Child Safety Code of Conduct
- the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures and
- any other child safety and wellbeing information that Log Cabin Camp leadership considers appropriate to the nature of the role.

Ongoing supervision and management of staff

All staff engaged in child-connected work will be supervised appropriately to ensure that their behaviour towards children is safe and appropriate.

Staff will be monitored and assessed to ensure their continuing suitability for child-connected work. This will be done by annual child safety training and performance reviews where required.

Inappropriate behaviour towards children and young people will be managed swiftly and in accordance with Log Cabin Camp policies and our legal obligations. Child safety and wellbeing will be paramount.

Child safety knowledge, skills and awareness

Ongoing training and education are essential to ensuring that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and develop their capacity to effectively address child safety and wellbeing matters.

In addition to the child safety and wellbeing induction, our staff will participate in a range of training and professional learning to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to maintain a child safe environment.

Staff child safety and wellbeing training will be delivered at least annually and will include guidance on:

- Log Cabin Camps child safety and wellbeing policies, procedures, codes, and practices
- recognising indicators of child harm including harm caused by other children and campers
- responding effectively to issues of child safety and wellbeing and supporting colleagues who disclose harm
- how to build culturally safe environments for children and campers
- information sharing and recordkeeping obligations
- how to identify and mitigate child safety and wellbeing risks in the school environment.

Other professional learning and training on child safety and wellbeing will be tailored to specific roles and responsibilities and any identified or emerging needs or issues.

Complaints and reporting processes

Log Cabin Camp fosters a culture that encourages staff, campers, parents, and the camp community to raise concerns and complaints. This makes it more difficult for breaches of the code of conduct, misconduct or abuse to occur and remain hidden.

We have clear pathways for raising complaints and concerns and responding and this is documented in our camp's [Child Safe Complaints Policy – Log Cabin Camp](#).

If there is an incident, disclosure, allegation or suspicion of child abuse, all staff and volunteers must follow our [Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures](#). Our policy and procedures address complaints and concerns of child abuse made by or in relation to a child or camper, camp staff, contractors, service providers, visitors or any other person while connected to Log Cabin Camp.

As soon as any immediate health and safety concerns are addressed, and relevant camp staff have been informed, we will ensure our camp follows:

- the [Four Critical Actions](#) for complaints and concerns relating to adult behaviour towards a child, or a child towards another child

Communications

Log Cabin Camp is committed to communicating our child safety strategies to the camp community through:

- ensuring that key child safety and wellbeing policies are available on our website including the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (this document), Child Safety Code of Conduct, and the Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations (including Mandatory Reporting) Policy and Procedure
- ensuring that child safety is a regular agenda item at camp leadership meetings and staff meetings

Privacy and information sharing

Log Cabin Camp collects, uses, and discloses information about children and their families in accordance with Victorian privacy laws, and other relevant laws. For information on how our camp collects, uses and discloses information refer to: [Privacy Policy](#)

Records management

Log Cabin Camp is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

All child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and near misses will be recorded in the incident reporting system.

Records which may assist with the investigation of a complaint or safety concern will be identified and kept as part of the record of an investigation. Records will be kept even if an investigation does not substantiate a complaint.

We will record and keep the outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints. This includes findings made, reasons for decisions and actions taken.

Records will be stored securely and kept by Log Cabin Camp for at least 45 years.

Information sharing

Log Cabin Camp may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests. Log Cabin Camp will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritize child safety. We may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritize safety.

Review of child safety practices

At Log Cabin Camp, we have established processes for the review and ongoing improvement of our child safe policies, procedures, and practices.

We will:

- review and improve our policy every 2 years or after any significant child safety incident
- analyse any complaints, concerns, and safety incidents to improve policy and practice
- act with transparency and share pertinent learnings and review outcomes with camp staff and our Log Cabin Camp community.

Related policies and procedures

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is to be read in conjunction with other related camp policies, procedures, and codes. These include our:

- Child Safety Responding and Reporting Obligations Policy and Procedures
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Complaints Policy – Log Cabin Camp
- Human Resource Management Policy
- Privacy Policy

Other related documents

- Four Critical Actions

Policy status and review

Camp Managers are responsible for reviewing and updating the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy at least every two years. The review will include input from campers, parents/carers, and the Log Cabin Camp community.

Approval

Created date	16/01/2023 by Beth Oswin
Consultation	Staff 16/1/23 BADAC 19/12/22 Parents – various 2022 Campers – various 2022 Child Safety Champions – Beth and Aiden 19/12/2022
Endorsed by	Grant Laidlaw, Camp Manager
Endorsed on	16/1/2023
Next review date	16/1/2025