

Y Community School Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

1. Purpose:

This policy outlines how Y Community School protects the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at the school and how the school implements both the requirements and the spirit of Victoria's Child Safe Standards including Ministerial Order 1359 of the Victorian Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

2. Scope:

This policy applies to all employees, volunteers and contractors at the Y Community School including any events or excursions as well as any Y People from other areas of the Y while they are attending the school as part of their duties.

3. Definitions:

- **Y Person/People:** includes employees, volunteers, contractors or sub-contractors, labour hire employees, apprentices or trainees and volunteers involved with the activities of the Y Whittlesea. It also includes Y Whittlesea Board members and any person serving the Y Whittlesea on a committee or in an advisory capacity.
- **'The Y' or 'Y' or 'Y Whittlesea':** refer to YMCA Whittlesea Inc and YMCA Whittlesea Youth and Community Services Ltd.
- **Staff:** Any person performing duties on behalf of the Y Community School be they an employee, volunteer, trainee or contractor.
- **School:** Refers to the Y Community School noting that the legal entity through which the school is registered is YMCA Whittlesea Youth and Community Services Ltd
- **Parent:** The term parent is used to refer to parent(s), and legal guardians. In the case of students who are adults or who have been deemed to have independent status the parent refers to the student and they should sign this agreement in their own right. There may be instances where a disengaged young person resides with an adult carer who does not have legal status as their legal guardian. In this instance, where all reasonable attempts to contact a parent have been undertaken and an Informal Carer Statutory Declaration has been completed, that carer may sign documents in the place of the parent.
- **Child abuse:** includes:
 - a) any act committed against a child involving:
 - o a sexual offence
 - o grooming offences under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958
 - b) the infliction, on a child, of:
 - o physical violence
 - o serious emotional or psychological harm
 - c) the serious neglect of a child.
- **Aboriginal:** the term Aboriginal in this policy includes both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. In applying this policy it is important to be respectful of how individual children, students, their families and community refer to themselves, and use appropriate language when referring to individuals or communities.

4. Policy:

Y Community School as part of Y Whittlesea and the broader YMCA movement is committed to child safety and to protecting children from abuse and harm.

The school is part of a multilayered approach which includes school based, Y Whittlesea and Y Australia arrangements which work together for the safety and wellbeing of children.

The school's approach to each of the 11 Child Safe Standards is outlined below.

Standard 1: The school will establish culturally safe environments in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children, young people and students are respected and valued. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

Supporting Aboriginal students to learn about and express their culture and provide an environment where staff and students understand and support their culture and their need to express this.



Including specific sessions regarding the history of Aboriginal people in the area as part of the Mind Body Spirit curriculum delivered to support student's wellbeing. Wherever possible families and community members will be invited to contribute to this and speak to students about their perspectives and experiences.

Ensuring that all staff are exposed to education and training regarding Aboriginal culture and identity and its importance to young people. Wherever possible this will be achieved with the input and support of the local indigenous community. There will be a minimum of one formal professional development session for all staff each year focussing on Aboriginal culture and identity.

The school's approach to individual planning for students will be used as an opportunity for students from Aboriginal backgrounds to explore their identities and cultures and also give other students the opportunity to explore Aboriginal culture through their negotiated projects. Students will have the opportunity to develop co-constructed curriculum relevant to Aboriginal culture and to engage with community in doing so. Curriculum activities within classes will showcase Aboriginal culture to all students and promote cultural awareness.

Important symbols of Aboriginal culture and identity (Aboriginal Flag, artwork etc) will be on display at the school and the school will celebrate events of significance to Aboriginal people such as Naidoc week.

Y Whittlesea is developing an 'innovate' level Reconciliation Action Plan (as of December 2023 this is with Reconciliation Australia pending feedback and authorisation). This includes identifying key members of the local Aboriginal community to support Y Whittlesea, including the school, to strengthen relationships with the local community. It also includes increasing the number of indigenous employees and this is a priority for action in staffing the school.

Families of Aboriginal students will be invited to contribute to the planning for their children and to assist in identifying how student's cultural identity can be featured in their individual learning plans and the work they undertake to achieve their qualifications at the school. Wherever appropriate family members will be invited to the school to contribute to events through activities such as welcome to country, speaking about and showcasing their culture and supporting the school staff to educate students and staff about the history and culture of the local Aboriginal people and the occupation of their lands.

The school's *Student Engagement and Management Policy* and *Bullying and Harassment Policy* will be used to respond to any incidents of racism. In line with the school's approach to restorative practices, students who engage in racist behaviours will be required to undertake educational activities designed to address and change their behaviours.

The above actions are underpinned by the *Y Whittlesea Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People*.

Standard 2: Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in leadership, governance and culture. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

Child safety and safeguarding is embedded across the various layers of the YMCA organisation and as a requirement of its licensing by YMCA Australia. Y Whittlesea and the Y Community School is party to the national YMCA Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and is independently audited for compliance by the Australian Childhood Foundation.

Y Whittlesea enacts the Y Safeguarding Framework (national) and the YMCA(Aust) Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy with an addendum specific to the Victorian context and Y Whittlesea.

All staff at Y Whittlesea, including the school, acknowledge their commitment to the *Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement* and the *eCommitment* and the Safe Behaviours poster is displayed at all sites. Understanding these three documents will be included as part of the induction for all staff. The commitment statement, eCommitment and Safe Behaviours poster along with information regarding the YMCA's *Stay Safe, Tell Someone* programme will be published via the school's website and displayed at the school campus.

At the school level the Principal, Campus Principal and Head of Wellbeing are nominated as child safety officers within the school. Information regarding their role will be displayed for staff and students at the school campus. They are responsible to liaise with Y Whittlesea's Safeguarding Lead.

A Child Safety Risk Assessment and register will be developed and maintained for the school. This will be reviewed at least once each year no later than the end of February or more often as indicated in the risk register. The register is to be reviewed by the school leadership team with the review process to be led by the principal.

The principal will report to the Y Youth and Community Services Ltd. Board regarding:

- The status of the Child Safe Risk Assessment.
- The risk register.
- Progress on any risk mitigation strategies.
- Any significant incidents regarding child safety or indicating previously unidentified risks.

The school through the principal will ensure all requirements of the Child Information Sharing Scheme and the Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme are:

- Included in staff training, and regularly discussed at staff meeting and forums.
- Actively supported through school leadership.
- Fully complied with.

Records relating to child safety and wellbeing will be retained for the periods as proscribed through the public Records Office. A summary of these requirements is below with further detail available from [Microsoft Word - PROS 19-08 FINAL issued 20190710.docx \(prov.vic.gov.au\)](#)

Type of records	Minimum Retention Period
Policy Strategy and Procedure designed to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and prevent abuse; • codify and regulate the response to abuse incidents and allegations; • conduct inquiries, investigations and redress schemes; • manage the outcomes of investigations, including redress schemes 	Permanent
Records of investigations including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • records of the initiating allegation, complaint or disclosure including incident reports • records of investigations carried out including cases referred to external law enforcement agencies • evidence collected and collated including records and transcripts of interviews, witness statements, notes of meetings or discussions • any physical exhibits collected such as photographs and audio-visual records 	99 years
Records of actions taken to address child sexual abuse that has occurred or is alleged to have occurred including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • records relating to any disciplinary action taken • records of any appeals or reviews of organisational decisions • records of cases referred to external law enforcement including legal proceedings or cases heard by other bodies, tribunals or courts and any decisions made Including correspondence and liaison with other government agencies relating to child sexual abuse that has occurred or is alleged to have occurred.	99 years
Records of activities undertaken to provide support and redress include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • records of mediation • records of services provided including counselling or other medical care • records of claims and any resulting compensation. 	99 years
Records of the development of training designed to prevent abuse; including how to identify possible incidents of abuse; the conduct of investigations and training to implement redress schemes. Includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • final high-level strategies and operational plans supporting the development and delivery • plans relating to training assessment and course delivery • master set of material and resources developed for training course delivery. 	45 years

Note: Should the school close, any documents not scheduled for destruction will be maintained in secure storage by Y Whittlesea. Should the Y Whittlesea cease operations all remaining records will be transferred to the Public Record Office Victoria for secure storage.

Documents which are able to be disposed of either because they are duplicates working drafts or have passed the retention periods specified above will be disposed of through the use of a commercial secure document destruction provider which meets the requirements of the Public Records office at that time.

Standard 3: Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

Ensuring that the Y's statement that *We believe in the Power of Inspired Young People* is central to our thinking, planning and actions.

Including information regarding students' rights, how these apply at the school and what to do if they feel unsafe or not listened to are published on the school website and displayed in the physical spaces of the school. These will be in age-appropriate accessible language to support an open, transparent and inclusive culture at the school.

Facilitating a reference group of students, representative of the cohort, to provide ongoing advice and feedback to the school leadership and staff as to all aspects of the school including the creation of a safe environment, appropriate programs, and a culture and environment supportive of young people to raise concerns and actively contribute to decision making at the school. The feedback and advice from this group will be shared with all staff and volunteers to ensure those working with students understand the student perspective.

Student involved in the reference group will be provided with opportunities to meet with classes and the student cohort as a whole, to consult with them and ensure the reference group is able to represent the views of the entire cohort. The reference group will provide input into policy and procedure reviews, the organisation of the school's program and will have the opportunity to raise matters of significance to them. They will meet with school leadership at least once / month.

Dedicating time to topics including, relationships, development of social skills, personal rights and responsibilities, safe behaviours, sex education including consent and respectful relationships, drug and alcohol education and social responsibilities in the school's timetable. This will be timetabled as regular sessions within the timetable designated as the Mind, Body Spirit, Curriculum. The school's Head of Wellbeing and the Teaching and Learning Leader will be responsible to develop resources and a schedule of activities based on assessment of student needs. The school will collaborate with the Y Vocational School in Brisbane who have an established Thrive Curriculum with associated resources which can further support our students and staff.

Each day in the school routine begins with a class check in and circle time which, as well as regular campus wide gatherings, will be used as an open forum for students. The small size of student groupings and overall campus size enable direct democratic approaches and participative decision making. The approach and philosophy of the school is built on co construction of learning and lends itself to direct involvement by students in all aspects of school life.

Using restorative approaches to any instances of breakdown in relationships or interpersonal conflict, the emphasis being on restoration of relationships and identifying positive strategies for parties to be and work together.

Using opportunities based on students' areas of interest to engage students in real world problem solving and social participation through the development of individual learning plans aligned with the Victorian Pathways Certificate and VCE Vocational Major.

Standard 4: Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

Involving parents and other adults significant to the student in discussions, meetings and decisions regarding the safety and wellbeing of their child. Teachers and the wellbeing team will be the key vehicle for this communication, and it is an expectation of teachers that they build positive relationships and establish regular communication about all aspects of a student's education including their safety and wellbeing.

The above statement will be implemented with due consideration of the circumstances of any child and family including any risks which exist and the age and wishes of the student.

Applying the principles of informed consent to activities within the school and any excursions and events outside the school. The nature of the student cohort and the likelihood of traumas and other triggers make this an important aspect of preparing students for activities which may trigger distress and ensuring these can be managed with safety and wellbeing as a priority.



Inviting local service providers and agencies to be involved in the school and in particular as a venue to meet and support young people in need and in the delivery of content for the Mind, Body, Spirit Curriculum.

Publishing information regarding the school's approach to child safety on the school's website, including this policy, the Safe Behaviours guide and information about the Stay Safe Tell Someone programme.

Inviting parents and students to contribute to the review of this policy and the strategies identified in it.

Using regular parent bulletins, via the school's student management software, and other communications to advise parents of activities, events changes in practice and any other matters related to child safety and wellbeing.

Standard 5: Equity is upheld, and diverse needs respected in policy and practice. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

The ethos and approach of the school is focussed on recognising the individual and is facilitated by small campus size, class groups and a strong emphasis on relational aspects of learning. These factors inherently support equity, inclusiveness and recognition of diversity.

The school's approach to individual planning for students will be used as an opportunity for students to explore their individual interests, identities and cultures. Students will have the opportunity to develop co-constructed curriculum that allows for their diverse interests, backgrounds and needs to be the focus of their learning and skill development. Curriculum activities within classes will showcase the diversity of the student cohort and drive inclusiveness. Sexuality including the diversity of genders and preferences and respectful relationships focus will be included within the Mind, Body, Spirit Curriculum a dedicated time allocation for wellbeing.

Teachers and students will regularly undertake activities within the community as part of the schools applied learning and interest-based approach. Students will experience the diversity of their community, and this will be used as an opportunity for learning and for teachers to explore with their classes how a diverse and inclusive community functions.

Each class group begins the day with a class check in and circle time. This provides an opportunity for all students to have a relational connection with others in their group and to be aware of the individual differences between them and their common humanity. Regular whole campus gatherings will support broader relationships and understanding across the campus.

Staff training including induction will include diversity and inclusivity training. To cater for the high proportion of students likely to be considered to have a disability under the criteria in the disability discrimination act, regular sessions at staff meetings will focus on making reasonable adjustments and this will be a professional development focus for all staff.

Standard 6: People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

The Y Whittlesea Human Resources Policy specifies a rigorous and merit-based selection process and the requirement for all employees to have appropriate clearance to work with children through the Working With Children Check or Victorian Institute of Teaching registration.

In recruiting and selecting staff, including volunteers, the school and Y Whittlesea HR department will ensure that all employees are appropriately screened with regard to working with children and the suitability of their role. This includes:

- Screen for the safety of a person to be able to work with children. This could be a Working With Children Clearance or registration with the Victorian Institute of Teaching.
- Verifying the identity of the person being employed.
- Checking the validity of a person's qualifications.
- Checking the history of a person in working with children.
- Sourcing professional references for a potential employee which address their suitability for the role being recruited to and their suitability to work with children and young people.
- Undertaking a police check and where relevant an international police check.

As part of the recruiting process all positions advertised will contain information including the position description which outlines the requirements, duties, and responsibilities with regard to child safety and which references and contains links to the relevant documents including the Child Safe Code of Conduct.

All staff at the Y Whittlesea undergo an induction process which includes child safety. The following modules are undertaken by all staff:

- Annual Mandatory Safeguarding Training – This includes the following policies procedures and documents and an online assessment of the staff understanding. Staff are required to have completed these modules prior to commencement of duties.
 - YMCA Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy
 - Safeguarding Children Young and Vulnerable People Procedure
 - Social Media Policy
 - Practice and Behaviour Guidelines
 - Safe behaviours
 - Employee and Volunteer Disclosure of Pre-existing relationships
 - Parents Guardians Safeguarding Guidelines
 - Reportable Conduct Scheme Scope and Procedure
 - Safeguarding Commitment
- After commencement all Y Whittlesea staff also undertake modules further modules in their first month of employment including:
 - Anti Bullying and Harassment,
 - Diversity Equity and Inclusion,
 - Incident reporting
 - Privacy Policy

In addition to the above training for all Y Whittlesea staff those employed at the school will undertake further induction including:

- YCS Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy,
- YCS Child Safe Code of Conduct
- YCS Safeguarding Procedure
 - Note this includes a link to information regarding the signs of child abuse at [Identify child abuse | schools.vic.gov.au](https://www.identifychildabuse|schools.vic.gov.au) This will form part of the induction and discussion with staff.
- YCS Code of conduct (Students staff and parents) - Staff are expected to sign and acknowledge this.
- YCS Student Engagement and Management Policy
- YCS Bullying and Harassment Policy
- YCS Camps and Excursions Policy
- YCS Restraint and Seclusion Policy
- Victorian Child Information Sharing Scheme and Family Violence Information Sharing Schemes

Each new staff member will be supported to understand these policies by being assigned a mentor, provided with time to read understand and discuss them and through discussion of their application during the induction process.

The above induction topics ensure staff familiarity with their child safety obligations and the practices of the school. These will be reviewed annually by all staff either through a whole staff meeting or, for those unable to attend, on an individual basis.

Volunteers including student placements are a welcome addition to the school providing opportunities for community connection, additional adult support for students and the opportunity to contribute to training of professionals and possibly recruit valuable staff in the future. As part of Y Whittlesea all volunteers and student placements at the school are subject to the Y Whittlesea's Student and Volunteers policy and Procedure. This includes requirements that volunteers, including placement students:

- Are appropriately selected and supported.
- Are subject to national police and Working with Children checks.
- Undertake the key safeguarding trainings.
- Are supervised and managed to ensure a good experience for them and the safety of children and staff.

Further detail regarding training and supervision of volunteers is included under standard 8.

The compliance of employees and volunteers in having completed the above training modules is recorded and monitored through the Y Whittlesea's *Y-Mac* system (digital records system built using World Manager). Working with Children Check and Victorian Institute of Teaching registration details and expiry dates are

recorded in the *Humanforce* HR system. The principal is responsible to monitor these and take any action regarding staff with pending training requirements or expiring registrations.

To ensure appropriate monitoring, all staff will participate in structured review processes through the course of their employment. In their induction period all staff undertake 1, 3 and 5 month probation reviews. The probation review focuses on all aspects of the work and has a specific section relating to their safeguarding obligations. All staff undertake annual performance reviews which include a section regarding their safeguarding obligations. The probation and annual reviews are documented and recorded as part of each person's personnel file.

At a less formal level school staff and team meetings include a standing agenda item regarding child safety to ensure that there is culture of open discussion regarding child safety at the school and that staff are encouraged to raise concerns and develop collective responsibility and efficacy. The school's child safety officers are responsible to ensure this occurs and to champion the culture of child safety with all staff.

As identified under standard 8 each volunteer has a designated 'manager' who will meet regularly with the volunteer to ensure support and management of their engagement is in place. The frequency of these meetings will be proportionate to the volunteer's frequency of attendance at the school. The minimum level will be meetings of once / term for volunteers who attend only occasionally. At these regular meetings the manager is responsible to ensure they discuss the child safety aspects of the volunteers engagement and that they canvass any concerns, identify points for development, check the volunteer's level of understanding and ensure that they are responding to and reporting any concerns they have or may become aware of.

Standard 7: Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

The YMCA Safeguarding Policy is available as a teen and youth friendly version both via the website and for visual display at the school.

The Stay Safe Say Something programme and resources provide a clear simple message for visual display at all sites and via the website to encourage all young people to speak out about any concerns.

The Y Whittlesea and the school ensures all children and young people, or their parents can easily make a complaint or raise a concern regarding their safety through the '*raise a concern*' link available on the Y Whittlesea and The Y Community School webpages.

Where a complaint is identified which involves child safety, the *Y Whittlesea Safeguarding Procedure* will be followed. This procedure is presented with simple visuals and will be shared with young people and families who have made a complaint and is available on the school website.

Records of any complaints which may be considered as constituting child abuse will be retained and dealt with in accordance with the information documented under standard 2 above.

Standard 8: Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

Board members undertake the YMCA Safeguarding training as a part of their induction as new board members. The board undertakes annual safeguarding training at a board meeting and will receive a detailed annual briefing covering implementation of the school's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and framework, child safety risk register, mitigation strategies and progress on treatment plans on an annual basis. A specific focus of the training undertaken by the board members is their individual and collective obligations and responsibilities for implementing the Child Safe Standards and managing the risk of child abuse.

As identified above in response to standard 6 there is an extensive induction process for all staff and as well as an induction for volunteers which ensures they are well versed in the policies procedures and importance of child safety. All staff will revisit these annually which will be done as a whole staff professional development activity thereby prompting discussion and reinforcement of a culture of child safety. Any staff not able to attend this session will be required to complete the annual training individually and follow up with school leadership.

Annual training for staff

The principal will ensure that all staff undertake annual training in child safety and that the participation of all staff in this training is monitored and recorded. This training will be undertaken as a collective group to ensure that discussion and a supportive learning environment can occur. This will be either through the use of a

closure day or a series of staff meetings covering the required topics. Staff who are not present for all or part of the training will be required to meet 1:1 with their manager to review and discuss the material they have missed.

The training will use as the basis of its structure the *YCS Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy* and the *YCS Safeguarding Procedure*. The key topics will include:

- A review of:
 - YCS Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
 - The YCS Child Safe Code of Conduct
 - YCS Safeguarding Procedure
- The indicators of child abuse or harm including harm caused by other children and students.
- Responding effectively to of child safety and wellbeing.
- Using child friendly strategies and language to support students to express their views, participate in decision making and raise their concerns. The chart “Managing Disclosures” in the Safeguarding Procedure will be used as a basis for staff discussion and development in this area.
- Supporting colleagues who may have disclosed harm.
- Different types of reporting in relation to child abuse and the obligations attached to each reporting type.
- Building culturally safe environments for children and students. This will include specific content regarding first nations students and wherever possible will involve members of the local indigenous community in providing advice and strategies regarding students from an indigenous background.
- Information sharing and recordkeeping obligations in relation to child abuse which are consistent with the requirements of the Public Record Office of Victoria Recordkeeping requirements.
- Identifying and mitigating child safety and wellbeing risks in the school's environment without compromising a child or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

Volunteers:

Any volunteers who attend the school will be managed in accordance with Y Whittlesea's Student and Placement Policy and Procedure. Each volunteer will meet with one of either the principal, Campus Principal or Wellbeing Leader who will be appointed as their 'manager' and will be responsible for overseeing their volunteer role at the school.

Prior to commencement at the school all volunteers will be required to:

- Review the *YCS Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy*, *YCS Safeguarding Procedure* and the *YCS Child Safe Code of Conduct*.
- Discuss the 3 documents above with the school leader overseeing their placement.

Each volunteer's manager will determine whether any of the following further training is required:

- The indicators of child abuse or harm including harm caused by other children and students.
- Responding effectively to of child safety and wellbeing.
- Supporting colleagues who may have disclosed harm.
- Different types of reporting in relation to child abuse and the obligations attached to each reporting type.
- Building culturally safe environments for children and students.
- Information sharing and recordkeeping obligations in relation to child abuse which are consistent with the requirements of the Public Record Office of Victoria Recordkeeping requirements.
- Identifying and mitigating child safety and wellbeing risks in the school's environment without compromising a child or student's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities.

In determining the need for additional training, the manager will consider:

- The types of activities they will be involved in at the school with a specific emphasis on the level and type of contact and engagement they will have with children.
- The level of direct oversight they will have from staff members while in attendance at the school.
- The qualifications, skills and experience the volunteer has specifically focussing on experience working with vulnerable young people.
- Any evidence of prior training the volunteer provides.

Where appropriate volunteers will be invited to attend the training and development sessions for school staff to assist them in developing their skills and experiencing and participating the professional dialogue with school staff.

Through the course of their engagement as volunteers their manager will meet with them at regular intervals dependent on the frequency of their attendance to ensure they have appropriate support and supervision. The manager will ensure that when they meet with the volunteer one of the items discussed is the volunteer's experiences and responses in relation to child safety and their level of knowledge, understanding and any support required to ensure they are able to

respond appropriately to any matters which come not their attention. Should any further training or support be required the manager will ensure this is provided as soon as practicable.

The principal is responsible to ensure compliance with this training requirement and ensure it is recorded on the *Humanforce* HR system.

Child safety will be a standing agenda item at all school staff meetings and any matters raised which identify further training and development needs for staff will be followed up at subsequent meetings or used to source appropriate external development.

Standard 9: Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

Including cyber safety as a regular topic for professional development for all staff through inclusion at either a closure day or a dedicated staff meeting at least once per term to ensure staff are aware of current developments resources and approaches in what is a rapidly changing area. The focus of these sessions will be in supporting staff to understand the risks to young people in online environments and how to mitigate those risks without compromising the child or young person's right to privacy, access to information, social connections and learning opportunities. Identifying a staff member with the interest and skills to become a champion in this area and resourcing time for that person to attend professional development and engage with the resources (e.g. those produced by the eSafety Commissioner).

Ensuring all students are aware of, discuss and agree to the ICT code of conduct when they enrol at the school.

Including online safety within the structured wellbeing lessons as part of the Mind, Body, Spirit Curriculum, as well as opportunistically as issues arise within class work.

Implementing managed systems for online access within the school which are firewalled, filtered and monitored to reduce risks.

Use of preferred suppliers for any services delivered on the school campus with requirement for these suppliers to acknowledge the school's child safety commitment and code of conduct as well as providing Working with Children Checks for all people attending the site.

Using standardised contracts for the delivery of any curriculum or program services. Contracts will ensure providers meet the requirements for appropriate skills and qualifications, vetting of staff for child safety and child safety commitment on the part of the provider. Evidence of these will be provided to the school by the contractor.

Ensuring program providers for excursions and camps meet the requirements for appropriate skills and qualifications, vetting of staff for child safety including Working with Children Checks and child safety commitment on the part of the provider. It is a requirement of the event organiser and the approver to ensure evidence of these will be provided to the school by the provider.

Standard 10: Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

Inclusion of Child Safety as a standing agenda item at staff and leadership meetings with the expectation that any child safety issues are identified, discussed and addressed through this process.

Regular review of the practices of the school against this policy and the standards it addresses. This review will be the responsibility of the school leadership team and occur annually. The review will be documented and presented to the board as a report against the standards as part of the annual board briefing. It will include identified areas for improvement with any areas where a significant deficit in practice is identified being recorded in the school's child safety risk register with an appropriate treatment developed.

The board will report on the outcomes of relevant reviews to staff, volunteers, the school community, families and students. This will be achieved through staff meetings, communication via email or school bulletin, direct written communication with individuals involved, or publication on the school's website as relevant.

Undertaking a review of any child safety incident to identify the factors that may have contributed to that incident and identify any improvements in practice that may be evident. Any areas where a significant deficit in practice is identified being recorded in the school's child safety risk register with an appropriate treatment developed.

Undertaking a review of this policy every two years using a consultative process that involves staff, students and families. Any changes identified in related policies, practices and procedures which flow from that will be made as a flow on from that review.

Standard 11: Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people. The school will ensure this standard is met by:

This policy, the school's safeguarding procedure and other policies and procedures connected to keeping children safe have been developed using the best practice resources available through the Commission for Children and Young People and the Victorian Department of Education as well as resources from the YMCA Australia and the audit carried out by the Australian Childhood foundation of Y Whittlesea Safeguarding mechanisms and culture. YMCA's safeguarding policies and especially the Stay Safe Tell Someone resource were developed based on the input from consultation with children and young people from around Australia.

At each point where these policies and procedures are reviewed, the most recent resources available through the Department of Education, the Commission for Children and Young People, the Australian Childhood Foundation and other relevant organisations will be consulted to provide the most recent input.

Reviews of policies and procedures will invite input from young people attending the school, through the student reference group, their families and relevant service providers involved in working with our school, to ensure our policies and procedures are relevant and meeting the needs of the school community.

This policy forms the overarching statement of the school's processes and commitment to the Child Safe Standards. This policy will be included in the induction of all school staff, published on the school's website and discussed at professional development and meetings featuring child safety.

The principal, campus principal and head of wellbeing will be the child safety officers of the school and will have, as part of that responsibility, the role of championing this policy and the school's child safety practices and ensuring that these are implemented to the fullest extent that can be reasonable achieved.

When any query, issue or incident involving child safety arises this policy will be referenced to ensure the school is following the processes it has set out.

5. Related policies:

- YMCA Safeguarding Policy
- YMCA Safeguarding Policy Teen and Youth friendly Version
- YW Human Resources Policy
- YCS Student Engagement and Management Policy
- YCS Bullying and Harassment Policy
- YCS Camps and Excursions Policy
- YW students and Volunteers Policy and procedure

6. Related procedures and supporting documents:

- YCS ICT Code of Conduct
- YW Safeguarding Procedure
- YW Commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Procedure
- YMCA Safeguarding Children and Young People Commitment Statement.
- eComittment.

Note: In the policies and document listed above:

- YMCA refers to national level documents applicable to all YMCAs across Australia,
- YW refers to Y Whittlesea and are applicable across all Y Whittlesea programs and staff,
- YCS refers to Y Community School and is specific to the school context.

7. Legislative and Industry Requirements:

- Education Training and Reform Act 2006 (Vic) – Ministerial Order 1359
- Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2005 (Vic)
- Public Records Act 1973 (Vic)

8. Consequences of breaching this policy:

All elements of this policy must be adhered to, and any breach will be dealt with in accordance with the [YMCA Whittlesea Disciplinary and Termination Policy](#).

9. Variations:

Y Whittlesea reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

10. Policy owner:

The Executive Manager Schools is responsible for keeping this policy current - including making amendments as required, and regular reviews as scheduled.

11. Document Control:

Review of this policy will be undertaken every 2 years, or prior as required by law, in consultation with appropriate Y People.

Policy available on Y-MAC>Communication>Manuals and Files>Policies and Procedures

This document is due for review on 1/12/2025.

Version:	Description of Amendment	Amended by	Approver and date	Release Date
2.1	Addition of specific information regarding recruitment advertisements	Paul van Breugel	Executive Manager Schools	2/05/2024
2.0	Substantial revisions based on feedback from VRQA	Paul van Breugel	Board 4/12/2023	10/1/2024
1.0	Policy Created	Paul van Breugel	Board 26/6/23	1/11/2023