

Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy



Policy Number:	KASC-STAT-048
Responsible Manager:	Chief Executive Officer
Legislation:	Local Government Act 2009 (Qld) Local Government Regulation (Qld) Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)
Approval Date:	28 July 2026

1. Purpose

- 1.1. Council is committed to providing and maintaining environments that support the safety, wellbeing and dignity of children and young people.
- 1.2. Child safety and wellbeing are embedded in Council's leadership, governance, culture and decision-making and are recognised as a shared responsibility across all levels of the organisation.
- 1.3. Council has zero tolerance for child abuse, harm, neglect, exploitation and grooming.
- 1.4. The purpose of this Policy is to:
 - set out Council's child safety and wellbeing commitments, principles, responsibilities and minimum requirements
 - support the prevention of harm to children and young people in Council services, programs, facilities, activities and online environments
 - promote child wellbeing through inclusive, respectful, culturally safe, trauma-informed and child-centred practice that enables children and young people to thrive
 - support Council personnel to identify, escalate and report suspicions, concerns or disclosures of harm, or risk of harm, to a child through internal reporting mechanisms and to the appropriate authorities where required
 - provide clear expectations for Council personnel and relevant third parties
 - support consistent child safe decision-making across different Council settings.
- 1.5. This Policy is an overarching child safety and wellbeing policy. It should be read together with Council's Child Safety and Wellbeing Statement of Commitment, Child Safe Code of Conduct, Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Process, Child Safety Risk Framework, Supervision and Duty of Care Policy and Procedure and related child safe guidance and supporting resources.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all Council personnel and to child safe responsibilities arising in Council services, programs, facilities, functions, events, online environments and other activities involving, affecting, or used by children and young people.
- 2.2. For this Policy, Council personnel (also referred to as workers) includes:
- councillors
 - employees
 - volunteers
 - contractors and consultants
 - labour-hire personnel (including event workers)
 - students on placement
 - trainees / apprentices
 - any other person engaged by or on behalf of Council.
- 2.3. Council operates across a range of settings, including directly delivered services, staffed programs, public facilities, shared-use community spaces, open-access environments and online services.
- 2.4. In some settings, Council provides direct supervision or service delivery. In other settings, Council provides access to facilities or public spaces and does not have continuous supervision or full control over who is present.
- 2.5. Council will apply this Policy in a way that is practical, risk-based and proportionate to the level of control, influence and responsibility Council has in each setting. Where Council does not hold primary supervision responsibility, Council will still take reasonable steps to identify, reduce and respond to child safety risks within its control.

3. Terms and Definitions

In this policy:

Child	any person under 18 years. In Queensland, a child is legally defined as an individual under 18 years of age. However, specific legal ages for activities may vary: E.g. 10 for criminal responsibility, 18 for buying alcohol. The legal age for consent for having sex in Queensland is 16.
Child safety and Wellbeing	means the actions, systems, culture and practices that support children to be safe, respected, included and heard, and that prevent and respond to harm.
Child Safe Concern	means any concern, allegation, suspicion, disclosure, complaint, incident, behaviour, practice or environmental issue that may affect the safety or wellbeing of a child or young person.
Harm	Harm includes physical harm, psychological or emotional harm, sexual abuse, neglect, exploitation, grooming, exposure to family violence, inappropriate conduct, and any other conduct or circumstance that places a child at risk
Third party	includes contractors, consultants, labour-hire personnel, funded partners, hirers, lessees, licensees, user groups, community organisations and any other public users, external person or entity providing services to children, working with children, or using Council facilities in circumstances where children may be present

4. Legislative and Practice Framework

- 4.1. This Policy is informed by and should be read consistently with relevant Queensland and Australian child safe requirements, including (*Refer Related Documents (External)*):
- Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld)
 - the Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle in Queensland
 - the Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme
 - Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)
 - Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld)
 - Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)
 - Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
 - Privacy Act 1988 (Cth), where applicable
 - National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth), where applicable
 - National Disability Insurance Scheme (Code of Conduct) Rules 2018, where applicable
 - National Disability Insurance Scheme (Provider Registration and Practice Standards) Rules 2018, where applicable
 - the NDIS Practice Standards, where applicable
 - the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- 4.2. Council will also comply with any other applicable legislative, regulatory, funding, contractual or sector-specific child safe requirements relevant to particular services or activities.
- 4.3. Council's related child safe policies, procedures and guidance documents support the practical application of these requirements across different Council settings.

5. Policy Statement and Commitment

- 5.1. Council is committed to creating and maintaining environments where children and young people are safe, respected, included and heard. Council has zero tolerance for child abuse, harm, neglect, exploitation and grooming.
- 5.2. Council will:
- act to prevent harm, abuse, neglect, exploitation and grooming
 - embed child safety in our culture and practices
 - respond to all child safety concerns seriously and respond promptly with a child focus
 - uphold the rights, voices and participation of children and young people – decision making and co-design
 - promote culturally safe, inclusive and accessible practices
 - support families, carers and communities to understand Council's child safe approach
 - ensure Council personnel are suitable, supported and accountable
 - identify and manage child safety risks in physical, online and service environments
 - regularly review and strengthen child safe practices in a timely manner
- 5.3. This Policy is supported by Council's Child Safety and Wellbeing Statement of Commitment and Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety, together with related child safe policies, procedures and guidance documents.

6. National Child Safe Principles and Child Safety Standards and How Council Applies Them

- 6.1. Council aligns with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and meets the Queensland Child Safe Organisations Standards, including all relevant state legislative and reporting obligations
- 6.2. These principles apply across Council services, facilities and activities involving children and young people, including directly delivered services, staffed programs, public facilities, open-access environments, shared community spaces and activities delivered in partnership with others. Together, these principles guide how Council builds, maintains, monitors and improves child safe practice across its operations:

- 6.2.1. Principle 1: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture
- Council recognises that creating and maintaining a child safe organisation requires visible leadership, clear accountability and a culture in which child safety and wellbeing are prioritised in decision-making, planning and practice. This includes ensuring child safety is embedded in governance, operations, risk management and continuous improvement across Council.

Council will:

- embed child safety and wellbeing in leadership, governance, planning and decision-making
- assign clear child safety responsibilities across the organisation
- support a culture where child safety concerns are taken seriously and acted on
- reflect child safety requirements in relevant policies, procedures and organisational systems
- monitor child safety risks, compliance and improvement actions as part of Council's governance and review processes.

This must include:

- including child safety in strategic, governance or risk discussions
- allocating child safety responsibilities to relevant leaders, managers or delegated roles
- embedding child safety in key policies, planning and review processes
- considering child safety as part of organisational risk management and continuous improvement.

This principle is supported by the Child Safety Risk Framework, the Guidelines for the Rollout of the Child Safe Policy Suite, and related governance, planning and review processes.

- 6.2.2. Principle 2: Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

Council recognises that children and young people have the right to safety, dignity, respect and participation. Child safe practice is strengthened when children and young people are informed, supported to speak up, and taken seriously when they express views, concerns, preferences or experiences.

Council will:

- provide information to children and young people in ways that are suitable to their age, development and context
- support children and young people to express their views, raise concerns and ask for help or raise a complaint
- listen to children and young people respectfully and take their views and concerns seriously
- consider children's views in decisions that affect them
- review feedback and concerns raised by children and young people to improve child safe practice

This must include:

- child-friendly posters, brochures or website information
- opportunities for children and young people to provide feedback about services, programs or facilities

- accessible ways for children to raise concerns and complaints directly or through the child friendly complaints process
- involving children and young people in planning or reviewing activities that affect them.

Further detail about child-friendly information, participation and reporting pathways is set out in the Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Process and related child-friendly complaint or reporting information.

6.2.3. Principle 3: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

Council recognises that families, carers and communities are critical partners in promoting child safety and wellbeing. In many local government settings, child safety is strengthened when families, carers, hirers, user groups and community members understand Council's child safe approach, reporting pathways and shared responsibilities.

Council will:

- communicate its child safe approach to families, carers and communities
- provide clear information about how to raise concerns or report child safety issues
- engage respectfully with families and carers where appropriate and safe to do so
- communicate relevant child safe expectations in settings such as facilities, programs, events and shared community spaces
- consider feedback from families, carers and community members as part of monitoring and improving child safe practice.

This must include:

- providing child safe information on Council's website or in program materials
- displaying reporting information or key child safe messages in relevant facilities
- including child safe expectations in bookings, event information, licences or facility conditions of use
- providing child-friendly and family-friendly complaint information where relevant.

Relevant requirements and communication mechanisms may also be set out in the Guidelines for the Rollout of the Child Safe Policy Suite, facility hire and use conditions, signage and other public-facing guidance.

6.2.4. Principle 4: Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice

Council celebrates diversity and is committed to creating environments where all children and young people are respected, included and supported to feel safe. Council recognises that children and young people experience safety differently and that some may face additional barriers to participation, inclusion, being heard, or accessing support. Council is committed to inclusive, respectful and equitable practice that recognises and responds to the diverse needs, identities and experiences of children and young people, including children from different cultural or linguistic backgrounds, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, LGBTQIA+ children and young people, children with disability or developmental needs, and children who may be vulnerable due to trauma, family circumstances or other factors.

Council will:

- promote inclusive, respectful and non-discriminatory environments
- recognise and respond to the diverse needs, experiences and vulnerabilities of children and young people in policy, planning and practice
- support culturally safe practice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people
- support accessibility, reasonable adjustments and inclusive communication where appropriate
- take steps to ensure services, facilities and responses do not unfairly exclude or disadvantage children
- consider barriers that may affect a child or young person's ability to participate, feel safe, raise concerns or access support
- review child safe practice with regard to inclusion, accessibility, cultural safety and equity.

This must include:

- considering accessibility and inclusion in the design or review of services, facilities and information
- using culturally respectful, trauma-informed and inclusive language and communication
- development and implementation of a cultural safety implementation plan
- making reasonable adjustments where appropriate
- considering whether particular children or groups may face additional barriers to safety, participation, inclusion or speaking up
- seeking to ensure child safe information and responses are appropriate to the child's needs, identity, culture and circumstances.

This principle should be read together with Council's Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety and any related inclusion, accessibility or cultural safety guidance adopted by Council.

6.2.5. Principle 5: People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

Council recognises that child safe organisations require people who are suitable for their roles, understand their responsibilities, and are supported to uphold child safe values in practice. Suitability is not only about screening and recruitment, but also about induction, supervision, conduct, training, accountability and early action where concerns arise.

Council will:

- use processes that child focused for recruitment, screening and engagement of third-party entities that address child safety
- ensure required checks, approvals and clearances are obtained where applicable
- check all prospective workers to confirm stability and detect any patterns suggesting avoidance of proper scrutiny.
- make child safety responsibilities clear in relevant roles and expectations
- provide induction, guidance, supervision and support
- respond promptly and appropriately to concerns about conduct, suitability or compliance
- monitor relevant screening, training and role requirements in line with Council systems and responsibilities.

This must include:

- including child safety responsibilities in position descriptions, contracts or volunteer role information
- verify any worker, whose role involves, or may involve, contact with children, their identity and every clearance, identity document and reference prior to engagement.
- requiring Blue Cards, NDIS worker screening checks or other relevant checks where applicable to the role or service
- providing induction on the Child Safe Code of Conduct and reporting obligations
- supporting managers to address concerns early and appropriately.

Further detail is set out in the Child Safe Code of Conduct and in relevant recruitment, screening, induction, supervision and workforce management documents.

6.2.6. Principle 6: Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child-focused

Council recognises that children and young people must be able to raise concerns safely and that complaints, allegations, disclosures, incidents and concerns must be responded to in a way that prioritises safety, wellbeing and fairness. Child-focused processes are accessible, responsive and respectful, and seek to reduce further harm while supporting appropriate action.

Council will:

- maintain clear and accessible processes for receiving and responding to child safety concerns
- respond to concerns, complaints, allegations, incidents and disclosures promptly and appropriately
- take immediate action where a child may be at risk
- support child-focused, trauma-informed and culturally responsive responses
- ensure reporting and escalation pathways are understood and followed
- review complaints, incidents and concerns to identify patterns, gaps and opportunities for improvement.

This must include:

- child-friendly reporting information and complaint options
- internal reporting and escalation pathways for Council personnel
- support for children and families during complaint or response processes
- review of complaints and incidents to improve systems, communication and safeguards.

Detailed reporting, complaint handling, escalation and response requirements are set out in the Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Process and other relevant procedures.

6.2.7. Principle 7: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training

Council recognises that child safe practice depends on Council personnel understanding what is expected of them and having the confidence and capability to act. Training, supervision, guidance and ongoing reinforcement help ensure child safety obligations remain vigilant and effective in safeguarding children.

Council will:

- provide child safety induction and ongoing training appropriate to roles and responsibilities
- support Council personnel to recognise and respond to child safety concerns
- reinforce expectations about professional boundaries, respectful behaviour and reporting
- provide role-specific guidance where needed
- support managers and delegated child safety contacts to implement this Policy in practice
- review training and support needs over time to strengthen child safe capability.

This must include:

- induction for workers, volunteers and relevant contractors
- refresher training or briefings on child safe responsibilities
- role-specific guidance for managers, supervisors or delegated child safety contacts
- reinforcing key expectations through supervision, meetings, reminders or local guidance.

Further guidance may be set out in the Guidelines for the Rollout of the Child Safe Policy Suite, induction materials, training resources and relevant role descriptions.

6.2.8. Principle 8: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed

Council recognises that child safety is shaped by the physical, online and service environments in which children and young people participate, access services, or are present. In a local government context, this includes settings where Council exercises direct control as well as public, shared-use and open-access environments where Council's control may be more limited. In all cases, Council will take reasonable and proportionate steps within its control to support child safety.

Council will:

- identify, assess and reduce child safety risks in physical, online and service environments within its control
- apply practical risk controls appropriate to the nature of the setting
- support visibility, safe access, appropriate supervision and safe use of technology
- communicate expected behaviour and supervision responsibilities where relevant
- use signage, conditions of use, local guidance and other controls to support child safety in public and shared settings
- monitor environmental risks, incidents and concerns to inform ongoing improvements.

This must include:

- risk assessments for programs, facilities, activities or events
- signage about expected behaviour and supervision responsibilities
- visibility measures, local supervision practices or safe access arrangements
- child safe expectations for digital communication, online platforms or use of technology
- facility conditions of use or contractor requirements that address child safety.

Further detail about risk identification, environmental controls and supervision expectations is set out in the Child Safety Risk Framework and the Supervision and Duty of Care Policy and Procedure.

6.3. Principle 9: Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved

Council recognises that child safe practice requires ongoing review, learning and improvement. Child safety risks, service settings, community expectations and legal requirements can change over time, and Council is committed to monitoring how its child safe framework is working in practice and taking action where improvement is needed.

Council will:

- monitor child safe practice, risks, incidents, complaints and feedback
- use reviews, audits, consultation and learning to strengthen child safe systems
- respond to legislative change, emerging risks and identified gaps
- support continuous improvement across the child safe framework
- review this Policy and related documents at planned intervals and when required
- track and action relevant findings from reviews, complaints, incidents and other monitoring processes.

This must include:

- reviewing feedback, complaints, incidents or risk information
- considering audit, assurance or review findings
- updating policies, procedures or guidance where needed
- identifying and addressing gaps in training, communication or implementation.

This principle is supported by the Child Safety Risk Framework, related procedures, implementation guidance and relevant review, audit and continuous improvement processes.

6.3.1. Principle 10: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

Council recognises that clear, accessible and consistent documentation supports accountability, understanding and implementation. A documented child safe framework helps Council personnel, families, communities and relevant third parties understand Council's expectations, responsibilities, reporting pathways and approach to child safety and wellbeing.

Council will:

- maintain a child safe policy and procedure suite appropriate to its services, functions and facilities
- ensure related documents are clear, accessible and aligned
- communicate key child safe information to Council personnel, families, carers, communities and relevant third parties
- support implementation through guidance, training, local instructions and supporting resources
- review documents regularly to ensure they remain current, practical and effective.

This must include:

- maintaining related policies, procedures, forms, posters, signage and guidance materials
- making key child safe documents publicly available where appropriate
- ensuring local procedures, work instructions, contracts and facility conditions align with the broader child safe framework
- reviewing documents following legislative change, identified risk, incidents or feedback.

This principle is supported by Council's broader child safe policy and procedure suite, related forms, signage, guidance materials and local work instructions.

Further detail about how Council implements these principles in practice is set out in related policies, procedures, the Child Safety Risk Framework, and the Guidelines for the Rollout of the Child Safe Policy Suite.

7. Children's Rights, Participation and Voice

- 7.1. Council recognises that children and young people have the right to safety, dignity, respect, participation and to be taken seriously. Council also recognises that children and young people are more likely to feel safe and speak up when they are given information they can understand, are listened to respectfully, and are supported to raise questions, concerns and ideas.
- 7.2. Where appropriate to the service, activity or setting, Council will support children and young people to:
- receive information in ways they can understand
 - know how to raise a concern or ask for help
 - express their views about matters affecting them
 - participate in decisions affecting them in age-appropriate and developmentally appropriate ways
 - have their views considered and responded to respectfully.
- 7.3. Council will seek to provide child-friendly and accessible ways for children and young people to speak up, ask questions, provide feedback and raise concerns.
- 7.4. Further information about child-friendly reporting and response pathways is set out in the Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Process and related child-friendly complaint or reporting information.

8. Families, Carers and Community

- 8.1. Council recognises that families, carers and community members are important partners in promoting child safety and wellbeing. Council also recognises that, in many local government settings, children and young people access public facilities, shared spaces and community activities where parents, carers, hirers, user groups or other responsible adults may retain primary supervision responsibilities.

Council will, where relevant to the service, activity or setting:

- provide clear information about Council's child safe approach
- encourage families and carers to raise questions, feedback and concerns
- communicate child safe expectations and reporting pathways

- work respectfully with families and carers when responding to concerns, where appropriate and safe to do so
- communicate relevant supervision, behaviour and safety expectations in public, shared-use or open-access settings.

8.2. Council will communicate shared responsibilities clearly where relevant through facility conditions of use, signage, bookings, event information, community information or other guidance.

8.3. Relevant expectations and information may also be communicated through the Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Process, child-friendly or family-friendly information, facility hire and use conditions, signage, website content and other public-facing guidance.

9. Equity, Inclusion and Cultural Safety

9.1. Council is committed to creating environments that are inclusive, respectful and safe for all children and young people.

9.2. Council recognises that children and young people have different identities, experiences, strengths, needs and vulnerabilities, and that some may face additional barriers to safety, participation, inclusion, being heard, or accessing support.

9.3. Council will take reasonable steps to ensure its child safe approach reflects the diverse needs, experiences and vulnerabilities of children and young people, including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- children and young people who identify as LGBTQIA+
- children and young people with disability or developmental needs
- children and young people who may be vulnerable due to family, social, economic or community circumstances.

9.4. Council recognises that a child's identity, culture, language, disability, developmental needs, gender, sexuality, family circumstances and lived experience may shape how safe they feel, how they communicate, and what support or adjustments may be needed.

9.5. Council is committed to creating environments that are culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. Council will work to ensure its leadership, policy, practice, communication and service delivery uphold the right of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children to cultural safety, connection and respect. Council will also seek to support culturally safe practice through respectful engagement and, where appropriate, codesign approaches with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and relevant advisory groups or committees.

9.6. Council will also support accessibility through inclusive communication, reasonable adjustments and respectful engagement where appropriate.

9.7. This section should be read together with Council's Statement of Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Safety and any related inclusion, accessibility or cultural safety guidance adopted by Council.

10. People Working with Children

10.1. Council will take reasonable steps to ensure that people engaged in child-related roles, or in roles that involve or may involve contact with children, are suitable, supported and accountable.

10.2. Council recognises that child safe practice depends not only on screening and recruitment, but also on clear expectations, induction, supervision, conduct, training, support and early action where concerns arise.

10.3. Depending on the role and setting, this may include:

- recruitment and selection processes that address child safety responsibilities
- referee checks and other pre-engagement checks
- Blue Card and other required screening or checks, where applicable
- clear position descriptions and role expectations
- induction into child safe obligations, the Child Safe Code of Conduct and reporting requirements
- supervision, training and performance management processes
- action where concerns arise about conduct, suitability or compliance.

10.4. No person will be permitted to undertake child-related duties without required screening, checks or approvals where these are legally required or determined by Council as necessary for the role.

11. Screening Requirements, Working with Children's Check – QLD Blue Card

- 11.1. All workers/council personnel engaged in child-related duties must comply with the requirements of the Working with Children Check (Blue Card system) under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld).
- 11.2. Under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld), "child-related work" is not a single standalone definition but is captured through the concepts of regulated employment and regulated businesses.
- 11.3. A person is undertaking child-related work where they are engaged in a role that is carried out in a regulated employment category or for a regulated business, and their usual duties include, or are likely to include, contact with children as part of those activities (e.g. school holiday program/activity workers, face-painters etc). Regulated employment is specifically prescribed in the Act and includes sectors such as education and care services, child accommodation services, religious organisations, sport and recreation, health services, and other child-focused services.
- 11.4. The requirement to hold a Blue Card applies where the work falls within one of these regulated categories and is not otherwise exempt under the Act. Work that involves incidental or infrequent contact with children, or that occurs outside a regulated category, does not constitute child-related work for the purposes of the legislation.
- 11.5. Council reserves the right to request additional checks i.e. national police check, alongside the working with children's screening (blue card).
- 11.6. Council reserves the right to request working with children clearance screening for incidental work related to children not covered specifically by the Working with Children Check (Blue Card system) under the Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld), where able to be issued.
- 11.7. Council is responsible to ensure all workers/personnel children's screening checks (blue cards) are current and currency is maintained.
- 11.8. A current and valid Blue Card or Exemption Card must be held prior to the commencement of all child-related work, and councils must verify and record the status of all workers through the Blue Card Services portal.
- 11.9. It is an offence under the Act for a disqualified person to apply for or hold a Blue Card, and for the Council to knowingly engage such individuals in regulated employment.
- 11.10. Council must ensure that all screening, record keeping and risk management practices align with legislative requirements and support a safe environment for children and young people.
- 11.11. Further detail about behavioural expectations is set out in the Child Safe Code of Conduct. Further detail about screening, recruitment, induction, supervision and role-specific requirements may be set out in relevant recruitment, screening, induction, supervision and workforce management documents.

12. Contractors, Hirers, Partners and Third Parties

- 12.1. Council recognises that children may be present in Council-managed facilities, services and activities delivered by contractors, funded partners, community groups, lessees, hirers, licensees and other third parties.
- 12.2. Council will take reasonable steps to ensure that relevant third parties understand and comply with applicable child safe expectations in connection with their role, service, activity or use of Council facilities.
- 12.3. Where relevant, Council will set child safe expectations through contracts, agreements, procurement processes, bookings, permits, site access conditions, induction requirements, supervision arrangements, codes of conduct and incident notification requirements.
- 12.4. Depending on the nature of the service, activity or facility use, third parties may be required to:
 - comply with relevant child safe expectations and conduct requirements
 - hold required screening or licences
 - provide evidence of child safe policies, procedures or risk controls
 - understand reporting and escalation requirements
 - take reasonable steps to support child safety within the scope of their role or use of Council facilities.
- 12.5. Council may take action where child safe requirements are not met, including escalation, corrective action, restriction of access, suspension or termination of an arrangement where appropriate.
- 12.6. Relevant child safe expectations may also be set out in contracts, procurement documents, bookings, permits, licences, facility hire and use conditions, local instructions and contractor or third-party child safe guidance.

13. Physical, Online and Service Environments

- 13.1. Council will take reasonable and proportionate steps to identify, assess and reduce child safety risks in the physical, online and service environments within its control.
- 13.2. Council recognises that child safety risks may arise in directly delivered services, staffed programs, public facilities, online environments, shared-use spaces and open-access settings.
- 13.3. Council also recognises that, in some environments, its control over who is present or how spaces are used may be limited. In these settings, Council will still take practical steps within its control to support child safety. This may include:
 - environmental design and visibility measures
 - risk assessments and site-specific controls
 - supervision arrangements appropriate to the setting
 - management of visitors, contractors and facility users, where relevant
 - codes of behaviour and conditions of entry or use
 - safe use of technology and online communication
 - clear reporting and escalation processes
 - signage, information and communication about expected behaviour and supervision responsibilities.
- 13.4. Further detail about risk identification, environmental controls and supervision expectations is set out in the Child Safety Risk Framework and the Supervision and Duty of Care Policy and Procedure.

14. Complaints, Concerns and Reporting

- 14.1. Council will maintain clear, accessible and child-focused processes for raising, receiving, responding to an escalating child safety concerns, complaints, allegations, disclosures, incidents and breaches.

- 14.2. All Council personnel must act on any child safety concern immediately. All concerns must be taken seriously, including concerns raised directly by a child or young person, by a family member, by another person on behalf of a child, or through observation, disclosure, complaint or allegation.
- 14.3. If a child is in immediate danger, call 000. If criminal conduct is suspected, report to Queensland Police. Internal reporting requirements apply in addition to, not instead of, any legal obligation to report to external authorities.
- 14.4. Council recognises that some workers may also hold legally mandatory reporting obligations under Queensland law and must comply with those obligations. Council reserves the right through this policy to enforce that all workers report all applicable child safety concerns to the appropriate statutory authorities regardless of their legally mandatory reporting obligations. This reporting standard is line with the Councils child safety statement.
- 14.5. Council will respond to child safety concerns in a way that is, as far as possible:
- child-focused
 - timely
 - fair
 - respectful
 - trauma-informed
 - culturally responsive
 - consistent with privacy, confidentiality and information-sharing requirements.
- 14.6. Detailed reporting, complaint handling, escalation and response requirements are set out in the Child Safety Complaints and Reporting Process and other relevant procedures.

15. Education, Training and Support

- 15.1. Council will provide child safety education, training and support appropriate to roles and responsibilities. This may include induction, refresher training, leadership briefings, role-specific guidance and access to support materials on topics such as:
- mandatory reporting
 - child safe responsibilities
 - trauma informed practice
 - regulatory updates
 - recognising and responding to concerns
 - professional boundaries
 - respectful behaviour
 - cultural safety and inclusion
 - reporting and escalation pathways
 - online safety and communication expectations.
- 15.2. Council will also support managers and relevant child safety contacts to implement this Policy in practice and will review training and support needs over time to strengthen child safe capability.
- 15.3. Further guidance about communication, implementation and workforce rollout may be set out in the Guidelines for the Rollout of the Child Safe Policy Suite, induction materials, training resources and relevant role descriptions.

16. Roles and Responsibilities

16.1. Council and Chief Executive Officer

Council and the Chief Executive Officer are responsible for endorsing and supporting the implementation of this Policy, allocating resources, and ensuring child safety is reflected in governance, risk management and decision-making.

16.2. Executive managers

Executive leaders and managers are responsible for implementing this Policy in their areas of responsibility, supporting child safe practice, monitoring compliance, responding appropriately to concerns, and ensuring relevant induction, supervision and risk controls are in place.

16.3. Council personnel

All Council personnel must:

- comply with this Policy and related child safe documents
- uphold the Child Safe Code of Conduct
- act on child safety concerns and report them promptly
- contribute to safe, respectful and inclusive environments
- participate in required induction, training and supervision
- cooperate with lawful directions, investigations and corrective action relating to child safety.

16.4. Child Safe Lead (Delegated Child Safety Contact)

The Child Safe Lead, Child Safety Officer, or other delegated child safety contact provides advice, coordination and support in relation to child safe practice, reporting, escalation, guidance, monitoring and continuous improvement.

16.5. Contractors, volunteers and third parties

Contractors, volunteers and third parties must comply with relevant child safe expectations applying to their role, service, activity or access to Council facilities.

16.6. Families, carers and community members

Families, carers and community members are encouraged to support child safety by understanding Council's child safe approach, following relevant conditions of use, and raising concerns where needed.

More detailed responsibilities for particular roles may be set out in relevant position descriptions, delegation instruments, the Child Safe Lead / Child Safety Officer role description, the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and related procedures or local instructions.

17. Communication and Accessibility

Council will take reasonable steps to ensure this Policy and related child safe information are communicated in ways that are accessible and appropriate to different audiences, including Council personnel, children and young people, families, carers, communities and relevant third parties.

This may include:

- making the Policy publicly available
- providing child-friendly and family-friendly information
- publishing or displaying key child safe commitments and reporting information
- providing information in alternative formats, where, reasonably practicable
- supporting understanding through induction, briefing, signage, website content or local guidance.

Further guidance about communication, publication, accessibility and local rollout may be set out in the Guidelines for the Rollout of the Child Safe Policy Suite, public-facing child safe information, signage and related guidance materials.

18. Accessibility, Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement

- 18.1. Council will monitor the implementation of this Policy and use feedback, incidents, complaints, risk information, audits, reviews and other relevant information to strengthen child safe practice over time.
- 18.2. Council recognises that effective child safe practice requires ongoing review, learning and improvement. Council will take reasonable steps to identify gaps, respond to emerging risks, and improve the effectiveness of its child safe systems, controls and communication over time.
- 18.3. This Policy will be reviewed at least every two years, or earlier if required due to legislative change, organisational change, service changes, identified risk, incident trends, or review findings.
- 18.4. Monitoring and review activities may also be informed by the Child Safety Risk Framework, related procedures, implementation guidance, incidents, complaints, feedback and other relevant review processes.
- 18.5. Child Safe Standards commenced from 1 October 2025. The Reportable Conduct Scheme commences for all reporting entities on 1 July 2026.
- 18.6. This policy is available on the council's website and internal intranet.
- 18.7. This policy is provided electronically (and available in hard copy as requested) to all families of all children and young people receiving services and/or who are registered with us.
- 18.8. This policy must be adhered to by all council personnel and will be made available electronically (or hard copy), prior to engagement.

19. Related Documents (External)

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld) <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1991-085>
- Blue Card Services (Queensland Government)
<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/laws-regulated-industries-and-accountability/queensland-laws-and-regulations/regulated-industries-and-licensing/blue-card>
- Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy requirements
<https://www.qld.gov.au/law/laws-regulated-industries-and-accountability/queensland-laws-and-regulations/regulated-industries-and-licensing/blue-card/child-and-youth-risk-management-strategy>
- Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (Qld) <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/whole/html/asmade/act-2024-049>
- Child Protection Act 1999 (Qld) <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-1999-010>
- Child Safe Standards and Universal Principle (Queensland)
(Adopts the National Principles, including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural safety principle)
<https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/sector-support/child-safe-organisations>
- Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld) <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2019-005>
- Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld) <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/whole/html/current/act-2009-014>
- Mandatory Reporting QLD <https://www.families.qld.gov.au/our-work/child-safety/about-child-protection/mandatory-reporting>
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations <https://www.childsafety.gov.au/resources/national-principles-child-safe-organisations>
- National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth) <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2013A00020>
- NDIS Code of Conduct Rules 2018
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2018L00625>
- NDIS Provider Registration and Practice Standards Rules 2018
<https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2018L00630>
- NDIS Practice Standards <https://www.ndiscommission.gov.au/providers/ndis-practice-standards>
- Public Records Act 2023 (Qld) <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/whole/html/asmade/act-2023-033>
- Privacy Act 1988 (Cth) <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/C2004A03712>
- Queensland Police emergency and Policelink reporting information
QPS Policelink (131 444) for non-urgent reporting; Triple Zero (000) in emergencies.
<https://www.police.qld.gov.au/policelink-reporting>
- Queensland Child Safe Standards and Queensland Family and Child Commission guidance
<https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/childsafestandards>

- Reportable Conduct Scheme Guidance (QFCC) <https://www.qfcc.qld.gov.au/publication/guide-queenslands-reportable-conduct-scheme>
- Report child abuse – Department of Child Safety (Regional Intake Service; After Hours 1800 177 135).
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld) <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2000-060>
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld) <https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/act-2000-001>

20. Policy Review

The policy is to be reviewed in accordance with the Policy Framework.

Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council reserves the right to vary, replace, or terminate this policy from time to time.

21. Approval

This policy was duly authorised by the Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council on 28 July 2026 as Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and shall hereby supersede any previous policies of the same intent.