

1. Purpose

The Country Universities Centre Norfolk Island (CUCNI) is committed to providing a safe environment and ensuring that young people can experience the fundamental right to be protected from all forms of child abuse. Furthermore, CUC is committed to ensuring legislative requirements of child protection are fulfilled. This policy defines the approach of CUCNI when providing for children and young people when the Centre, and informs parents, guardians, and staff about matters relevant to the care of children and young people aged 12 to 18 years of age.

2. Scope

This policy applies to CUCNI:

- Staff,
- Board members,
- Students,
- Volunteers,
- Children and younger people who attend the Centre,
- Parents and/or guardians of children and younger people.

3. Policy

A. Child Safety Commitment

CUCNI commits itself to upholding the safety and wellbeing of all children and younger persons under the care and supervision of staff, students, volunteers, contractors, and subcontractors by:

- Providing a safe and protected environment to reduce and eliminate the risk of any form of child abuse,
- Providing information on identifying child abuse risks to new employees of the organisation ensuring child safety,
- Recruiting suitable candidates and providing employees relevant training, supervision and support where required,
- Alerting relevant authorities if there is a belief that a child requires protection,
- Adhering to state requirements for child protection, including relevant checks, providing risk management strategies, and securing parental permission,
- Keeping physical contact to a minimum, other than when explicit permission has been sought from a parent or guardian,
- Maintaining appropriate relationships with children which include but are not limited to, clear boundaries, limited one-on-one contact, no contact with children outside of CUC activities.
- Maintaining professional boundaries, avoiding situations where they are alone with a child unless unavoidable for safety or operational reasons,
- Maintaining standards of language are always positive and encouraging when engaging with children, and

Providing parents, carers, students, and any required stakeholders with this policy to define approaches, expectations, and information.



B. National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

CUCNI is fully committed to embedding the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations into its operations. These principles, endorsed by all Australian governments, outline essential elements for creating a child-safe environment and reflect best practices for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of children. To comply with these principles, CUCNI will:

1. **Embed Child Safety in Governance and Culture:** Demonstrate leadership by integrating child safety and wellbeing into organisational values, policies, and governance structures. The Board and management will champion child-safe practices and model appropriate behaviours.
2. **Empower Children and Young People:** Inform children of their rights and create opportunities for them to participate in decision-making processes. CUCNI will ensure children feel respected, heard, and empowered to contribute to their safety.
3. **Engage Families and Communities:** Actively involve families and the broader community in promoting child safety and wellbeing. The CUCNI will maintain transparent communication channels and seek feedback to improve its practices.
4. **Respect Equity and Diversity:** Address the diverse needs of children, including children with disabilities, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The organisation will foster an inclusive and equitable environment.
5. **Ensure Suitability and Support of Personnel:** Implement robust recruitment and screening processes, including mandatory Working with Children Checks, to ensure all staff and volunteers are suitable for working with children. Ongoing professional development will be provided to reinforce child safety principles.
6. **Respond to Complaints and Concerns Effectively:** Maintain child-focused complaint management processes that are accessible and culturally appropriate. All complaints will be taken seriously, addressed promptly, and handled with transparency.
7. **Provide Ongoing Education and Training:** Regularly train staff and volunteers to recognise and respond to signs of harm. Training will also focus on creating culturally safe environments and understanding the developmental needs of children.
8. **Promote Safe Physical and Online Environments:** Establish risk management strategies for physical and online spaces to minimise harm. The organisation will ensure that environments are secure, monitored, and aligned with child safety policies.
9. **Commit to Continuous Improvement:** Regularly review and evaluate child-safe practices to ensure effectiveness and relevance. Feedback from children, families, and staff will inform improvements.
10. **Document Policies and Procedures:** Maintain comprehensive and accessible policies that detail how child safety and wellbeing are prioritised within the organisation. These policies will be regularly updated and communicated to stakeholders.

By aligning with these principles, CUCNI underscores its commitment to ensuring a culture of safety, respect, and wellbeing for all children and young people who engage with the organisation.

C. Reporting

If CUCNI staff think a child has been, is being or is at risk of being harmed they are required to take one of the following actions:

- Contact the police,
- Call 000 in an emergency,
- Advise the designated responsible officer within CUCNI, and/or



- Report it to the relevant Federal authority.

D. Local requirements

The CUC requires employees and volunteers working with children in the CUC on Norfolk Island to comply with child protection legislation applicable under Norfolk Island laws and Commonwealth legislation. Individuals working with children must undergo National Police Checks and adhere to child safety regulations under the relevant Commonwealth laws governing child protection in external territories.

In addition to CUCNI Child Safety Commitment (section 3A of this policy), compliance with NI regulatory requirements will be ensured by:

- Ensuring all individuals engaging in child-related work hold a National Police Certificate (NPC) and/or a Blue Card or Working with Children Check, and that clearances are obtained before commencing employment or volunteer roles.
- Maintaining a register of all NPC holders within the organisation, including verification records and expiry dates.
- Developing and maintaining a Child Safety Risk Management Strategy, reviewed annually, to identify, assess, and mitigate risks to children within the CUCNI environment.
- Ensuring all staff and volunteers receive training on recognising and responding to child safety risks, in accordance with Commonwealth child protection guidelines.
- Reporting all allegations, suspected harm, or risks to children to the Norfolk Island Police Force and, where applicable, Australian Federal Police (AFP) for further investigation.
- Implementing and enforcing mandatory reporting obligations under relevant Commonwealth child protection laws.
- Collaborating with NI-Connect, police, and other support services.

The relevant authorities for reporting child safety concerns and risks in Norfolk Island are:

- Norfolk Island Police Force – 000 (emergency) or 22222 (non-emergency)
- Australian Federal Police (AFP) – Child Protection Operations
- Commonwealth Department of Social Services – Child Safety and Wellbeing
- The Child Welfare Officer on 23380 (landline) or 51115 (mobile), email: childwelfareofficer@keyassets.org.au

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E. Providing for Children and Young People

CUCNI actively encourages young people to use and enjoy the Centre frequently, widely, and creatively. Priorities in relation to children and young people are to:

- Provide scope for exploration, discovery and learning at CUCNI,
- Provide access to resources and opportunity for young people to explore higher education options and experiences,
- Equally value and cater for individual interests, capacities, and personalities,



- Bring children and young people along the path of self-motivated, independent, and creative learning for life, and
- Offer student services and support as registered students of the Centre.

F. Expected Behaviour in the Centre

CUCNI will not accept responsibility for the behaviour and actions of young people on the CUCNI premises. The behaviour is the responsibility of the child/young person themselves, their parents, carers, and the responsible person accompanying the child and if in school group, their teacher and supervision. The following behaviour is not accepted within the Centre:

- Misuse or damage to property,
- Disrupting other CUCNI users, and
- Verbal or physical abuse.

CUCNI staff have the discretion to ban or insist upon the young person to vacate the premises immediately if any inappropriate behaviour (including any of the above-mentioned behaviours) are exhibited. The duration will be at the discretion of the CUCNI staff, who will take into consideration the degree and severity of the behaviour.

G. Requirements for Parents and/or Carers

To ensure that young peoples' experiences at CUCNI are consistently positive, CUCNI seeks the cooperation of parents, carers, and educators to understand that:

- Young people (aged 12 to 18) can use the Centre during staffed hours without being attended or supervised by a parent or responsible adult, provided they always maintain acceptable behaviours.
- CUCNI does not assume parental responsibilities when young adults are using the CUC. The role of CUCNI staff is to guide and assist young people.
- CUCNI does not monitor or control content access through the internet.
- CUCNI endeavours to create a safe workplace with CCTV throughout the centre and swipe card access outside of staffed hours.
- It is assumed that any person on CUCNI premises who requires individual supervision is receiving it from a parent, carer, or educator.
- CUCNI provides a range of activities and programs for children and young adults. Age restrictions may apply to some sessions.
- Group visits organised must be made with appropriate supervision. On such occasions, young people must be accompanied by a teacher or responsible person as specified by their school or organisation.
- CUCNI is open to registered students, and staff cannot judge which members of the community may be dangerous or unpredictable.

H. Consent

CUCNI requires that all individuals under the age of 18 must have explicit parental or caregiver consent before registering or attending the Centre. This consent must be provided through a formal approval form, which must be read in conjunction with this Policy. Without a signed approval form, children under the age of 18 will not be permitted to register for or participate in any Centre activities. The Centre will maintain secure records of all submitted consent forms and will review them annually to ensure accuracy and ongoing compliance.



Parent/guardian consent is renewed each semester to ensure permission remains current, informed, and reflective of the student's developmental stage and family circumstances. Children and young people's needs, comfort levels, and wellbeing can change over time, and regular consent supports child-safe practice by ensuring parents and carers receive up-to-date information about the activity, associated risks, and CUCNI's safety measures. This approach provides clear, contemporary evidence of parental approval and strengthens the organisation's duty of care and governance responsibilities.

All information provided will be securely stored and used solely for the purposes outlined in the CUC Child Safety Policy, ensuring compliance with legal and ethical standards. All sensitive information will be handled in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth).

I. Photography

CUCNI staff often take photographs and use personal information as a record for events for use in CUCNI publications, website, and social media to promote CUCNI services and resources. Any photography of children and young people will be managed according to the Social Media and Website Policy, and will include explicit consent of both the individual and their parent and/or guardian.

4.

Resources

- [National Principles for Child Safe Organisations](#)
- [Privacy Act 1988 \(Cth\)](#)
- [Child Welfare Act 2009 \(NI\)](#)
- [Criminal Code 2007 \(NI\)](#)