Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

(Policy Number – KL-GOVPOL005)
(Policy Type – Council)

1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define Kentish and Latrobe Council's (Council) commitment to creating and maintaining a Child Safe Organisation. It establishes Council's commitment, principles and responsibilities for protecting the safety, wellbeing and rights of children and young people, and for promoting child safety across all Council services, activities, facilities and online environments.

2 Scope

a) This policy applies to the following:

   i) Council, when acting as the governing and decision-making body;

   ii) Elected Members;

   iii) Council employees (permanent, temporary, casual, apprentices, trainees, work experience students and employees engaged through a labour-hire agency);

   iv) Employees on secondment;

   v) Volunteers;

   vi) Contractors or consultants engaged by Council; and

   vii) Any other person undertaking work or providing services on behalf of Council.

b) The application of this policy is irrespective of involvement in child related work, and there are no exclusions to the application of this policy.

3 Policy Detail

Council are committed to creating and maintaining a Child Safe Organisation. Council recognises its legal and moral responsibility to protect the safety, wellbeing and rights of children and young people and to comply with the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023* (Tas)

3.1 Statement of Commitment

a) We are committed to the safety and wellbeing of children and young people while enabling their participation as valued members of the community.

b) We have zero tolerance to child abuse and harm. Our people are obliged to prioritise the safety of the children they interact with in the performance of their role and to report conduct of concern.

c) We recognise the importance of child safety in the provision of quality community services. All children who attend services, programs, events, and community spaces (including online environments) that are delivered, owned, contracted, or managed by Council, have the right to feel safe, be safe, and be heard.

d) We recognise our legal and moral responsibilities in keeping children and young people safe and have robust policies and procedures in place to meet this commitment that are aligned with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations.

e) We want children to thrive, be safe, happy, and empowered, and are dedicated to ensuring their views are listened to and respected, and they are given the opportunities to contribute to how we plan and deliver our services that affect them.

f) We are committed to upholding equity and respecting the diverse needs of children and young people.

g) We are committed to respecting and supporting the cultural rights, safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people in accordance with the Universal Principle for Aboriginal Cultural Safety.

h) We are committed to being a Child Safe Organisation.

3.2 Child and Youth Safe Standards

Council will implement and maintain the Tasmanian Child and Youth Safe Standards in accordance with the Universal Principle for Aboriginal Cultural Safety.

The Standards are:

a) **Standard 1 –** Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance, and culture.

b) **Standard 2 –** Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

c) **Standard 3 –** Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.

d) **Standard 4 –** Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.

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

f) **Standard 6 –** Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.

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

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

i) **Standard 9 –** Implementation of the Child and Youth Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.

j) **Standard 10 –** Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

3.3 Reportable Conduct Scheme

Council will comply with the Reportable Conduct Scheme and maintain systems to:

a) Prevent child abuse and harm.

b) Respond appropriately to allegations of reportable conduct.

c) Meet legislative reporting obligations.

d) Support fair, timely and child-focused investigations.

Reportable conduct includes:

a) Sexual offences (against, with or in the presence of, a child);

b) Sexual misconduct (against, with or in the presence of, a child);

c) Physical violence (against, with or in the presence of, a child);

d) Grooming of a child;

e) Behaviour that causes significant emotional or psychological harm;

f) Significant neglect; and

g) Relevant offences such as failing to report child abuse.

3.4 Policy Implementation

Council will:

a) Support the work of the Child Safe Organisation Working Group in implementing, monitoring and reviewing Council's child safety obligations and practices.

b) Provide resources, within Council's approved budget, to support implementation and ongoing compliance with the Child and Youth Safe Standards.

c) Develop, implement and review child safe policies, procedures and supporting documentation, including:

   i) Child Safe Code of Conduct.

   ii) Child safety risk assessments.

   iii) Child safety complaint and allegation management procedures.

   iv) Reporting and recordkeeping processes.

   v) Contractor, procurement and supplier arrangements.

vi) Other supporting policies and procedures as required.

d) Provide child safety awareness, education and training for relevant persons.

e) Promote child safety messages across Council services, facilities, venues, programs and events.

f) Work collaboratively with community organisations, contractors, volunteers and other stakeholders to promote child safety practices.

g) Monitor compliance with this policy and continually improve Council's child safety systems.

4 Responsibilities

4.1 Council

Council will:

a) Provide governance oversight and leadership in relation to Council's commitment to child safety;

b) Consider the resources required to support implementation and ongoing compliance with the Child and Youth Safe Standards through Council's annual budget and resource allocation processes; and

c) Support the work undertaken by the Child Safe Organisation Working Group to implement, monitor and review Council's child safe requirements.

4.2 Elected Members

Elected Members will:

a) Demonstrate leadership and promote a culture that supports child safety and wellbeing.

b) Understand and comply with their obligations under this policy.

c) Report any child safety concerns in accordance with Council procedures.

d) Promote Council's commitment to being a Child Safe Organisation.

4.3 Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will:

a) Fulfill the responsibilities of the Head of Entity under the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023* (Tas).

b) Ensure Council complies with the Child and Youth Safe Standards and Reportable Conduct Scheme.

c) Ensure adequate resources approved by Council are appropriately allocated to support implementation and maintenance of the Child and Youth Safe Standards.

d) Receive and manage reportable conduct matters and notifications in accordance with legislative requirements.

e) Promote continual improvement of Council's child safe systems.

4.4 Directors

The Directors will:

a) Embed child safety and wellbeing within their areas of responsibility.

b) Implement this policy and associated procedures.

c) Ensure child safety risks are identified, assessed and appropriately controlled.

d) Ensure workers receive appropriate induction, supervision and training.

e) Support the reporting and management of child safety concerns.

4.5 People and Culture

People and Culture will:

a) Ensure recruitment, screening and selection processes comply with the Child and Youth Safe Standards.

b) Verify Working with Vulnerable People Registration where required.

c) Maintain employment records relating to child safety requirements.

d) Provide advice regarding employment matters associated with child safety.

4.6 Child Safety Officer

The Child Safety Officer will:

a) Coordinate the implementation and continual improvement of Council's Child Safe Organisation Framework.

b) Coordinate child safety induction, awareness and training programs for workers.

c) Maintain records relating to child safety training and awareness activities.

d) Provide advice and guidance to workers and management on child safety obligations, reporting requirements and associated procedures.

e) Monitor compliance with this policy and identify opportunities for continual improvement.

f) Support the management of child safety concerns, including providing advice on reporting pathways and legislative requirements.

g) Liaise with the CEO, People and Culture, Directors and external agencies, where appropriate, to support Council's child safety obligations.

***Note:** The Child Safety Officer function is undertaken by the WHS & Training Officer or another officer appointed by the CEO.*

4.7 Workers

Workers will:

a) Comply with this policy, the Child Safe Code of Conduct and associated procedures.

b) Behave appropriately when interacting with children and young people.

c) Report any child safety concerns or suspected reportable conduct immediately.

d) Participate in required child safety training.

e) Maintain any required Working with Vulnerable People Registration.

4.8 Contract Managers

Contract Managers will:

a) Ensure child safety requirements are incorporated into relevant contracts, agreements, leases, licences, funding arrangements and labour-hire engagements.

b) Ensure contractors and third parties are provided with relevant child safety information where applicable.

c) Verify contractors comply with Council's child safety requirements, including Working with Vulnerable People Registration, where required.

d) Monitor contractor compliance with contractual child safety obligations.

4.9 External Parties

a) Council recognises that many community organisations, sporting clubs, user groups, contractors and service providers operate from, or use, Council-owned facilities and spaces.

b) While Council is not responsible for managing or overseeing the child safety obligations of external organisations, it will take reasonable steps to promote and support child safe practices within the community.

c) Council may support external organisations by:

i) Providing access to child safety information and resources.

ii) Promoting awareness of the Child and Youth Safe Standards and other relevant child safety requirements.

iii) Encouraging organisations using Council facilities to implement child safe policies and practices appropriate to their activities.

iv) Supporting organisations to access relevant child safety guidance, training and educational resources.

v) Promoting inclusive, culturally safe and accessible child safe practices.

d) Council acknowledges the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Institutional Response to Child Sexual Abuse regarding the role of local government in promoting child safe communities and will continue to strengthen its leadership and support for child safe practices across the community where reasonably practicable.

5 Definitions

Term	Meaning
Abuse	Means an act or omission that causes, or is likely to cause, harm to a child or young person. Abuse may include physical abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, grooming or exposure to family violence.
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	The title Chief Executive Officer is a term of reference for the General Manager as appointed by Council pursuant to section 61 of the *Local Government Act 1993*; and carries the same meaning for the purposes of the *Local Government Act 1993* and all other legislation administered by or concerning the Council.
Child/Children/ Young Person	Means a person under 18 years of age.
Child Safe Organisation	Means an organisation that creates and maintains environments where children and young people are safe, their wellbeing is promoted, risks of harm are minimised, and concerns are identified and responded to appropriately.
Child and Youth Safe Standards	Means the ten standards established under the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023* (Tas) that organisations must implement to promote the safety and wellbeing of children and young people.
Contractor	Means a person, company or other entity engaged by Council to perform work or provide services on Council's behalf.
Council Facilities	Means Council-owned, managed or controlled buildings, facilities, parks, reserves, sporting grounds, public spaces and other locations used for Council services, programs or activities.

Term	Meaning
Head of Entity	Means the person who is the Head of Entity under the *Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023* (Tas). For Council, this is the CEO.
Independent Regulator	Means the Tasmanian Independent Regulator responsible for administering and monitoring compliance with the Child and Youth Safe Organisations Framework.
Reportable Conduct Scheme	Means the legislative scheme established under the Reportable Conduct Scheme requiring the Head of Entity to report, investigate and respond to allegations of reportable conduct involving workers.
Universal Principle for Aboriginal Cultural Safety	Means the principle requiring organisations to ensure the cultural rights, safety and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and young people are respected and supported when implementing the Child and Youth Safe Standards.
Worker	Means a person who has attained the age of 18 years and who carries out work for or on behalf of Council in any capacity, including as an employee, volunteer, contractor, subcontractor, consultant, Councillor, office holder, trainee, student, work experience participant or any other person engaged by, or acting on behalf of, Council, whether or not they work with children or young people.
Working with Vulnerable People Registration	Means a current registration issued under the *Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013* (Tas) authorising a person to undertake regulated activities involving children where required by law.

6 Associated Documents and References

6.1 Legislation Reference

- Child and Youth Safe Organisations Act 2023 (Tas).
- Registration to Work with Vulnerable People Act 2013 (Tas).
- Local Government Act 1993 (Tas).

6.2 Strategic Plan Reference

6.2.1 Kentish Council

Area	1	Governance and Organisational Development
Project	1.5	Risk Management
Objective	1.5	To be actively committed to risk management
Strategy	1.5.1	Maintain and improve our risk management systems and culture
	1.5.2	Promote community awareness of risk management systems

6.2.2 Latrobe Council

Area	1	Governance
Project	1.5	Risk Management
Objective	1.5	Committed to risk management and building community capacity and resilience
Strategy	1.5.3	Maintain and improve risk management systems and culture as a core organisational focus

6.3 Other Associated Documents

- KL-GOVPRO005 – Child Safety Disclosure/Reporting Procedure.
- KL-HRPOL001 – Code of Conduct Policy.
- KL-HRPRO023 – Working with Vulnerable People Procedure.
- KL-HRPOL019 – Recruitment, Selection, and Appointment Policy.
- KL-HRPRO008 – Recruitment, Selection, and Appointment Procedure.
- KL-HRPOL003 – Discipline Policy.
- KL-HRPRO020 – Discipline Procedure.

APPROVED BY LATROBE COUNCIL: 26/10/2026 Minute: 14.4

APPROVED BY KENTISH COUNCIL: 21/10/2026 Minute: 14.3

LATROBE COUNCIL EFFECTIVE DATE: 30/10/2026

KENTISH COUNCIL EFFECTIVE DATE: 30/10/2026

ADMINISTERED BY: Chief Executive Officer

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure its relevance in terms of community needs and expectations and Council goals, targets, budget, and statutory requirements.