

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

Contents

1. Purpose.....	3
2. Plain English Version of Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy	3
3. Scope	3
4. Policy Statement	3
5. Legislative and Regulatory Framework	3
6. Berry Street Yooralla's Commitment to Child Safety	5
7. Definitions	6
8. Governance Roles and Responsibilities.....	6
9. Child Safety Culture	8
10. Codes of Conduct	8
11. Risk Management	8
12. Children's Rights and Participation	9
13. Families and Communities	9
14. Cultural Safety	10
15. Diversity and Equity	10
16. Feedback and Complaints	11
17. Responding and Reporting to Allegations of Child Maltreatment	11
18. Information Sharing	11
19. Recruitment, Screening and Training	12
20. Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement	13
21. Supporting Policies and Procedures	13
22. Version Control	13
Appendix A - Legislative and Regulatory Framework – Child Safety and Wellbeing.....	0
Appendix B – Definitions	2
Appendix C- Plain English Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy	0

1. Purpose

This Policy outlines how Berry Street Yooralla (BSY) prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people and how we prevent, identify and respond to harm, including child abuse and neglect.

The Policy demonstrates compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, and Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards. It provides the overarching structure for policies, procedures, systems and practices that support child safety and wellbeing across Berry Street and Yooralla.

2. Plain English Version of Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

A Plain English version of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy is available in Appendix C. This summary explains in plain English, how Berry Street Yooralla keeps children safe and promotes wellbeing. It does not replace the full Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all Berry Street and Yooralla operations and to all people associated with Berry Street and Yooralla, including Board members, staff, carers, volunteers, students on placement, contractors and representatives.

4. Policy Statement

Berry Street Yooralla is committed to being a Child Safe Organisation and has a zero tolerance for child abuse and neglect. We ensure the safety, wellbeing and rights of all children and young people are at the centre of our governance, systems, practices and culture. We actively listen to, respect and elevate the voices of children and young people, ensuring their views inform decision-making, service design and continuous improvement.

This Policy establishes the organisation-wide approach to preventing, identifying and responding to risks to child safety and wellbeing. It reinforces the importance of creating environments where children and young people feel safe, heard and empowered to raise concerns. Key supporting policies and procedures are referenced under Section 20 of this Policy, forming part of the broader suite of documents that support safeguarding across Berry Street Yooralla.

5. Legislative and Regulatory Framework

Berry Street Victoria Incorporated and Yooralla (together Berry Street Yooralla) operate in accordance with all relevant Victorian and Commonwealth legislation governing disability services, social services, education and care programs, and the

Berry Street School. This includes operating across multiple regulatory frameworks, some of which impose service-specific requirements.

In accordance with the Child Safety and Wellbeing Act (Vic), Berry Street Yooralla is committed to operating as, a Child Safe Organisation, with governance arrangements, policies, systems, practices and a culture that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.

Berry Street Yooralla also meets child safety obligations under Commonwealth legislation and funding frameworks, including the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

Berry Street Yooralla complies with applicable legislative and regulatory requirements designed to protect the rights, safety and wellbeing of children and young people, including:

- Victorian Child Safe Standards
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- Ministerial Order 1359 – Implementing the Child Safe Standards
- Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme
- Mandatory reporting obligations and related criminal offences
- Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS)
- Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS)
- Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework.
- NDIS Practice Standards and Quality and Safeguards Framework
- Victorian Social Services regulatory framework
- Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations (National Quality Framework)

The Berry Street School operates within an additional, education-specific regulatory framework, including compliance with:

- Ministerial Order No. 1359- Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises
- Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic) and associated Regulations
- Requirements of the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA), including Minimum Standards for School Registration.

While this Policy establishes the overarching approach to child safety and wellbeing across Berry Street Yooralla, the Berry Street School maintains school-specific policies, procedures and processes to meet its regulatory and registration requirements. These operate in parallel with, and are aligned to, this Policy. Where required, school-specific legislative and regulatory requirements take precedence.

Appendix A outlines the key Victorian and Commonwealth legislation, standards and regulatory frameworks applicable to Berry Street Yooralla.

6. Berry Street Yooralla's Commitment to Child Safety

Berry Street has zero tolerance for child abuse or neglect. Through strong leadership, clear accountability and robust governance, we are committed to culturally safe, equitable, inclusive and trauma-informed environments.

This commitment is embedded through the Berry Street Yooralla Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and a comprehensive suite of policies, internal organisational procedures and practices, supported by training, monitoring and continuous improvement processes. Together, these ensure we prevent harm, respond effectively to concerns, and uphold the rights and wellbeing of children and young people.

We promote environments where children, families, carers and our workforce feel safe, supported and empowered to raise concerns, ask questions and report issues relating to child safety, and where those concerns are taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

Guiding Principles:

Our actions, systems and culture to ensure child safety is guided by the following principles:

- a) **Zero Tolerance for Abuse:** We have zero tolerance for child abuse in any form and zero tolerance for any Berry Street Yooralla person who fails to report suspected harm, risk, or misconduct.
- b) **Children Are Safe, Respected and Heard:** We create and maintain environments where every child is safe, respected, listened to, empowered, and where their views and experiences are actively sought, valued and acted upon.
- c) **Proactive Risk Management:** We identify, assess, and reduce risks to children's safety and wellbeing across all settings—physical, digital, and through our people, programs and systems.
- d) **Strong, Trauma-informed Responses to Concerns:** We respond immediately, compassionately and thoroughly to all concerns, disclosures, allegations and complaints involving the safety and wellbeing of children.
- e) **Compliance with Child Safety Standards:** We meet our obligations under the Victorian Child Safe Standards, the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.
- f) **Clear Policies, Safe Systems and Strong Governance:** We maintain robust policies, procedures, governance structures and reporting systems that protect children, support staff and volunteers, and ensure accountability.

- g) **Cultural Safety for Aboriginal Children:** We are committed to the cultural safety, participation, and agency of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and to working in ways that uphold self-determination.
- h) **Inclusion, Equity and Accessibility:** We uphold the rights of all children, inclusive of children of any ability or disability, culture, gender expression, sexuality, family background or identity and ensure equitable access to safe, inclusive experiences.
- i) **Safety and Empowerment of Children with Disability:** We ensure children with disability are empowered to participate, can safely express their views, and are supported through environments and communication approaches that meet their needs.
- j) **Safe Online and Digital Environments:** We maintain safe, age appropriate and monitored online and digital environments, reducing cyber risk and preventing online grooming, exploitation or harm.
- k) **Safe Recruitment and Workforce Practices:** We implement rigorous recruitment, screening, supervision and training to ensure our workforce is child safe, skilled, and culturally competent.
- l) **Continuous Improvement and External Accountability:** We regularly review, audit and improve our child safety practices, and invite external scrutiny to strengthen our systems and culture.
- m) **Shared Responsibility and Leadership Commitment:** Child safety is a shared responsibility, led by a visible, active and accountable leadership commitment across all levels of Berry Street Yooralla.

7. Definitions

Refer to Appendix B

8. Governance Roles and Responsibilities

Child safety is a shared responsibility across Berry Street Yooralla. While everyone has a role to play, specific governance and operational roles carry defined responsibilities to ensure strong leadership, accountability and safeguarding systems. This includes actively listening to, valuing and responding to the voices of children and young people, recognising their critical role in informing safe practice and decision-making.

Role	Responsibilities
Berry Street Yooralla Board	-Sets clear expectations for child safety and wellbeing across all Berry Street Yooralla services. -Ensures compliance with all child safety legislation, standards and regulatory obligations. - Provides oversight of safeguarding culture, governance, risk and organisational performance. -Undertakes training on child safety and the Child Safe Standards.

	-Ensures Board recruitment and conduct processes are child safe. -For the Berry Street School: fulfils governance requirements under Ministerial Order 1359, with all school specific matters guided by the Berry Street School Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.
Quality & Safeguarding Committee	-Advises the Board on the effectiveness of child safety and safeguarding systems, controls and organisational culture - Provides oversight of child safety risks, trends and emerging issues across all Berry Street Yooralla services.. -Ensures appropriate governance oversight of safeguarding, including regulatory alignment and continuous improvement across the organisation.
Berry Street School Committee	-Provides governance oversight of child safety within the Berry Street School. -Ensures compliance with Ministerial Order 1359 and the School's Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. -Monitors school-specific risks, incidents, controls, training compliance and cultural safety initiatives. -Escalates significant concerns, emerging risks or compliance issues to the Audit and Risk Committee and the Board.
Executive Leadership Team (ELT)	-Leads and embeds a child safe culture across all Berry Street Yooralla services, including the School. -Ensures consistent application of policies, Codes of Conduct, supervision, and reporting pathways. -Oversees organisational responses to concerns, complaints, incidents and allegations. -Ensures adequate resourcing, capability, workforce screening and system support. -Escalates critical child safety risks and matters to the Board. -Ensures school leadership has the support required to meet responsibilities under Ministerial Order 1359.
Senior Leaders (Directors, Principal, Heads)	-Lead and model child safe practice within their programs and areas of responsibility. -Ensure staff understand and follow child safety policies, reporting obligations and legal requirements. -Monitor local risks and escalate concerns promptly. -Promote culturally safe, inclusive, trauma-informed and child friendly environments. -Within the School: the Principal and School Leadership Team ensure implementation of the Berry Street School Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and compliance with Ministerial Order 1359.
People Leaders / Team Leaders	-Model respectful, professional and child safe behaviour at all times. -Provide supervision that reinforces safe practice, wellbeing and accountability. -Act immediately on concerns, risks or allegations and ensure reporting requirements are met.

	-Support staff to identify, respond to and escalate child safety concerns confidently. -Monitor team culture, environmental safety and emerging risks.
Child Safety Officers/ Berry Street School Child Safety Champions	-Provide specialised advice on child safety, reporting pathways and risk management. -Support compliance with legislation, Ministerial Order 1359 (for the Berry Street School), information sharing schemes and organisational policies. -Offer secondary consultation on concerns, escalation decisions and safety planning. -Assist services and school staff to identify, assess and reduce child safety risks. -Promote child voice, cultural safety and inclusive practice. -Support capability building, training and continuous improvement.

9. Child Safety Culture

Berry Street Yooralla promotes a culture where child safety is prioritised, concerns are raised early and responded to appropriately, and children feel safe to speak up. Leaders at all levels model expected behaviours and reinforce accountability.

10. Codes of Conduct

Berry Street Yooralla maintains an organisation-wide Code of Conduct setting overarching expectations for ethical, professional and respectful behaviour. Child safety-specific expectations are detailed in the Berry Street Yooralla Child Safety Code of Conduct. All personnel must comply with these Codes and participate in ongoing child safety training. The Berry Street School also maintains a School-specific Child Safety Code of Conduct under Ministerial Order 1359, which must be followed by all school-based staff, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

11. Risk Management

Berry Street Yooralla identifies, assesses and manages risks to child safety and wellbeing across all environments in which children and young people engage with our services, including physical settings, online environments, and any offsite or externally delivered activities.

Risk management activities are guided by the Berry Street Yooralla Risk Management Framework, which provides the overarching approach to how risks are identified, assessed, controlled, monitored and reviewed across the organisation.

The overarching Berry Street Yooralla Risk Management Framework is supported by a range of procedures and practice guidance, including program and school level assessments, tools and processes tailored to the context and nature of individual

programs, activities and environments. These enable risks to be identified and managed at both an organisational, program and School level.

12. Children's Rights and Participation

Berry Street Yooralla strives to ensure children and young people are empowered, informed about their rights, and actively supported to participate in decisions that affect them. We are committed to creating environments where children feel safe being their authentic selves inclusive of diverse identities, expressing their views, raising concerns and asking for help, and where those views are listened to and respected.

In practice, this includes providing appropriate information about children's rights, acceptable behaviour, and how to raise concerns or make a complaint; ensuring children know who they can talk to if they feel unsafe; and supporting children to have a voice in matters that affect their daily lives, care, learning and wellbeing. Where appropriate, children and young people are invited to contribute feedback about services and programs through conversations, and other participation mechanisms that are accessible and culturally safe.

Children's and young peoples lived experience informs Berry Street Yooralla's service evaluation, quality improvement, research and advocacy activities, including through structured feedback processes, engagement with lived experience advisory groups, and involvement in reviewing or shaping aspects of service design.

We recognise that empowering children and young people is an ongoing responsibility, particularly for children who may experience barriers to participation due to disability, trauma, cultural background, language, age or previous experiences of harm. Berry Street Yooralla therefore continues to reflect on, strengthen and improve how we listen to, engage with and respond to the voices, experiences and perspectives of all children and young people, and adapts our approaches to ensure participation is meaningful, inclusive and safe.

13. Families and Communities

Berry Street Yooralla recognises the important role that families, carers and communities play in supporting the safety and wellbeing of children and young people. Where it is safe, appropriate and in the best interests of the child, we involve families and carers in decision-making and planning. This includes sharing information about our services, listening to family and carer perspectives, and providing opportunities for feedback through accessible and culturally safe channels. We welcome feedback, concerns and lived experience input from families and communities to strengthen our practice, support continuous improvement, and ensure our approaches to child safety remain responsive, inclusive and effective.

14. Cultural Safety

Berry Street Yooralla is committed to being an inclusive and culturally safe organisation where the cultures, identities and rights of all children and young people are respected and upheld. We recognise the unique rights, histories and experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and are committed to ensuring they are safe, supported and empowered to express culture, maintain connections to community, Country and kin, and enjoy their cultural rights.

Berry Street Yooralla has zero tolerance for racism. We actively identify, prevent and respond to racism, discrimination and behaviours that undermine cultural safety.

To uphold cultural safety, Berry Street Yooralla:

- sets clear expectations for culturally safe behaviour, as outlined in the Code of Conduct
- requires mandatory cultural awareness and capability development for all staff
- maintains cultural governance and oversight, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives inform decision-making, planning and practice
- embeds culturally informed policies, procedures and resources across all service environments
- makes public commitments, including our Cultural Safety Statement and Apology to the Stolen Generations
- works in ongoing partnership with Aboriginal communities and organisations to strengthen practice and support continuous improvement

15. Diversity and Equity

Berry Street Yooralla values diversity and is committed to equity, inclusion and non-discrimination. We do not tolerate discrimination, racism, bullying, harassment or exclusion. We actively promote respectful relationships and uphold the rights, identities and strengths of every child and young person.

Berry Street Yooralla is committed to creating environments where all children feel safe, included and able to participate fully. This includes:

- promoting cultural safety and inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- providing culturally responsive environments for children and young people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- ensuring the safety, inclusion and empowerment of children with disability, recognising individual strengths, capabilities and aspirations
- affirming the rights, identity and safety of LGBTQIA+ children and young people
- maintaining a diverse, respectful and accountable workforce, supported by behavioural expectations set out in the Code of Conduct
- supporting positive peer relationships, recognising their importance for belonging and wellbeing

- ensuring inclusive physical and online environments that reflect, respect and celebrate diversity
- Berry Street Yooralla continually reflects on and strengthens its practices to ensure diversity equity and inclusion are embedded across all services and settings.

16. Feedback and Complaints

Berry Street Yooralla encourages children, young people, families, carers and community members to provide feedback or raise complaints about any aspect of our services, including concerns about safety or wellbeing.

All complaints and feedback are taken seriously, responded to respectfully and used to support learning and continuous improvement. Berry Street Yooralla provides accessible, culturally safe and age-appropriate ways for feedback and complaints to be raised, and ensures they are recorded, assessed and managed in accordance with organisational policies and procedures.

Detailed procedures outline how complaints and allegations are reported, assessed and managed, including escalation, documentation and engagement with relevant authorities.

17. Responding and Reporting to Allegations of Child Maltreatment

All Berry Street Yooralla personnel must immediately report any concern, suspicion or allegation of child abuse, harm or misconduct involving children and young people.

Berry Street Yooralla responds to all allegations by prioritising the safety and wellbeing of the child, meeting all mandatory reporting and notification obligations, cooperating fully with internal and external investigations, supporting affected children and young people, and taking appropriate corrective or disciplinary action where required.

Internal organisational procedures set out how allegations of child maltreatment are reported, assessed, documented and managed, including escalation pathways and engagement with relevant authorities.

18. Information Sharing

Berry Street Yooralla may share information to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people, where doing so is lawful, necessary and in the best interests of the child.

Information sharing is undertaken in accordance with the *Child Information Sharing Scheme (CISS)*, the *Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme (FVISS)* and the *Multiagency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework*. These frameworks enable Authorised organisations to share relevant information to

protect children, assess and manage risk, and prevent harm, including family violence.

Berry Street Yooralla respects and protects the privacy and confidentiality of children, young people and families. Personal and sensitive information is collected, used and shared only for legitimate purposes, on a need-to-know basis, and in accordance with applicable privacy and information protection legislation, including Victorian and Commonwealth privacy laws. Where possible, information is shared transparently and respectfully, and children's safety is always prioritised over confidentiality.

19. Recruitment, Screening and Training

Berry Street Yooralla maintains a child safe workforce through robust recruitment, screening, training and ongoing supervision. Workforce suitability requirements are applied in accordance with relevant Victorian and Commonwealth legislation and child safety frameworks.

This includes, where applicable:

- Working with Children Checks (WWCC) under the Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic) for all staff, volunteers and contractors engaged in child related work (directly or indirectly)
- VIT registration for all personal working a teaching role within the Berry Street School.
- National and International police check to identify relevant criminal history
- Role specific safety and suitability screening, including values-based recruitment and reference checking
- Compliance with the Worker and Carer Exclusion Scheme administered by the Victorian Social Services Regulator, where required
- Compliance with the Education and Care Services National Law and Regulations and the National Quality Framework, for roles within regulated education and care settings
- Additional registration or compliance requirements for regulated professions (for example, Victorian Institute of Teaching registration for teachers).

All personnel are required to complete child safety induction, ongoing training and supervision, adhere to applicable Codes of Conduct, and maintain required clearances for the duration of their engagement. Berry Street Yooralla does not engage, or continue to engage, any person who is barred, restricted or otherwise assessed as unsuitable to work with children under relevant legislation or screening schemes.

20. Monitoring, Review and Continuous Improvement

This Policy is reviewed at least every two years, or earlier where required to respond to changes in legislation, standards, organisational structure or emerging child safety risks.

Berry Street Yooralla strengthens child safety and wellbeing through a program of continuous monitoring and improvement. This includes regular audits and assurance activities to assess compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and related obligations; scheduled and ad hoc risk reviews using the organisational Risk Management Framework to identify emerging or changing risks to children; and analysis of complaints, incidents and feedback to identify patterns, systemic issues and opportunities for improvement.

Feedback and insights from children, young people, families and carers are actively considered in service evaluation, quality improvement initiatives and policy development. Learning from investigations, reviews and lived experience input is used to improve practice, refine controls and strengthen safeguarding systems. Oversight of child safety performance, risks and improvement actions is provided through the Quality and Safeguarding Committee, which monitors trends, reviews assurance outcomes and reports to the Board. This governance oversight supports accountability, transparency and ongoing strengthening of Berry Street Yooralla's child safety culture and systems.

21. Supporting Policies and Procedures

This Policy is underpinned by a comprehensive suite of internal policies and procedures that support its implementation and ongoing operation.

These are complemented by key public-facing frameworks, including:

- **Privacy** ([Berry Street](#) | [Yooralla](#))
- **Feedback and Complaints** ([Berry Street](#) | [Yooralla](#))
- **Whistleblower** ([Berry Street](#) | [Yooralla](#))
- **Berry Street School** [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#) | [Child Safety Code of Conduct](#)

Together, these contribute to a cohesive system of safeguarding, transparency, and accountability across Berry Street Yooralla.

22. Version Control

Version Number	1.0
Approved by:	Berry Street Yooralla Board
Approved date:	17 th June 2026
Review date:	17 th June 2028
Process Owner:	Director Quality Risk & Safeguarding
Manager Responsible:	Executive Director, Quality Practice and Safeguarding
Version notes:	

Version 1.0	Policy created: Post Merge Berry Street Yooralla, incorporating both entities and replacing the Berry Street Child Safety and Wellbeing policy and the Yooralla Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. The Berry Street Child Safety Statement of Commitment and the Yooralla Child Safety Statement of Commitment.
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Appendix A - Legislative and Regulatory Framework – Child Safety and Wellbeing.

This document sets out the key Victorian and Commonwealth legislation, standards and regulatory frameworks that inform Berry Street Yooralla's obligations as a Child Safe Organisation across Out-of-Home Care, Family Violence Services, Family Services, Disability Services, Out of Hours Care Services and the Berry Street School.

Commonwealth Legislation and National Frameworks

Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)
National Disability Insurance Scheme Act 2013 (Cth)
NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission Act 2017 (Cth)
Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013 (Cth)
Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)
National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators
NDIS Code of Conduct

Victorian Child Safety and Wellbeing Legislation (All Services)

Child Safety and Wellbeing Act 2025 (Vic)
Victorian Child Safe Standards
Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
Reportable Conduct Scheme (Part 5B – Children, Youth and Families Act)
Worker Screening Act 2020 (Vic)
Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 (Vic)
Health Records Act 2001 (Vic)
Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)
Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

Out of Home Care and Family Services

Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic)
Care Leaver Strategy and supporting policy frameworks (Vic)
Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)
Child Safe Standards – Ministerial Regulations

Family Violence Services

Family Violence Protection Act 2008 (Vic)
Family Violence Information Sharing Scheme
Multi-Agency Risk Assessment and Management (MARAM) Framework

Disability Services

Disability Services Safeguards Act 2018 (Vic)
Disability Act 2006 (Vic)
Social Services Regulation Act 2021 (Vic)
Social Services Regulations 2023 (Vic)
Worker and Carer Exclusion Scheme (Victorian Social Services Regulator)
Victorian Disability Worker Commission – Code of Conduct

Education and Care Services / Out of Hours School Care

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 (Vic)

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

National Quality Framework (NQF)

Children's Services Act 1996 (Vic) (where applicable)

Berry Street School – Education Legislation

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic)

Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 (Vic)

Ministerial Order No. 1359 – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools and School Boarding Premises

Guidelines to the Minimum Standards and Requirements for School Registration (VRQA)

Ministerial Order 706 – Anaphylaxis Management

Guidelines for Bushfire Preparedness

Berry Street Yooralla maintains a comprehensive Law and Compliance Register that identifies all applicable legislative and regulatory requirements and supports ongoing compliance monitoring and review.

Appendix B – Definitions

Child / Children / Young People: A child or young person is any person under the age of 18 years. This includes all children and young people who engage with Berry Street Yooralla services, programs, schools, events or environments, whether directly or indirectly.

Child Abuse: Child abuse refers to any act or omission by an adult or another child that harms, or places at risk of harm, a child's physical, emotional, psychological or sexual safety or wellbeing. This includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect, exposure to family violence, grooming, exploitation and online harm.

Child Maltreatment: Child maltreatment encompasses all forms of abuse and neglect that result in actual or potential harm to a child's safety, development or wellbeing. This includes one-off incidents and patterns of ongoing harm.

Child Safe Organisation: A Child Safe Organisation is one that intentionally and systematically places the safety and wellbeing of children at the centre of governance, leadership, culture and practice. This includes having effective policies, procedures, behaviours and accountability systems to prevent harm and respond to concerns.

Child Safe Standards: The Victorian Child Safe Standards are legislative requirements that set minimum expectations for organisations to prevent child abuse, promote child safety and respond effectively to concerns. They focus on governance, culture, participation, family engagement, risk management and continuous improvement.

Child Safety Code of Conduct: A Child Safety Code of Conduct outlines expected and prohibited behaviours when working with or around children. It establishes professional boundaries, applies to physical and online environments, and explains how concerns or breaches must be reported.

Cultural Safety: Cultural safety describes environments that respect and value cultural identity and are free from racism and discrimination. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, it includes the ability to express culture, maintain connections to family, kin, community and Country, and have cultural rights upheld.

Diversity and Equity: Diversity and equity recognise the different identities, experiences and needs of children and young people and the importance of equitable access to safe, inclusive and responsive environments.

Mandatory Reporter: A mandatory reporter is a person who has a legal obligation under Victorian law to report reasonable beliefs of child abuse to Child Protection authorities.

Reportable Conduct: Reportable conduct refers to certain behaviours by an adult associated with an organisation toward a child that must be reported to an external oversight body. This includes sexual offences, sexual misconduct, physical violence, significant emotional or psychological harm and significant neglect.

Risk: Risk refers to any situation, action, environment or behaviour that could reasonably result in harm to a child or young person's safety or wellbeing.

Safety Screening / Worker Screening: Safety screening includes checks and assessments used to determine a person's suitability to work with children, such as Working with Children Checks, police checks, professional registration and other role-specific screening requirements.

Trauma-Informed Practice: Trauma-informed practice recognises the prevalence and impact of trauma and aims to provide environments and interactions that promote safety, trust, empowerment and healing, while avoiding re-traumatisation.

Appendix C- Plain English Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

This document is a plain English summary of the Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

It has been developed to help members of the community, clients, families and stakeholders understand how Berry Street Yooralla keeps children safe and promotes their wellbeing.

This summary does not replace the full Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy. For complete information, please refer to the full Policy and related policies.

If you have any questions or would like further information, please contact us by:

- speaking with a staff member
- emailing childsafety@berrystreet.org.au

Berry Street Yooralla is committed to ensuring that everyone understands their role in keeping children and young people safe.

1. What this Policy is about

This Policy explains how Berry Street Yooralla (BSY) keeps children and young people safe and well.

It explains:

- what we believe about child safety and wellbeing
- what everyone's role is
- how we prevent harm
- what to do if something is not right.

We want children, young people, families and carers to understand how we work to keep children safe.

2. Our commitment to children and young people

At Berry Street Yooralla:

- We have zero tolerance for child abuse or neglect
- Children and young people have the right to feel safe, respected and listened to.
- Child safety is everyone's responsibility
- We take concerns seriously and act quickly
- We create environments that are inclusive, culturally safe and trauma-informed.

3. Who this applies to

This Policy applies to everyone involved with Berry Street Yooralla, including staff, carers, volunteers, students on placement, contractors and visitors.

The Berry Street School has its own child safety policy for school-based staff and students.

4. Everyone has a role in child safety

Leaders and managers:

- ✓ Foster a safe and respectful culture
- ✓ Make sure staff understand their responsibilities
- ✓ Act quickly when concerns are raised.

All staff, volunteers and carers:

- ✓ Treat children with respect
- ✓ Follow our Codes of Conduct
- ✓ Speak up and report concerns immediately.

5. A child safe culture

We work to make sure that children feel safe to speak up, adults listen and respond kindly, concerns are raised early, and people are supported to do the right thing.

6. Codes of Conduct

Everyone must follow our Code of Conduct and Child Safety Code of Conduct. These set clear expectations about appropriate behaviour, professional boundaries and what to do if something does not feel right.

7. Managing risks to children

We take steps to reduce risks to children in physical spaces, online environments, and during programs, activities and outings, and we regularly review and improve safety.

8. Children's rights and having a say

Children and young people have the right to feel safe, be treated fairly, have a say in things that affect them, and know who they can talk to if they are worried.

9. Families and communities

Families, carers and communities are important partners in child safety. We involve families where it is safe and appropriate.

10. What to do if you are worried

If you are worried about a child or young person's safety or wellbeing, speak up. You can tell a staff member or contact Berry Street Yooralla directly. **If a child is in immediate danger, call 000.**

Keeping children safe is central to everything we do.

***Child safety is everyone's responsibility at Berry Street Yooralla.
If something doesn't seem right, report it immediately***