



CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

PURPOSE

The Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy outlines how our organisation prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. It outlines our organisation's expectations about child safe practices for staff, board members, volunteers, industry partners and any other individuals who are in contact with young people as part of their involvement in CGLLEN activities, programs or events. This policy applies to all programs, events and activities facilitated by Central Grampians Local Learning and Employment Network Inc (CGLLEN).

CHILD SAFETY STATEMENT

CGLLEN is committed to building a positive culture to support child safety and wellbeing. We endeavour to ensure children and young people feel safe, supported and respected, and that their rights, needs and interests are met in our activities and programs.

CGLLEN believes it is the shared responsibility of all board members, employees and volunteers to keep children and young people safe and commits to protecting and safeguarding children and young people by adhering to the 11 Child Safe Standards.

POLICY DETAILS

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The CGLLEN Board of Management is responsible for ensuring best practice and compliance across all CGLLEN policies, including child safety and wellbeing. Any concerns raised about child safety will be reviewed by the board of management and action taken accordingly. The board of management will conduct an annual review of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy to ensure it remains up to date. Any changes to relevant legislation will be reflected in this policy as they occur.
- The Executive Officer is responsible for the implementation of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and handling any child safety complaints or concerns received by the organisation. The Executive Officer is responsible for reporting any concerns raised to the board of management.
- The Child Safety Officer is also responsible for the implementation of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and handling any child safety complaints or concerns received by the organisation. The Child Safety Officer is responsible for reporting any concerns raised to the Executive Officer. They are also responsible for recording the concern, complaint or incident

relating to child safety in our HappyHR incident reporting system.

- All staff, board members, volunteers and industry partners are required to prioritise child safety, identify and manage risks of child abuse or harm and create a positive culture around reporting so that anyone raising a concern feels safe and comfortable doing so.

DEFINITIONS

CGLLEN Board of Management - the current elected representatives of the CGLLEN board.

Staff – any adult working for, or with, CGLLEN.

Volunteer – an adult conducting work for CGLLEN in an unpaid capacity. This includes mentors in our programs.

Industry partner – an adult who is representing an employer in one of CGLLEN’s school-industry engagement activities.

Child abuse is defined as:

- 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.

Harm - is damage to the health, safety or wellbeing of a child or young person, 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.

Child/young person - a person who is under the age of 18 years.

Concerns and complaints

1. A concern refers to any potential issue that could impact negatively on the safety and wellbeing of children.
2. A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction to CGLLEN related to one or more of the following:
 - our services or dealings with individuals
 - allegations of abuse or misconduct by a staff member, volunteer or another individual associated with CGLLEN
 - disclosures of abuse or harm made by a child or young person
 - the conduct of a child or young person involved in a CGLLEN’s activity or program
 - the inadequate handling of a prior concern
 - general concerns about the safety of an activity or program

CGLLEN CHILD SAFETY PROVISIONS

CGLLEN prioritises child safety throughout the recruitment, induction and training of staff, board members and volunteers and program implementation. CGLLEN holds an appropriate level of insurance for child abuse claims for not-for-profit organisations.

BOARD MEMBER INDUCTION

As part of their induction, all board members are provided with an induction manual that outlines the Child Safe Standards and CGLLEN's child safety expectations. They must also read, accept and comply with the CGLLEN Board Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. All CGLLEN board members must hold a current Working with Children Check.

STAFF RECRUITMENT, TRAINING AND SUPPORT

The recruitment and screening process for all CGLLEN staff is strongly focused on child safety and wellbeing. Staff are required to hold a current Working with Children Check, pass a National Police Check and undergo adequate referee checks prior to their employment.

As part of their induction, all staff are required to successfully complete child safety training to understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and to support their engagement with children. Staff are also briefed on the CGLLEN Staff Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy, which they must accept and comply with.

Annual child safety refresher training is mandatory for all staff throughout the course of their employment. Regular individual meetings with the Executive Officer provide an opportunity for staff to discuss any issues they may have.

Any concerns raised about staff behaving inappropriately with children will be addressed immediately in line with our CGLLEN Staff Code of Conduct and Complaint Handling policy.

CODE OF CONDUCTS

All CGLLEN board members, staff, and volunteers must sign the Code of Conduct relevant to their role prior to commencing at the organisation and must comply with this Code of Conduct at all times. Both our TAC L2P Program and MATES Mentoring program have their own specific Codes of Conduct relevant to the mentors' roles and responsibilities.

Any violation of the Code of Conducts may be subject to disciplinary action. This can include increased supervision, suspension, termination from their role at the organisation or external investigation from other authorities.

All third-party industry partners and contractors are expected to abide by the CGLLEN Staff Code of Conduct. If they are engaging with children, they will be provided with the code, prior to delivering any services.

TAC L2P PROGRAM

CGLLEN delivers the TAC L2P Program for young people aged 16-21, and in some cases up to 23 years of age, across Ararat Rural City, Northern Grampians Shire and Pyrenees Shire. The program supports young people who do not have access to a supervising driver or vehicle to gain the 120 hours of supervised driving experience required to qualify for their probationary licence. Learners are matched with a trained mentor from the community who provides a positive learning environment for the young driver to gain safe driving skills.

Mentors are required to pass the following compliance checks prior to being matched with a learner

in the program:

- Attend an intake meeting where they are provided with child safety information.
- Undergo adequate referee checks as part of the intake process.
- Undergo a National Police Check upon application and renew every three years.
- Hold a current WWCC upon application. CGLLEN completes weekly status checks through the Services Victoria website.
- Hold a current Victorian Driver Licence upon application. CGLLEN completes driver licence status checks annually through VicRoads.
- Complete TAC L2P Program mentor training which includes information on the Child Safe Standards.
- Complete a Code of Conduct and Match Meeting Agreement prior to driving with a learner.

To ensure the young person feels comfortable and supported, they are able to have a parent or guardian present at the learner intake meeting and match meeting with their mentor. Both the intake and match meetings outline the young person's rights as a participant in the program and encourage them to raise any questions or concerns they may have before going on their first drive with their mentor. The learner must also sign a Code of Conduct agreement which outlines expected behaviours and who to contact if any concerns arise.

Learners are contacted at regular intervals throughout their time in the program. Child safety learner check ins are conducted after their first drive and every three months following to remind learners of their rights as a participant in the program. They are encouraged to contact the L2P Coordinator or Executive Officer if they have any concerns about the behaviour of the adults who are supporting them in the program. They are also assured that their comfort and safety is our top priority. Any concerns raised by young people are addressed as soon as possible.

Mentors are required to contact the L2P Coordinator immediately if they have concerns for the safety of their learner. If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, emergency services should be called on 000.

MATES MENTORING PROGRAM

CGLLEN delivers the MATES Mentoring program in participating schools across the Central Grampians region. The program matches nominated students from each school with volunteer mentors from the community. They meet for one hour each fortnight, within school hours, for the duration of the school year. As all MATES meetings are conducted onsite at the participating school, school policies and processes apply. Mentors must sign in and out of the school office and each school is provided with an orange lanyard to give mentors to wear while they are on school grounds for easy identification.

Mentors are required to pass the following compliance checks prior to being matched with a learner in the program:

- Attend an intake meeting where they are provided with child safety information.
- Undergo adequate referee checks as part of the intake process.
- Undergo a National Police Check upon application and renew every three years.
- Hold a current WWCC upon application. CGLLEN completes weekly status checks through the Services Victoria website.
- Complete MATES mentor training which clearly explains risk identification, duty of care, Child Safe Standards, appropriate activities and reporting procedures.
- Complete a Code of Conduct, Confidentiality Agreement and Match Meeting Agreement prior to meeting with a student.

All schools implementing the MATES Mentoring program are required to gain school council approval of the mentors as official school volunteers. Each school is provided with a School Council Approval form that lists the names and Working with Children Check numbers of the mentors who will be participating in the program at their school. All mentors listed have undergone the required screening checks and induction process. If any additional mentors enter the program throughout the year, the CGLLEN MATES Coordinator will provide their details to the school to be added to this form. This form is to be provided to the school council for approval of mentors. Once this motion is passed and recorded in the minutes, the mentors are covered by the same Department of Education protections and insurances as the paid staff at the school. Independent schools implementing the MATES program should ensure their school system provides the necessary insurance covers for mentors.

Prior to mentors commencing their roles, the In-School Coordinator or a school staff member provides them with a school induction outlining the sign-in process and relevant procedures, policies and school requirements.

School office staff are provided with a timetable that outlines when each MATES mentor will be attending the school across the fortnight.

Under the Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, teachers and principals are mandated to report to child protection services if they believe a child is being abused. As part of the MATES program, mentors are required to report to the school principal or a teacher before they leave the school grounds if they have reasonable belief that a child is being physically or sexually abused. They must also inform the CGLLEN MATES Coordinator or Executive Officer as soon as possible.

OTHER SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAMS

In addition to the TAC L2P Program and MATES Mentoring program, CGLLEN also implements a number of other programs and activities in primary and secondary schools across the Central Grampians region. These programs and activities are either delivered onsite at a school or, if delivered offsite, with school staff members present for supervision of students. These are all covered by the Department of Education's policies and procedures for schools. If a CGLLEN staff member or industry partner has any concerns about child safety, they are expected to report it to the teacher present on the day or advise the school Principal prior to leaving the school grounds.

At the beginning of each interaction with young people through any of our programs or activities, staff introduce themselves and their role at the organisation.

We aim to ensure that all our programs and activities are engaging and relevant for young people. Students are encouraged to give feedback on any CGLLEN programs or activities either directly to the CGLLEN staff member or to their teacher. This information is taken into consideration when evaluating program delivery and planning new programs or activities. Any feedback related to a child safety concern will be addressed in partnership with the school.

REPORTING CHILD SAFETY CONCERNS

If anyone involved in a CGLLEN program or activity has any concerns about child safety, they are expected to report it to the Executive Officer, Child Safety Officer or relevant program coordinator.

If you become aware of a child safety related concern while on school grounds or involving a school-

based activity, you are expected to report it to the teacher present on the day or advise the school Principal prior to leaving the school grounds.

Where CGLLEN staff have concerns about child safety or receive a concern or complaint related to child safety, they must report it to the Executive Officer or Child Safety Officer as soon as possible. If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, emergency services should be called on 000.

RISK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT

We recognise the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the programs and activities implemented by CGLLEN.

We have a Risk Management Plan that is reviewed annually to address the risk of child abuse and harm. The Risk Management Plan has been developed in consultation with our board members, staff and volunteers. We will ensure that any risk controls put in place balance the need to manage harm with the benefits of participating in CGLLEN programs and activities. The board of management is responsible for approving the Risk Management Plan.

Any contractors or other providers of services will always be supervised by a CGLLEN or school staff member while working with us to ensure child safety.

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

CGLLEN recognises the important role of families in child safety. Parents/guardians, families and communities are welcome to provide feedback at any time through the 'contact us' page on our website, or via email, and are encouraged to raise any concerns they may have.

CGLLEN provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices by publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Staff Code of Conduct on our website and our Commitment to Child Safety statement in our newsletter.

CREATING CULTURALLY SAFE ENVIRONMENTS FOR ABORIGINAL CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

CGLLEN is committed to creating environments where Aboriginal culture is celebrated and Aboriginal children, families and community members are welcomed and included.

Strategies to embed cultural safety for Aboriginal children include:

- an Acknowledgement of Country at all meetings, events, on our website and email signatures
- providing opportunities for staff and volunteers to access Cultural Awareness training

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY

CGLLEN is committed to being a welcoming and inclusive organisation where all individuals are accepted, regardless of their race, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion and socioeconomic status.

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THIS POLICY AND THE CODE OF CONDUCTS

CGLLEN will enforce this policy and the Code of Conduct. Any violation of these may be subject to disciplinary action. This can include increased supervision, suspension, termination from their role at the organisation or external investigation from other authorities.

COMPLAINTS AND RESOLUTION PROCESS

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.

CGLLEN has a Complaint Handling Policy that includes information for staff and volunteers about how a complaint will be responded to.

All complaints should be directed to the Executive Officer in person, via phone call or email.

RECORD KEEPING AND INFORMATION SHARING

CGLLEN is committed to making and keeping full and accurate records about all child-related complaints or safety concerns.

All child safety complaints, concerns, incidents and near misses will be recorded and stored securely in our HappyHR incident reporting system. The outcome of any investigations, and the resolution of any complaints will also be recorded.

CGLLEN 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.

ACCESS TO THE POLICY

All CGLLEN staff can access this policy via HappyHR. A hard copy will be available in the policy folder located in the CGLLEN office and an electronic copy will be publicly available via the CGLLEN website: www.cgllen.org.au

REVIEW

All CGLLEN policies are approved and reviewed by the CGLLEN Board of Management and come into effect from the date they are passed either at a board meeting or via circular resolution. A review of all child safe policies and practices is conducted annually. In the event of a child safety incident, relevant policies and practices will be reviewed to identify any possible areas for improvement.

CONTACTS

For more information on this policy or to report a breach of the policy, please contact either the CGLLEN Executive Officer or the Child Safety Officer on the contact details below.

Executive Officer, Jane Moriarty – 0429 352 135 or eo@cgllen.org.au

Child Safety Officer, Shelly Chalmers – 5352 3266 or business@cgllen.org.au

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The following policies and procedures work together to support child safety and wellbeing:

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
CGLLEN Staff Code of Conduct
CGLLEN Board Code of Conduct
MATES Mentor Code of Conduct
L2P Mentor Code of Conduct
CGLLEN Complaint Handling policy
Privacy policy
Recruitment policy
Diversity policy
CGLLEN Risk Management plan

SUPPORTING LEGISLATION

Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
Crimes Act 1958 (Vic)
Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic)
[Child Safe Standards](#)

<i>Adopted by CGLLEN Board of Management</i>	<i>Date: 09/04/2025</i>
<i>To be reviewed by CGLLEN Board of Management</i>	<i>Date:</i>