

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

<p>Purpose</p>	<p>Crown Coaches's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines how the organisation prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps it will take to do this. It sets out the organisation's expectations about child safe practices for all staff whilst working with Department of Education clientele as well as all children as part of the wider community. Crown Coaches transports children from all cultural and diverse backgrounds and do not discriminate.</p>
<p>Statement of commitment to child safety</p>	<p>Crown Coaches has a zero tolerance for any form of discrimination or child abuse and is committed to children's best interests and keeping them safe. We value and promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally, linguistically and gender diverse backgrounds and the safety of children with a disability in any interactions between staff and children. As a primary mode of transportation for children to and from school, we aim to create a child safe and child friendly environment where children feel safe.</p>
<p>Scope</p>	<p>The Policy applies to all people who conduct work for, or are connected to, Crown Coaches in a paid capacity. This may include board members, Management Committee, executive leadership, staff, and contractors.</p> <p>Crown Coaches's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy applies to all activities in the organisation which involve, result in or relate to contact with children.</p>
<p>Responsibilities</p>	<p><u>The role of Management and Operation Supervisors/Coordinators</u></p> <p>Management and Operations Supervisors/Coordinators will ensure that children's safety is prioritised and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.</p> <p>Management and Operations Supervisors/Coordinators will champion and model a child safe culture in this organisation. We encourage anyone involved with the organisation to report a child safety concern. Management and Operations Supervisors/Coordinators will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns.</p> <p>Everyone involved in the organisation has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm. Management and Operations Supervisors/Coordinators will support staff to take action to manage risks, in accordance with this policy. We will also ensure that appropriate child safety training for staff is identified and completed.</p> <p>All our child safe policies and practices will be reviewed at the times and in the manner referred to below under 'Review', including an annual review of staff compliance with these policies which will be reflected in the child safe standards review checklist and any resulting non-compliance report.</p> <p><u>The role of the Human Resource and Training Officer</u></p> <p>Is responsible for implementing and complying with aspects of the organisation's child safety and wellbeing including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policy • recruitment and screening practices • staff induction, training, supervision and support • policy or procedure for receiving and responding to complaints • risk assessment and management process

- policies or procedures on external reporting, record keeping and information sharing
- Code of Conduct and Child Safe Code of Conduct.

Employee recruitment

Child safety and wellbeing is central to recruitment, including in any advertisements, and screening processes for staff as outlined in the recruitment and screening policy. We only recruit staff who are appropriate to engage with children.

We require a Working with Children Check and referee checks for all staff who have a role with children or have access to children's personal information. We require staff to have appropriate qualifications for their roles and check to make sure these qualifications are valid. Regular checks are made during a person's employment to ensure they remain valid.

Members of management must also hold a valid Working with Children Check. (A National Police Check through Victoria Police is required as part of Victorian bus operator accreditation.)

Families and communities

Parents and others are invited to provide feedback and raise any safety concerns with us at any time via the school or by phone 03 98451400 or via our email address info@crowngoaches.com.au.

We provide information to families and serviced schools about our child safe policies and practices by:

- providing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct to our serviced school/s on request
- publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Child Safe Code of Conduct on our website

Employee support

All management and staff receive training on induction, and annually or as needed to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety, including information and record keeping obligations, and to support their engagement with children.

Training will be recorded in the business's employee records system (CMS).

Concerns, complaints and reporting

If a staff member has any concerns, the staff member will record the reason and report the information promptly and confidentially to their Operations Supervisor, who will notify the relevant person (for example, the school Principal). Should a driver believe that a matter requires police attention they will advise the operator (and if school services, the Principal) and report the matter to the police.

All reports of child abuse and child safety concerns will be treated seriously, whether they are made by an adult or a child and whether they are about the conduct of an adult or a child. All complaints and child safety concerns will be responded to promptly and thoroughly.

Our complaint handling policy includes information about how a complaint or child safety concern will be responded to and the process to make a complaint, as well as the support available to those making a complaint and those involved in the complaint process.

If a complaint includes an allegation or incident of child abuse or harm, including racism, it must be reported in accordance with the complaint handling policy. All management and staff are required to prioritise children's safety in any response and to report all potentially

criminal conduct to Victoria Police. Under the complaint handling and disciplinary policies, staff may be subject to actions to support child safety including:

- being stood down during an investigation or terminated following an investigation
- having their duties altered so they do not engage with children while at work if this is possible
- not allowing unsupervised contact with children while at work
- removing their access to our IT system and facilities.

Complaints can be made at any time via the school or by phone 03 98451400 or via our email address info@crowngoaches.com.au.

Record keeping

This organisation will make and keep full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns which will be recorded in our MIS incident reporting system.

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

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

Records will be stored securely and kept for a minimum of 6 years.

Information sharing

This organisation may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is lawful, appropriate and in their best interests. We will keep information about complaints confidential, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly to a complaint or to prioritise child safety. We may also need to share information about incidents or complaints with external authorities to comply with the law or to prioritise safety. More information is available in our complaint handling policy.

Risk management

We recognise the importance of identifying, preventing, and reducing risks of child harm and abuse in this organisation. We conduct regular risk assessments and have a risk register (risk management plan) to address the risk of child abuse and harm. The risk management plan has been developed in consultation with our staff. We will ensure that any risk controls put in place balance the need to manage harm with the requirements of contracted student transport. Management is responsible for approving the risk management plan. Staff are to comply with the risk management plan.

Non-compliance with this policy and the Code of Conduct

We will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and related child safety and wellbeing policies (see policies and procedures listed below). Alleged breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement or other corrective action.

Definitions

child abuse means:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a sexual offence committed against a child • an offence committed against a child under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958 (Vic), such as grooming • physical violence against a child • causing serious emotional or psychological harm to a child • serious neglect of a child. <p><u>child/children</u> means a person who is under the age of 18 years.</p> <p><u>complaint</u></p> <p>A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction related to one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • our services or dealings with individuals • allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member or other individual associated with our organisation • disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person • the conduct of a child or young person • the inadequate handling of a prior concern • general concerns about the safety of a group of children or activity. <p><u>concern</u></p> <p>A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.</p> <p><u>harm</u> is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child, including as a result of child abuse by adults or the conduct of other children. It includes physical, emotional, sexual and psychological harm. Harm can arise from a single act or event and can also be cumulative, that is, arising as a result of a series of acts or events over a period of time.</p>
<p>Relevant legislation and standards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (including Child Safe Standards) • Reportable Conduct Scheme • <i>Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)</i> (including reporting to Child Protection) • <i>Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)</i> (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences) • <i>Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)</i> (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for child abuse) • <i>Bus Safety Act 2009</i> • <i>Transport (Compliance and Miscellaneous) Act 1983</i> • United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
<p>Related organisational policies and procedures</p>	<p>Reference and links to other internal policies and procedures related to Crown Coaches's Child Safety and Wellbeing:</p> <p>Child Safe Standards</p> <p>Child Safe Code of Conduct</p> <p>Child Safety Standards Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure</p> <p>Child Safe Recruitment and Screening Policy</p>

	<p>Reportable Conduct Scheme</p> <p>Statement of Commitment to Child Safety and Child Safe Policy</p> <p>Child Safe Standards Risk Register Items</p> <p>Performance and Misconduct Policy</p> <p>Equal Employment Opportunity Policy (EEO)</p> <p>Employee Training Policy</p> <p>Failure to Protect a Child from Abuse Policy</p> <p>School Run Policy - Private School Runs</p> <p>School Run Policy (DET)</p> <p>Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy</p> <p>Fair Workplace Relations Policy</p>
<p>Access to the policy</p>	<p>The policy is available to all staff, clients and public via the Crown Coaches website. The policy is available to all staff via various other channels such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction documents • Company Handbook • Noticeboards • Employee Newsletter
<p>Policy status and review</p>	<p>We will review all child safe policies and practices at least annually as part of the annual internal audit required under our MIS, and if risks or circumstances change, and each policy will reflect that. Reviews will include consultation with staff and any relevant parties. We will also review relevant practices and policies in response to concerns, complaints, a child safety incident or 'near miss', and alleged significant breaches of policies or practices. Findings from reviews will be set out in separate reports and reported to the people involved in our organisation and will also inform our approach to identifying/addressing flaws or failings in our policies and practices and the continuous improvement of our child safe practices.</p>