

Child Safe Policy

Perform Education Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Perform Education acknowledges the Wurundjeri and Boonwurrung People of the Kulin Nation, the Traditional Owners of the land on which we operate. We acknowledge and respect their contributions, experience and knowledge as First Nations people. We pay our respects to their Elders, past and present.

This Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy was approved by the Management on 5th June 2023. It demonstrates the strong commitment of management, staff and contractors to child safety and wellbeing, and how our organisation keeps children safe from harm, including child abuse.

Commitment to child safety

Perform Education is committed to promoting and protecting at all times the best interests of all children. Our company has zero tolerance for child abuse.

All employees of Perform Education have a duty of care to provide a safe environment for children and report all information of suspected breaches of child safety and abuse. We are committed to providing child safe environment where children and young people are safe and feel safe. Particular attention will be paid to the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, as well as the safety of children with a disability.

Purpose

This Policy outlines how Perform Education prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and what steps we will take to do this.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, contractors, children and other individuals involved in our organisation. This policy applies to all activities – live performance, livestream performance, workshops and film – conducted by Perform Education.

Procedures

1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.

Management has the role of making sure Perform Education prioritises children's safety and that action is taken when anyone raises concerns about children's safety.

Management will champion and model a child safe culture at Perform Education. We encourage anyone involved with the organisation to report a child safety concern. Management will work to create a positive culture around reporting so that people feel comfortable to raise concerns.

Everyone at Perform Education has a role in identifying and managing risks of child abuse and harm. Management will make sure that staff and contractors are conducting risk assessments and taking action to manage risks in accordance with this policy. They will also ensure that appropriate child safety training for staff and contractors is identified and completed.

Management will conduct an annual review of how effectively Perform Education is delivering child safety and wellbeing. The input of people involved with Perform Education will be sought as part of this review.

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

Perform Education is a child-centred organisation. Our audience at the end of the day, are children. All our programs are designed to improve their quality of life whether that be through education, entertainment, or other. Creative decisions are made with children in mind, with respect to the diverse needs that that entails.

We actively seek to include children's views and ideas in our delivery of services including rehearsals and performances.

We want children to engage positively with our products and encourage students to be supportive of each other. We foster audience interaction within our performances, which we do so with as much control as to respect to the rights and values of each student, We do not tolerate bullying or abusive behaviour between children and defer to teachers to take action if this occurs.

We actively seek to understand what makes children feel safe in our organisation. We regularly communicate with children about what they can do if they feel unsafe.

Perform Education values the voices of children and will act on safety concerns raised by children or their families.

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

Perform Education recognises the important role of families and involves parents and carers when making significant decisions about their child. Parents, families and communities are welcome to provide feedback at any time through our contact email address and are encouraged to raise any concerns they have with us.

Perform Education provides information to families and community about our child safe policies and practices including through:

- publishing this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Code of Conduct on our website

Creating culturally safe environments for all Aboriginal children and their families (Organisations establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and valued)

Perform Education 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 performances
- consulting with members of the Aboriginal community to identify opportunities to promote Aboriginal culture and practices in Perform Education programs
- providing training for staff and contractors on the strengths of Aboriginal culture and its importance to the wellbeing and safety of Aboriginal children
- celebrating NAIDOC Week and acknowledging significant events including National Sorry Day and National Reconciliation Week
- seeking feedback from teachers, Aboriginal children, families and communities on their experience with Perform Education, particularly how Aboriginal safe they feel expressing their identity including their culture.

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

We value diversity and equity for all children. To achieve this, we:

- welcome and support participation of all children, including children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ children and Aboriginal children and their families

- offer teachers through our booking process forms the opportunity to provide information about their students, including any specific requirements that they might have in order to participate fully in our programs
- continue to customise programs in order to make our programs accessible for as many diverse groups as possible. This includes training for all Management members, staff and contractors on understanding diversity and how to support inclusion and cultural safety
- have a company Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy as well as a committee to make sure this is regularly reviewed and up to date
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified
- deliver programming that reflects the diversity of our students, their interests and cultures
- strive to reflect the diversity of our community through representation in our staff and Management
- have a physical and online environment that actively celebrates diversity
- commit to ensuring our performances and online activities promote inclusion of children of all abilities.
- ensure that all children and staff have the same protection regardless of age, disability, gender, racial heritage, religious belief, sexual orientation or identity. The Company is committed to anti-discriminatory practice and explicitly recognises the additional needs of children from minority ethnic groups and disabled people and the barriers they may face, especially around communication.

5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.

Perform Education puts child safety and wellbeing at the centre of recruitment and screening processes for staff and contractors as outlined in the recruitment and screening policy. We only recruit staff and contractors who are appropriate to engage with children.

We require a Working with Children Check for all staff and contractors who have a role with children. We require staff to have appropriate qualifications for their roles and check to make sure these qualifications are valid. Perform Education is responsible for making sure that checks remain valid for the duration of employment.

Perform Education requires all workers/volunteers to pass through the organisation's recruitment and screening processes prior to commencing their engagement with Perform Education.

Perform Education will undertake thorough reference checks as per the approved internal procedure. Once engaged, employees must review and acknowledge their understanding of this Policy.

Perform Education has a Child Safe Code of Conduct. Staff, contractors and the Management must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including termination of a person's involvement with the organisation.

All third-party contractors are also expected to abide by the Child Safe Code of Conduct, and where they are engaging with children will have to sign an agreement to comply with the code, prior to delivering any services.

6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused

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.

Perform Education staff and contractors are required to prioritise children's safety in any response and to report all potentially criminal conduct to Police. Immediate disciplinary actions for staff and contractors to support child safety include:

- Immediate dismissal and termination of contract.
- having their duties altered so they do not engage with children at Perform Education.
- removing their access to the Perform Education IT system and facilities.

Complaints can be emailed to tour@performeducation.com

If a complaint is directed towards a member of Management, please instead phone Tobias Benn, Managing Director of Perform Education at 03 9532 0988

If there is concern for the immediate safety of a child, immediately call 000.

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

Perform Education is committed to ensuring that all leaders, staff and contractors receive training to ensure they understand their responsibilities in relation to child safety and to support their engagement with children. Perform Education assists its leaders, staff and contractors to incorporate child safety considerations into decisions and to promote a safe environment where children are empowered to speak up about issues that affect them.

All Perform Education Management members, leaders, staff and contractors are required to complete annual child safety training. Training will be recorded in the Child Safety Training Action Plan. We monitor staff training and make sure that obligations under the Commonwealth Child Safe Framework are being met and regularly reviewed.

We ensure that all staff, contractors, and volunteers are aware of their obligation to observe the Perform Education Code of Conduct.

Staff and contractors will receive supervision to support their engagement with children and for compliance with our Code of Conduct and Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

Issues or concerns about behaviour with children will be raised immediately and addressed in line with our Code of Conduct.

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

We recognise the importance of identifying and managing risks of child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments operated by Perform Education.

We conduct regular risk assessments and have a risk management plan to address the risk of child abuse and harm at Perform Education. The risk management plan will be developed in consultation with our staff, contractors, teachers, parent representatives and children. We will ensure that any risk controls put in place balance the need to manage harm with the benefits of participating.

Management is responsible for approving the risk management plan.

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

Perform Education will review all child safe practices and policies annually. We also review relevant practices and policies in response to a child safety incident or 'near miss'. Findings from reviews will be reported to the people involved in our organisation and inform our approach to continuous improvement of our child safety practices. Reviews are overseen by Management and will be informed by consultation with staff, contractors, teachers and children.

10. Supporting Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

The following internal policies and procedures work together to support child safety and wellbeing across all of our operations:

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Code of Conduct
- Risk management plan
- Child safe training plan

- Sexual harassment policy
- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policy
- Employee handbook
- Termination of Employment Policy and Misconduct Procedures.

In addition this policy must be read in conjunction with:

- The law of the Commonwealth or of the relevant local state or territory;
- Commonwealth Child Safe Framework

Non-compliance with this policy and the Code of Conduct

Perform Education will enforce this policy, the Code of Conduct and any other child safety and wellbeing policies (see list below). Potential breaches by anyone will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement or other corrective action. More information can be found in our disciplinary policy.

Record keeping

Perform Education 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 in the 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 by Perform Education for at least 45 years.

Information sharing

Perform Education may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children, where it is appropriate and in their best interests. Perform Education 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.