



**DISTRICT COUNCIL OF  
KIMBA**

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**1.30**  
**SAFE ENVIRONMENT**  
**POLICY**



[www.kimba.sa.gov.au](http://www.kimba.sa.gov.au)

[council@kimba.sa.gov.au](mailto:council@kimba.sa.gov.au)

**2023**

# DOCUMENT APPROVAL

This document has been endorsed and approved for use by:

*Deb Larwood*

Deb Larwood  
CEO District Council Kimba

9<sup>th</sup> August 2023

Date

## Document Version Control

<b>Document Name:</b>	1.30 Safe Environment Policy
<b>Document Status:</b>	Final
<b>Version Number:</b>	7
<b>Author:</b>	D L Larwood
<b>Authorised By</b>	D Larwood

## Change History

Version	Issue Date	Author	Reasons for Change
2	9/9/2009	D Larwood	Review
3	2015	D Larwood	Review
4	12/2016	D Kemp	Extensively reviewed and revised
5	2/2017	D Kemp	Small change
6	12/2020	K Francis	Review
7	08/2023	D Larwood	Reviewed in line with Childhood Safe Environment Guidelines

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to Council Elected Members, the Executive Management Team, workers, non-employment persons (such as volunteers, school/community work experience persons), contractors, consultants, lessees, trainers, agent of Council, parents and family members and any others involved in undertaking Council operations or the delivery of Council services and programs to, or in the vicinity of, children and other vulnerable persons within the Kimba community.

## **PURPOSE**

The District Council of Kimba is committed to the safety and wellbeing of children, young people and other vulnerable people, valued and respected members of the community, who access our services. We support the rights of the child and vulnerable persons in the community and will act without hesitation to ensure a safe environment is maintained at all times. We also support the rights and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers and encourage their active participation in building and maintaining a secure environment for all children, young people and other vulnerable persons.

In addition to the moral obligation to address any harm to children, the Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA [‘the Safety Act’] places a legal obligation on Councils (and other organisations providing a service wholly or partly to children) to ensure children are safe from harm.

This policy aims to ensure the Council organisation and facilities are safe environments for children, young people and that they are protected from harm noting that bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.. This policy also aims to ensure that all relevant Council managers, employees , volunteers, contractors and consultants are aware of their duty of care and responsibilities for the protection, safety and wellbeing of children at all times.

**It is acknowledged that the District Council of Kimba staff and workers have limited contact with children and aged/vulnerable people. Regular maintenance is undertaken at the Kimba Pioneer Memorial Village (independent living units) and regular playground inspections are completed. Council believes the level of risk pertaining to child & vulnerable people harm or risk of harm is low.**

## **LEGAL OBLIGATIONS**

- Child Safe Environments

Section 114(1) of the Safety Act requires Councils and subsidiaries to have in place policies and procedures for ensuring:

- a) Child safe environments for children and young people are established and maintained within the organisation;:
- b) Mandatory reporting obligations (as set out in Chapter 5, Part 1 of the Act) are complied with..

The policies and procedures must comply with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations issued by the Chief Executive if the Department of Human Services as varied from time to time.

- Mandatory reporting

Section 30(3) of the Safety Act prescribes mandated notifiers as any Council employee, contractor, volunteer or person undertaking educational or vocational training that provides health, welfare, education, sporting or recreational childcare or residential services wholly or partly for children and young people, being a person who:

- a) Provides services directly to children and young people; or
- b) Holds a management position in the organisation the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of services to children; and

mandated notifiers also include an officer or employee of a Council or a subsidiary who holds a management position, the duties of which include direct responsibility for, or direct supervision of, the provision of services to children.

Mandated notifies must report any suspicion of a child being at risk to the Child Abuse Report Line (CARL) (telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 13 14 78). All serious concerns must be reported via the phone line, **not** via the online e-CARL portal (<https://my.families.sa.gov.au/IDMProv/landing.html>).

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Child or young person** means a person under the age of 18.

**Harm** includes physical or psychological harm (whether caused by an act or omission) and includes such harm caused by sexual, physical, mental or emotional abuse or neglect.

**Prescribed position** is a position in which a person works with children or a position in which it is reasonably foreseeable that the person will work with children, including people who:

- provide a service or undertake an activity that is child-related work in the course of their employment;
- carry on a business in which an employee works with children (whether or not the person works with children); or
- are employed to provide preschool, primary or secondary education to a child (whether or not the person is a registered teacher).

Prescribed positions may be held by employees, volunteers, contractors, persons undertaking educational / vocational training or elected members.

## **APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY**

The policy will apply from the date of endorsement, to all employees, volunteers, elected members, students on placement, work experience students, contractors and consultants providing services wholly or partly to children, or who work with or near children.

\*Author's Note: A schedule of roles and responsibilities is included as Attachment 2.

The Safe Environment Policy will be communicated through Council's usual channels to all relevant audiences to ensure awareness and understanding of Council's commitment to ensuring a safe environment. This will include Council Members, staff, volunteers, contractors, consultants, parents, carers, and children where relevant. Copies of this Policy are available at the Administration Office or via Council website – [www.kimba.sa.gov.au](http://www.kimba.sa.gov.au).

## **POLICY**

Council is committed to ensuring the organisation and Council facilities are safe environments for children and vulnerable people.

In particular, the following standards reflect the guidance provided by DHS on appropriate standards of conduct for adults in dealing with children.

\*Author's Note: These Child Safe Environment Guidelines are intended to align with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations, which provide further detail about what is required to satisfy each Principle, including "**Key action areas**" and "**Indicators that this Principle is upheld**".

## **RISK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Council will identify and assess potential sources of harm and take steps to decrease the likelihood that harm will occur to children, young people and other vulnerable people who use our services. Areas of risk assessment will include human resources, activities and programs, record keeping, physical spaces, and organisational culture.

\*Author's Note: Risk management strategies will vary in scope and detail depending on the complexity and size of the organisation, the type of activities or services provided for children and the age and maturity of the children involved.

## **CODES OF CONDUCT**

All employees, volunteers, contractors, elected members and consultants will be required to comply with the code of conduct endorsed by Council, which sets out standards of conduct when providing services to children.

The code of conduct is supported by Council's grievance procedure to address breaches of the code of conduct.

For more information about these procedures, contact the Council's Safe Environment Contact Office –the Chief Executive Officer.

\*Author's Note: Codes of Conduct could be separate documents or written into existing codes of conduct to provide guidance for protective work practices for staff and volunteers, and to prevent harm to children. An example Code of Conduct follows in these Attachments.

## **RECRUITMENT, SELECTION AND ENHANCING PERFORMANCE**

Council will take all reasonable steps to ensure that it engages the most suitable and appropriate people to work with, and provide services to, children and young people.

Applicants for prescribed positions will be screened for their suitability to provide services. Screening will involve WWCC checks, interviews, referee reports, checking qualifications and previous employment history in working with children.

Council will ensure that all staff and volunteers who work with children or who have access to their personal records have ongoing support and training to develop, enhance and maintain a child safe environment.

\*Author's Note: If Council intends to specify a contact person (see 5.2 above) that officer could also be the contact person for staff, parents and children in relation to safe environment issues.

## **INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING**

Council will promote the involvement of children and young people in service development planning where relevant, and inform them of their rights and how to access grievance procedures where relevant.

\*Author's Note: Consider existing/new forums or other consultation mechanisms for children and young people. If Council intends to specify a contact person (see 5.2 above) that officer could also be part of facilitating involvement of children and young people in service development and review.

## **RESPONDING TO HARM OR RISK OF HARM**

Council will ensure that staff, volunteers, contractors and consultants providing services to and/or working with children are aware of and are trained, and appropriately supported to report any suspicion of harm or risk of harm (including abuse or neglect) on reasonable grounds.

\*Author's Note: Consider existing/new procedures that articulate options for:

- seeking advice and support from supervisors, managers or the Safe Environment Contact Officer, recording incidents, concerns and referrals, and storing these securely; and
- dealing with concerns of harm (including abuse or neglect) of a child or vulnerable person that has been perpetrated by a Council staff member, volunteer, contractor, consultant or elected member; and
- keeping up awareness, e.g. on staff safety noticeboards, intranet, email news

## **ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS**

- *Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017 (SA);*
- *Children and Young People (Safety) Regulations 2017 (SA);*
- *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Act 2016 (SA); and*
- *Child Safety (Prohibited Persons) Regulations 2019 (SA),*
- *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations*
- *Working with Children/Child Safe Code of Conduct*

## **POLICY REVIEW**

The Safe Environment Policy will be reviewed at a minimum at least every 4 years to ensure compliance with the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and effective maintenance of a safe environment.