

# EREA CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Principles

This policy is based on the EREA Charter and is underpinned by EREA core values, supported by the EREA Child Safeguarding Standards Framework. The following principles guide the development and regular review of our work systems, practices, policies and procedures to protect children and young people from abuse:

- (a) All children and young people have the right to be safe.
- (b) The welfare and best interests of the child and young person are paramount.
- (c) The views of the child and young person and their privacy must be respected.
- (d) Clear expectations for appropriate behaviour with children and young people are established in the EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct within the EREA Code of Conduct.
- (e) The safety of children and young people is dependent upon the existence of a child safe culture.
- (f) Families, carers and relevant communities have a role in helping to build a child safe culture through participation in decision making processes on child safety and wellbeing.
- (g) Procedures are in place to screen all staff, Direct Contact Volunteers, Third Party Contractors and External Education Providers who have direct contact with children and young people.
- (h) Child safety and protection is everyone's responsibility.
- (i) Child safeguarding training is mandatory for all workers as required by legislation.
- (j) Procedures for responding to alleged or suspected incidents of child abuse are simple and accessible.

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- (k) A child safe culture identifies particular strategies for the care and support of children and young people who may be especially vulnerable:
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people;
  - children and young people from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;
  - children and young people with disabilities;
  - children and young people who are unable to live at home; and
  - lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and questioning children and young people.

## **1.2 Purpose**

EREA is committed to the creation of a positive and robust child safeguarding culture, ensuring that all children and young people who comprise the EREA Network are safe and valued members of their school communities. To this end, the purpose of this policy is to provide the overall framework for child safeguarding within EREA. The policy further aims to ensure that child safeguarding is a paramount consideration in all EREA schools and entities.

## **1.3 Scope**

The policy provides a statement of the overall goals of EREA to protect all children and young people in the EREA network from all harm. The policy directs individuals to specific guidelines, processes and procedures that must be followed when a child or young person is in need of protection. The implementation of a comprehensive Child Safeguarding Program and the EREA Child Safeguarding Standards Framework provides the scope of this policy and EREA's commitment to child safeguarding.

This policy applies to EREA, its schools and entities. The specific obligations are imposed on the EREA Board, the Executive Director, the Regional Directors and the Principal of each school.

## **1.4 Definitions**

<b>Safeguarding:</b>	Includes, not only child abuse, but also embraces the overall wellbeing of the child or young person.
<b>Child Abuse:</b>	Includes sexual offences, grooming, physical violence, serious emotional or psychological harm, serious neglect and exposure to family violence.
<b>Wellbeing:</b>	Includes issues impacting the wellbeing of a young person, e.g. mental health issues, stress, depression, anxiety; and is supported by strategies for building resilience and educating for safety and mental health awareness.

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## 2. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
EREA Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>EREA Board</b> has responsibility for approving the Child Safeguarding Policy and to ensure that appropriate procedures and guidelines are in place to assist all to comply with the policy.</li> </ul>
EREA Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>Executive Director</b> is responsible for ensuring that EREA complies with its legal, regulatory and procedural obligations through the implementation of this policy and the development of procedures and guidelines to be followed in adhering to this policy</li> <li>The <b>Executive Director</b> will ensure that sound governance and management practices are applied and that EREA meets the highest standards in relation to the protection of children and young people.</li> <li>The <b>Executive Director</b> will ensure that all who have the delegated responsibility to employ in EREA, screen employees in accord with relevant state or territory legislated requirements.</li> <li>The <b>Executive Director</b> will ensure written reports regarding abuse or potential abuse of a child or young person are received by EREA, where required, and that they have been promptly provided to the police and the relevant State/Territory Government Child Protection Authorities where this is required by legislation.</li> <li>The <b>Executive Director</b> receives official notification that a Reportable Conduct notification has been made through the Assurance Program and directly from the CCYP office.</li> </ul>
EREA Regional Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The <b>Regional Directors</b> have a primary responsibility to ensure that EREA schools and entities within their region maintain the highest standards in relation to the protection of children and young people.</li> <li>The <b>Regional Directors</b> will receive written reports regarding abuse or potential abuse of a child or young person and will follow up with Principals on reports to the police and the relevant State/Territory Government Child Protection Authorities where this is required by legislation.</li> </ul>
Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Principals</b> are responsible for adhering to this policy and ensuring the EREA Child Safeguarding Standards and the Child Safeguarding programs developed for all EREA schools as part of the EREA national Governance, Risk, Compliance and Policy project are implemented, managed and reported.</li> <li><b>Principals</b> will receive reports regarding abuse or potential abuse of a child or young person and will ensure a report is promptly provided to police, and the relevant</li> </ul>

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Role	Responsibilities
	<p>State/Territory Government Child Protection Authorities where this is required by legislation. In cases involving Reportable Conduct, Principals will provide a report through Assurance to the Regional Director, Director Safeguarding and the EREA Executive Director.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Principals</b> will advise the School Advisory Council of significant Child Protection issues occurring at school or school related events.</li> </ul>

### 3. Obligations

State legislation provides for mandatory reporting when it is suspected that a child or young person is being harmed or abused. EREA expects strict compliance with legislative mandatory reporting requirements and all other child protection laws.

When a person suspects that a child or young person is in need of protection, the person **must** comply with the procedures in the EREA Child Safeguarding Program of their jurisdiction.

When engaging with children and young people, persons within the EREA community **must** comply with the appropriate behaviour standards in the EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct.

### 4. Policy compliance

#### 4.1 Breach of this Policy

Individuals that breach this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, including and up to termination of their employment.

Individuals that are aware of a suspected breach of this policy should refer to EREA's reporting procedures and can make a report to EREA's Director of Safeguarding. All reports will be treated confidentially.

#### 4.2 Policy Review

The EREA Child Safeguarding Policy will be reviewed every three years unless there is a legislative or regulatory requirement to do so earlier.

The EREA Board is responsible for ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated as needed and endorsing the Policy.

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## **5. Related policies, procedures and legislation**

### **5.1 EREA policy linkage**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related documents:

- (a) The EREA Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- (b) EREA Child Safeguarding Standards Framework
- (c) EREA Child Safeguarding Program (NSW) – ComplisSpace
- (d) EREA Child Safeguarding Program (QLD) - ComplisSpace
- (e) EREA Child Safeguarding Program (SA) - ComplisSpace
- (f) EREA Child Safeguarding Program (VIC) - ComplisSpace
- (g) TCEO Child Safeguarding Program (TAS) - ComplisSpace
- (h) EREA Child Safeguarding Program (WA) - ComplisSpace
- (i) EREA Child Safeguarding Program (ACT) – ComplisSpace
- (j) EREA Child Safeguarding Program (NT) – Complispace
- (k) EREA Student Duty of Care Program - ComplisSpace
- (l) EREA Code of Conduct
- (m) EREA Child Safety Code of Conduct (Victoria)

### **5.2 Related legislative instruments**

The following legislation, standards and regulations apply, and this policy aligns with these mandated requirements:

- (a) Relevant Legislation in each State and Territory

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