



Child Protection Policy

When referenced in this document, Australia School of Performing Arts (ASPA) includes the Australian Girls Choir, ASPA Education, Raw Energy Dance Education, the International School of Performing Arts and the Australian International Girls Choir.

Australian School of Performing Arts (ASPA) adheres to the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations as well as the relevant Child Safe Standards in each state and territory. ASPA staff members adhere to the Child Safe Code of Conduct and understand they have a legal obligation to protect the children in our care. This policy outlines the key points of Child Protection at ASPA.

Our ASPA community is comprised of many individuals, working together to achieve common goals. We are proud to have such a diverse group of students and we are committed to providing a safe physical and emotional environment for all students and staff members.

Please note that this document touches on some sensitive topics about Child Protection; should you have any questions please talk to the ED – Corporate Services, Kylie Lee-Archer.

The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations are:

- Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.
- Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
- Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
- Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
- Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focussed.
- People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
- Staff members are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.
- Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.
- Implementation of national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.
- Policies and procedures document how the organisation is safe for children and young people.

Child Safe Environments Training

ASPA has strategies in place to supervise, train and support staff members to understand their mandatory reporting obligations and their responsibilities to create a child safe environment.

These strategies include, but are not limited to:

- all staff members receiving an annual induction pack with their appointment letter that includes the AGC Staff Handbook and all relevant child safe policies and procedures
- ASPA senior staff members reiterating child safe procedures, including mandatory reporting obligations, at our annual ASPA Essential National Staff Meeting
- ASPA senior staff members conducting regular in-venue performance appraisals and feedback to ensure all child safe policies and procedures are being followed correctly
- encouraging staff members to invite students to provide their input and be involved in classroom activity decisions, and raise any complaints or concerns to either their Tutor, Venue Manager, or by contacting Head Office.

Child Participation

ASPA appoints student leaders in our top three levels who provide role modelling and support to their peers and liaise with staff members on pastoral care and classroom activities.

If any students experience or observe bullying or unsafe behaviour or practices, we encourage them to:

- make it clear to their peers that this is not acceptable behaviour
- speak with an ASPA staff member or contact Head Office

Reporting of Suspected Harm

Australian States and Territories have different laws in regard to the reporting of suspected harm. Please refer to the specific Acts listed at the end of this policy. In all jurisdictions it is clear that ASPA staff are mandatory reporters, sometimes called mandated notifiers. All staff members are invited to seek the support of the Executive Director – Corporate Services, Kylie Lee-Archer, in any case they feel concerned about the safety of an ASPA participant.

Harm refers to physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission), including harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

Suspected Harm is, but is not limited to, the risk of significant harm in relation to current concerns. Current concerns may relate to:

- harm that is recent
- harm that is likely in the foreseeable future if nothing changes
- The child having contact with someone who has caused significant harm to either them or another child in the past
- Past harm with a continuing and significant impact on the child

ASPA staff members should be aware that failing to make a report of risk of significant harm in relation to a child or young person may constitute a breach of their duty of care.

Working With Children Checks and Child Employment

ASPA adheres to the relevant state and territory working with Children and Child Employment Acts. It is a condition of employment at ASPA that all staff members and contractors, regardless of their role, are required to hold a valid Working with Children Check or state equivalent.

All candidates for employment are provided with a job description outlining their role responsibilities and are subject to interviews and referee checks.

Use

Child Employment conditions are state specific and are only relevant in particular states for AGC choristers involved in additional engagements that fall outside a regular Australian Girls Choir rehearsal or concert.

Use of Images, Audio and Video

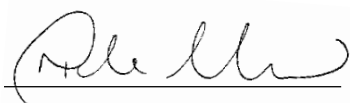
By submitting payment and enrolling in an ASPA program, parents and guardians agree to the Terms of Enrolment, allowing ASPA the use of photographs, audio and video recordings of relevant activities for educational purposes, staff training and in promotional material. All media will support a positive message and will not include the child's full name. Use of ASPA Education images for ASPA promotional purposes only are negotiated on a case by case basis with individuals and schools.

ASPA informs parents, guardians and staff members that they cannot photograph or film students during session times for personal use.

Please refer to the website for the ASPA Privacy Policy. If ASPA staff members or families have any concerns regarding an image posted on our social media platforms or used in a promotional campaign, or feel it may be harmful, please contact the Executive Director – Marketing and Business Development, Jasmine Cruickshank on 03 9859 6499 or via email to headoffice@aspagroup.com.au. Jasmine will review the image and respond to the query as soon as practicable.

Informing the ASPA community of the legislative liability of Child Protection

All ASPA staff members receive a copy of this policy upon appointment, and in the case of a policy revision, along with the Child Safe Code of Conduct. Students, parents and guardians are directed to view this policy and our Child Safe Code of Conduct, listed on our website, via the Terms of Enrolment distributed annually.



Nicole Muir
CEO

Updated Date: September 2024

Acts and Regulations

ACT – Children and Young People Act 2008 and Working with Vulnerable People (Background Checking) Act 2011

NSW – Children’s Guardian Act 2019, Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998, Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) (Child Employment) Regulation 2015, and Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012

QLD – Child Protection Act 1999, Child Employment Act 2006 and Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000

SA – Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 and Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016

VIC – Children, Youth and Families Act 2005, Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005, Child Employment Act 2003 and Worker Screening Act 2020

WA – Children and Community Services Act 2004 and Working with Children (Criminal Record Checking) Act 2004

Appendix 1 – SA specific requirements

Working With Children Checks

All ASPA staff members and contractors working with children and young people must hold a valid Working with Children Check (WWCC) issued by the Screening Unit of the Department of Human Services. A DCSI clearance can be held until it expires then a WWCC from DHS must be obtained.

Mandatory Reporting

In SA, under the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017, should a staff member suspect harm they are directed to call the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) at the Department for Child Protection on 13 14 78. If a child is at immediate risk, please contact the SA Police on 000.