Child Safe Code of Conduct

Commitment to child safety

At Whyld Equestrian Coaching, we are committed to supporting the safety of all children, with a zero-tolerance approach to abuse. This includes a culture where preventing and reporting abuse is encouraged and supported.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for promoting the safety, wellbeing and empowerment of children. This includes understanding and responding to children's diverse needs and cultural considerations.

Our Child Safe Code of Conduct sets out how we expect adults in our organisation to behave around children to help prevent harm and abuse in our physical spaces and online. Our Child Safe Code of Conduct identifies:

- **'I will'** child safe behaviours that we consider acceptable
- '**I won't'** behaviours that we consider unacceptable.

Engaging in unacceptable behaviour is a breach of our Child Safe Code of Conduct and may result in disciplinary action.

Different types of child harm and abuse

Child abuse takes many forms. It can include psychological, physical and sexual abuse, grooming, misconduct and lack of appropriate care as defined below.

Psychological abuse (also known as emotional abuse)
This includes bullying, threatening and abusive language, intimidation, shaming and name calling, ignoring and isolating a child, and exposure to domestic and family violence.

Physical abuse
This includes physical punishment, such as pushing, shoving, punching, slapping and kicking, resulting in injury, burns, choking or bruising.

Sexual abuse
This includes the sexual touching of a child, grooming, and production, distribution or possession of child abuse material.

Grooming
This is a process where a person manipulates a child or group of children and sometimes those looking after them, including parents, carers, teachers and leaders. They do this to establish a position of 'trust' so they can then later sexually abuse the child.

Misconduct
This is inappropriate behaviour that may not be as severe as abuse, but could indicate that abuse is occurring and would often be in breach of an organisation's Child Safe Code of Conduct. This could

include showing a child something inappropriate on a phone, having inappropriate conversations with a child or an adult sitting with a child on their lap.

Lack of appropriate care
This includes not providing adequate and proper supervision, nourishment, clothing, shelter, education or medical care.

Acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in our organisation

The list of acceptable and unacceptable behaviours below are in relation to interactions of staff and volunteers with children who interact with our organisation's services, locations or activities.

I will:

- treat all children with respect
- uphold the rights of the child and always prioritise their needs
- make sure the needs of all children remain the paramount focus of any decision-making
- listen to and value the ideas and opinions of all children, and respond to them appropriately
- welcome all children and their families and carers, and ask them to participate in decisions around child safety
- actively promote safe and inclusive practices for all children, including those with diverse needs, circumstances and backgrounds, including children with disability where possible in horse riding
- adhere to the organisation's child safe policies, procedures and practices
- participate in all compulsory child safe training
- include a child's parent or carer in any direct online communication or correspondence.
- when transporting a child at work, take all reasonable steps to ensure at least two adults are travelling with the child at all times or put in place a suitable arrangement between my organisation and the parents or carers of the child. If the child is alone, they must sit in the back seat of the vehicle.
- let the organisation know about any out-of-hours contact with any children in the care of our organisation or who interact with our services, and make sure there is a valid reason for this contact and parents or carers are also aware of this contact.
- take all reasonable steps to protect children from harm and abuse, and report and act on any concerns or allegations (see reporting obligations below)
- report any conflicts of interest such as a relationship with a child that is outside the organisation
- raise concerns with the leadership team if risks to child safety are identified
- take a child seriously if they disclose harm or abuse and follow the correct procedures for responding to a disclosure
- make sure breaches of the Child Safe Code of Conduct and any instances of concerning behaviour from adults are reported immediately
- respect the privacy of children, and their families, and keep all information about child protection concerns confidential.

I won't:

- condone or participate in unsafe, harmful or abusive behaviour towards children, including psychological, physical and sexual abuse, grooming, misconduct or lack of appropriate care
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse
- exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- persistently criticise or denigrate a child
- use hurtful, discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language with children
- verbally assault a child, or create a climate of fear
- deliberately prevent a child from forming friendships
- engage in unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child

- be alone with a child without supervision or adequate risk management in place
- have contact after hours with children
- encourage a child to communicate with me in a private setting, including online or on social media
- give personal gifts or benefits of any kind to a child unless direct permission has been given from the parent or carer
- share details of sexual experiences with a child
- use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children
- show sexual, violent or other inappropriate images to a child
- take videos or images of children interacting with the organisation or under the care of the organisation on a personal device without permission from the organisation
- share videos or images of children on social media without consent
- fail to report information to police or other relevant authorities if I know a child has been harmed or abused (see reporting obligations below).

Concerning behaviours

Concerning behaviours are behaviours that on their own may not constitute a breach of our Child Safe Code of Conduct but when viewed together may indicate grooming behaviour.

These include:

- Showing favour to one child over others
- Babysitting children without prior consent from the organisation (babysitting outside the organisation is only allowed in exceptional circumstances when the child and their family or carer is known has a pre-existing relationship with the staff member or volunteer outside the organisation)
- Participating in the lives of children outside the service without a valid reason
- Crossing professional boundaries with the children in our care
- Spending time alone with children
- Being ‘child centric’, which means showing a preference for hanging out with children rather than adults.

Internal and external reporting obligations

You must follow all internal and external reporting obligations set out in our organisation’s Child Safe Reporting Policy, refer to Child safe Policy Document.

Criminal offences for not acting to protect children

Some breaches of this code of conduct may need to be reported to NSW Police, the Office of the Children’s Guardian or the Department of Communities and Justice.

It is a criminal offence for adults not to report to police if they know or believe that a child abuse offence has been committed. In addition, people employed in child-related work may be subject to a criminal offence if they fail to reduce or remove the risk of a child becoming a victim of child abuse.

The adult concerned should reach out to a leader/ child safety officer within the organisation if they are unsure of what may need to be reported externally.

Penalties for staff or volunteers who breach our Child Safe Code of Conduct

Staff or volunteers who breach our Child Safe Code of Conduct but do not commit a criminal offence may still be subject to disciplinary action. This can include increased supervision, appointment to a different role, additional training, suspension or termination from the service.

Concerning behaviours

If a staff member or volunteer shows patterns of concerning behaviour but do not commit a criminal offence, this may result in increased supervision and/ or additional training. If these behaviours of concern continue, the staff member or volunteer may be subject to disciplinary action, including appointment to a different role, suspension or termination from the service.

Agreement to abide by the terms of Child Safe Code of Conduct

I have read and agree to abide by the terms of this Child Safe Code of Conduct

Name of staff member or volunteer

Staff Member Name:

Role in organisation

Staff Member Role:

Signature and date

X _____

Date:

Date document reviewed

Next review date

2/02/2026 , Ali Williams. Child Safety Officer.

If there are any critical incidents, the document will be reviewed immediately.

Signature of responsible officer

X _____

Person responsible for policy and compliance

1/05/2025

This sample was developed by the NSW Office of the Children's Guardian.

For more information on how to develop your Child Safe Code of Conduct, download the Understanding and Developing a Child Safe Code of Conduct handbook.

If you need further support, the OCG offers regular workshops to help your organisation develop its Child Safe Code of Conduct. Visit the OCG's website to book.

For more free child safe resources, visit ocg.nsw.gov.au/our-resources.