



Subject: Governance

Title: Executive Committee Child and Young People Safety Policy and Procedures

Approved Date: January 28th, 2026

Approved By: IFN Executive Committee

Effective Date: February 27th, 2026

Review Date: February 2027

Background IFN

Established in 1989, the Interfaith Network (IFN), is the longest serving Network in Australia. IFN is a group of diverse religious and cultural faiths, serving and working locally within the City of Greater Dandenong.

The Network's vision is a message of simplicity and impact, 'Many Faiths, One People'.

Our core objective is to prevent harm by promoting respect and understanding for the integrity of each person's beliefs, cultures and traditions so that people of all faiths, and none, can live together in peace and harmony.

The IFN's commitment to creating a strong sense of belonging has led to an increasing respect for shared beliefs and values, resulting in deeper connections within diverse communities.

Policy Purpose

The Interfaith Network of the City of Greater Dandenong is committed to the safety of children and young people. IFN is committed to promoting the rights of children and young people, providing and promoting environments which are safe for children and young people, and ensuring that this commitment is reflected in all aspects of our service and work.

Who this Policy Applies to:

This policy applies to the following individuals:

IFN Executive Committee Members

IFN Staff

IFN Members

IFN Volunteers

IFN Supporters, including individuals attending events, meetings

IFN Student Placements, Interns

IFN Contractors

Victoria's Child Safe Standards

The Child Safe Standards (the Standards) commenced in Victoria in January 2016.

Since 1 July 2022, organisations covered by the Standards have to comply with 11 Standards.

The 11 Standards set out minimum requirements and outline the actions organisations must take to keep children and young people safe.

The 11 Standards include specific requirements:

- To involve families and communities in organisation's efforts to keep children and young people safe.
- For a greater focus on safety for Aboriginal children and young people.
- To manage the risk of child abuse in online environments.
- In relation to governance, systems and processes to keep children and young people safe (Commission for Children and Young People, Website: January 2026)

Victorian Child Safe Standards

There are 11 Child Safe Standards:

Child Safe Standards 1 – 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

- IFN actively encourages and supports children's abilities to express their culture and exercise their cultural beliefs.
- IFN is committed to engaging with Aboriginal elders and leaders to participate in initiatives and events specific to children and young people to promote cultural awareness and celebrate indigenous culture.

Child Safe Standard 2 – Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture

- IFN Governance, Child and Young People Safety Policy established and operationalised.
- IFN Governance, Child and Young People Safety Policy is widely promoted through various communication channels to stakeholders, including IFN members.
- Governance members, staff and volunteers are required to hold a current Working with Children’s Check, and this information is to be held within the appropriate organisation register maintained by the IFN Association Secretary, Public Officer.
- Governance members, staff and volunteers are required to complete child safety training. This training maybe organised by IFN, or the individual may have undertaken child safety training in another position within an organisation, and IFN recognises the training completed. This information is to be held within the appropriate organisation register maintained by the IFN Association Secretary, Public Officer.
- Promotion of accredited child safety training to key stakeholders including IFN members.
- IFN staff, members and volunteers are required to complete and sign the required documentation, including the IFN Membership Application Form, that states a commitment to the protection of child and young people, and a zero tolerance for abuse.
- Participating IFN Places of Worship communities are required to complete the IFN Annual Site Safety and Accessibility Assessment Checklist which includes questions relating to child safety and wellbeing.
- Any individual charged, and or convicted of a criminal offence may be suspended, terminated, and or expelled from the organisation. In such circumstances, if the individual is part of a Place of Worship site, IFN will not include the Place of Worship site as part of its ‘Tours’ initiative, until determined otherwise by the IFN Executive Committee. This is to be formally minuted in the IFN Executive Committee meeting minutes prepared by the IFN Association Secretary, Public Officer.

Child Safe Standard 3 – Children and young people are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously

- IFN Governance, Child and Young People Safety Policy established and operationalised.
- Participating organisations involved within IFN initiatives are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Policy and are encouraged to provide feedback on ways in which the policy can be improved. Where possible, the feedback is to include the ‘voices’ of children and young people.
- IFN is committed to the inclusivity of the ‘voices’ of children and young people, in the design and delivery of child, young people related activities, including the Annual Interfaith Schools Gathering.

Child Safe Standard 4 – Families and communities are informed, and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing

- IFN Child and Young Persons Safety Policy is publicly available through IFN social media platforms including the IFN website.
- Families and communities are encouraged to provide feedback to the Policy by contacting the IFN Executive Officer.

Child Safe Standard 5 – Equity is upheld and diverse needs are respected in policy and practice

- Upheld in the IFN Governance, Child and Young People Safety Policy.

Child Safe Standard 6 – People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice

In accordance with appropriate legislation, IFN requires any person who works with children and/or young people hold a current Working with Children Check.

To ensure IFN engages the most suitable people to work with children and young people, IFN will adhere to the following recruitment practices:

1. IFN’s commitment to child safety is included in all position advertisements.
2. Clear position descriptions that include IFN’s commitment to child safety and well-being.
3. Written applications from applicants.
4. Face-to-face interviews that use behavioural questions to determine the applicant’s knowledge of child safeguarding and
5. Two referee checks and qualifications checks including formal, academic qualifications.

Children Safe Standard 7 – Processes for complaints and concerns are child-focused

IFN aims to provide accessible and responsive complaints management processes that are focused on the needs of the children and young people.

IFN does this by:

- Where a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, any adult present should call 000.
- Where there is a safeguarding concern but no immediate risk of serious harm, the adult who has heard or witnessed the concern should notify the IFN Executive Officer and/or an IFN Executive Member Office Bearer, as soon as practicable and by no later than the end of the same day.
- Where a child makes a disclosure relating to harm or abuse to an adult, it is important for that adult to:
 1. Listen calmly and carefully, showing that their views are taken seriously.
 2. Provide reassurance.
 3. Avoid interrogating children and asking intrusive and/or leading questions.
 4. Avoid making false promises regarding confidentiality with the child.
 5. Make a confidential written record of the discussion either during the discussion or immediately afterwards. The record should include the key details of the disclosure together with any relevant times, dates, places and people of concern.
 6. Refer all relevant information to the IFN Executive Officer, and or an IFN Executive Member Office Bearer, as soon as practicable afterwards, and by no later than the end of the day and ensure that
 7. All information received by IFN is securely stored electronically, and access is limited to the IFN Executive Officer, IFN Executive Committee.

Children Safe Standard 8 – Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training

IFN strives to ensure that staff and volunteers, working and serving within the organisation are supported by:

1. Induction, orientation of IFN including policies and practices relating to child safety and well-being.
2. Completion of an approved, accredited child safety training and
3. For all child and young person-related activities, the appropriate briefing and debriefing of staff and volunteers by a senior IFN representative is undertaken.

Child Safe Standard 9 – Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people not to be harmed

- For certain types of events or activities, IFN may issue additional requirements that are specific to that occasion.

Places of Worship Tours

- Places of Worship site visits are resourced by IFN staff and led by both IFN staff and volunteers.
- Appropriate bus transportation is provided by IFN for IFN Places of Worship Public Tours and Specialised Tours.
- Under no circumstances are Tour participants, including children and young people, to be transported in the individual vehicles of IFN staff or volunteers.
- Appropriate bus transportation is provided by primary and secondary schools for all school related - Places of Worship site visits. Only with the expressed approval of the participating school and the IFN Executive Officer, is an IFN staff member and or volunteer to travel on the bus transportation organised by the participating school. It is the practice requirement that IFN staff and volunteers will travel in their individual vehicles to the Places of Worship Sites for this tour type.
- Specific to Public Tours and Specialised Tours, no individual aged 16 years of age or under is permitted to participate in a Tour without an accompanying and known adult to the child or young person is present.
- For all Places of Worship, the IFN staff and volunteer participants ratio is:
 1. Up to 80 participants, 1 IFN representative
 2. Between 100 –150 participants 2 IFN representatives
 3. Over 150 participants 3 IFN representatives

Venues

- The location for any events or activities held by IFN shall be risked-assessed properly in reference to the suitability and safety for children. Fire and safety procedures and precautions shall be made clear to all those involved, including staff, volunteers, etc.

First Aid

- If an ambulance is required, call 000 immediately. Please notify an IFN Senior Representative present that an ambulance has been called.
- Any accident or injury concerning a child should be brought to the attention of the nearest first aider and should thereafter be formally reported to an IFN Senior Representative present.

Recordings and Photographs

- IFN will not record or photograph any event that involves children and young people.
- IFN will not post any images of children or young people unless the images are 'stock' images that are available widely.
- No forms of recording or photography are permitted at any IFN event, involving children and young people, by a third party, for example, a school, without the prior approval of IFN and the written and informed consent of parents.

Child Safe Standard 10 – Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved

- IFN will undertake an annual review of the policy.

Child Safe Standard 11 – Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people

- As detailed within this Policy.

Victorian Reportable Conduct Scheme – Reporting Concerns under the Child Safe Standards

Effective, Monday February 23rd, 2026, any concerns that an organisation may not be complying with the Child Safe Standards, contact is to be made with the Social Services Regulator.

The Social Services Regulator (SSR) regulates the Child Safe Standards for social services and organisations who do not have a sector specific co-regulator, that provide care of services to children in Victoria.

The Social Services Regulator regulates the Reportable Conduct Scheme, the Worker and Career Exclusion Scheme, the Working with Children Check, the National Disability Insurance Scheme Screening Check, the Child Safe Standards and the Social Services Standards.

Community members or service users raising a concern relating to the Social Services Standards, the Child Safe Standards, or the Reportable Conduct Scheme can email contact@ssr.vic.gov.au or call 1300 310 778.

In circumstances whereby IFN may contact and report concerns, this report is to be made by the IFN Executive Officer or an IFN Executive Committee Member Office Bearer, and all discussions are to be documented and securely stored.

Further Information

If you require further information, please email the Executive Officer, via executive@interfaithnetwork.org.au

Acknowledgement

By signing below, you acknowledge having read and understood the Policy, and you agree to comply with this Policy. Please return to the IFN Administration Officer, administration@interfaithnetwork.org.au

Name:

Position:

Email address:

Signature:

Date:

References:

Victorian Commission for Children and Young People Standards 2023

Wonder.Legal Australia website

Social Services Regulator Victoria