



Policy Title	Child Safety Policy		
Responsible Directorate	Community Development		
Policy No		Date Approved	February 2017
Revision No	1	Revision Approved	February 2021

Purpose

The purpose of the Child Safety Policy is to set a consistent approach to introducing Child Safe Standards for the organisational staff that puts the safety of children above all other matters and accepts that child safety is everybody's responsibility.

Scope

This policy applies to all Buloke Shire Council Councillors and employees, including contractors and volunteers.

Policy Statement

This policy is intended to demonstrate the strong commitment of the management, staff and volunteers at Buloke Shire Council to promoting and protecting the interests and safety of children.

The Child Safety Standards are a response to the growing community concern about not only the extent of child abuse occurring within organisations, but also the lengths to which some bodies would go to conceal this abuse.

Council supports and respects the rights of all children, and for children to feel and be safe, happy and empowered. Council has a zero tolerance to child abuse.

Commitment to child safety

All children who come in to contact with Buloke Shire Council have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of the children in our care will always be our first priority and we have a zero tolerance to child abuse. We aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel secure.

POLICY OUTCOMES

The outcomes for measuring the safety concerns of children and young people are to be embedded in Council activity including our service delivery, Council strategies, our cultural and disability programs, and in Council community infrastructure planning, including but not limited to the following:

1. Strategies and policies developed and implemented to embed an organisational culture of child safety including through the Senior Management and Executive Management groups.
2. Council commitment to securing the safety of children and young people made visible in our Council Plans, policies and strategies.
3. Excellence in Governance - Code of Conduct amended for Councillors and employees to establish clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children and young people.
4. Human Resource mechanisms in place to ensure all new and current employees working directly with children and young people have Working with Children Checks and appropriate measures are in place to manage reports of abuse perpetrated by employees.

5. Well communicated and visible procedures established across Council for responding to and reporting suspected violence and abuse to children and young people, ensuring employees are familiar with indicators of abuse perpetrated against children and young people and are able to respond appropriately.
6. Partnerships undertaken with State Government, Local Governments and other organisations working to promote the safety of children and young people across communities.

Legislation

This Policy was developed in accord with the following legislation:

- *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012*
- *Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment Act 2015 (Vic)*
- *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*

Documents

This Policy is implemented in conjunction with the following documents:

- Buloke Shire Councillors Code of Conduct
- Buloke Shire Staff Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Procedure