

Child-Safe Behaviour Standards

Purpose of this requirement

At Goodstart we take any action necessary to ensure that all children can feel safe and be safe, and are safeguarded from sexual, physical, emotional, or psychological abuse, exposure to violence, harm, and neglect. This means we are committed to keeping children safe and protected, ensuring they gain a strong sense of wellbeing, optimism, and confidence so they have the learning and development and wellbeing outcomes they need for school and life. This is more than just meeting compliance responsibilities. Underpinned by the 'look, do, tell' framework, we amplify and promote the voice and rights of children, through the prevention, identification and response to child abuse, neglect, and harm.

This requirement sets expectations for how Goodstarters should behave around children at all times, (when at Goodstart and when not at Goodstart, including online).

Applicability of this requirement

Child Safe Behavioural Expectations

I WILL:

- Uphold children’s rights, always prioritise their needs and be respectful of children
- Seek, listen to and value children and young people’s ideas and opinions.
- Welcome all children and their families by being inclusive and actively promoting cultural safety.
- Welcome families to participate in decisions about their child’s learning and any other matters about their safety and respect the cultural and religious practices of families.
- Understand and acknowledge the significance of family relationships for children.
- Understand and meet the needs of children in my care that may have developmental delays, disabilities and/or histories of complex trauma.
- Be attuned and responsive to children within a play-based learning environment
- Ensure all children are effectively supervised to keep them safe from harm and hazards that may arise in their play and learning.
- Hold a current working with children check.
- Participate in all mandatory training and have a commitment to continually increasing my knowledge of child protection issues and practice.
- Genuinely believe children and take it seriously if they disclose abuse, neglect and harm.
- Take all reasonable steps to protect children from abuse, neglect and/or harm.
- Adhere to the Code of Conduct and the Child Safe Behaviour Standards at all times (including with my own children if applicable) and immediately report and act on any concerns or observed breaches of these standards.
- Adhere to all relevant Australian, State and Territory legislation and regulations and our child safe policies and procedures.
- Raise concerns with my manager if risks to child safety are identified, including cultural, environmental and operational risks
- Report any conflicts of interest to my manager (such as an outside relationship with a child).

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CONTENT OWNER	Matthew Little, Chief Safety Officer	DOCUMENT AUTHOR	Sara Evans, National Lead - Safeguarding Children		
DATE PUBLISHED	01/07/2022	DOCUMENT VERSION	V5.0	REVISION DUE DATE	30/06/2024
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- Reporting or act on any allegations or suspicions of child abuse, neglect and harm regardless of whether the suspicion relates to the safety of the child while in the care of Goodstart or elsewhere.
- Respect and protect the privacy of children and their families by keeping all information about child abuse, neglect and harm concerns confidential.
- Assist to my fullest capacity, with any investigation carried out by a regulatory authority, statutory agency or with any internal investigative process in relation to allegations of child abuse, neglect or harm
- Immediately report unsafe behaviour to my manager. If I have already raised a safety concern and I'm not satisfied with the outcome, and I feel that there is an unsafe practice or situation continuing, I will call the Goodcall hotline – 1300 376 583 (Option 1 for Safety and then Option 5 for Goodcall).

I WILL NOT:

- Harm or exploit children and young people
- Condone or participate in illegal, unsafe or abusive behaviour towards children, including sexual, physical, emotional, or psychological abuse, exposure to violence, neglect or grooming behaviours.
- Use hurtful, racist or discriminatory or offensive behaviour or language with children
- Engage in unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child
- Persistently criticise humiliate and/or denigrate a child or create a climate of fear, or show favour to one child over others.
- Deliberately prevent a child from forming friendships
- Ignore, disregard or fail to report (to Police, Statutory Child Protection or internally) any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of child abuse, or obstruct or prevent anyone from reporting instances of abuse, neglect or harm, or exploitation in accordance with our policies and procedures.
- Exaggerate or trivialise child abuse issues
- Take, transmit, or save photographs, images or videos of children or families on personal cameras, electronic devices, or computers.
- Offer children alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs
- Use sexual language or gestures in the presence of children, show children pornographic images or share details of sexual experiences with a child
- Be alone with a child when there is no professional reason for doing so.
- Encourage a child to communicate with me in a private setting, including online.
- Offer or accept private services to families out of work hours, e.g. babysitting or tutoring where no pre-existing family connection exists, without giving consideration to the risks associated and without approval from my manager.
- Offer or accept emergency placements for children at the request of statutory child protection without giving consideration to the risks associated and without approval from my manager.

Some breaches of these Child Safe Behaviour Standards may need to be reported to the Police, Statutory Child Protection or other Regulatory Authority. Our [Notification of Complaints, Incidents and Events to a Regulatory Authority Procedure](#) provides more information about our reporting obligations to external authorities as well as describing protections and confidentiality provisions for anyone making a report.

PLEASE NOTE: You are committing an offence if you know another Goodstarter poses a serious risk of abusing a child and you have the power to reduce or remove the risk, and you negligently fail to do so. All Goodstarter's are required to report information to police if they know, believe or reasonably ought to know that a child has been abused.

Staff and volunteers who breach our Code of Conduct or Child Safe Behaviour Standards may also be subject to disciplinary action. This can include increased supervision, appointment to an alternative role, suspension or termination from the organisation. Detailed descriptions of breaches are found in our [Investigation Process Appendix](#). Serious breaches of the Child-Safe Behaviour Standards may result in legal proceedings.

Definitions

- **Domestic or family violence:** The use of violence or abuse to hurt, control or bully someone else in an intimate personal, family or informal carer relationship. Children and young people can be adversely affected by violence whether they witness it, hear it or are exposed to the consequences of emotions post the violence. They do not need to be directly involved to be impacted.

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- **Emotional/psychological harm:** The intentional use of inappropriate comments or behaviour towards a child which results in emotional harm or trauma to a child. This includes, verbal abuse, threatening a child or using manipulative behaviour, hostility towards or rejection of a child, deliberately making a child feel unimportant or embarrassed, blaming a child or exposure to domestic and family violence or stories and/or media about violence. Evidence of psychological harm could include the child displaying patterns of out of character behaviour, regression in behaviour, distress, anxiety, physical symptoms, or self-harm.
- **Ill treatment:** Seriously inappropriate, cruel, or inhumane treatment of a child such as making excessive or degrading demands of a child; a pattern of hostile or degrading comments or behaviour towards a child; and using seriously inappropriate forms of behaviour management towards a child. This includes handling children aggressively such as pulling or grabbing children, particularly by their arms, legs, or neck, swinging or picking up children by their arms or repeatedly swearing, yelling, screaming, scolding, or intimidating children verbally or physically.
- **Inappropriate behaviour guidance:** Inappropriate, unacceptable and damaging methods of attempting to control children's behaviour, such as yelling at a child, deliberately embarrassing a child, handling a child in an inappropriate way, withholding food or drink from a child, unreasonably restraining a child (this may include restraint in a high chair), excluding children from events, consistently moving children to the office or other space away from the play areas, and/or moving children to another room as punishment.
- **Neglect:** An intentional or reckless failure to meet the basic needs of a child, where the adult understood the needs of the child, and had the opportunity to meet those needs but failed to do so. This includes, inadequate supervision, failure to meet a child's physical needs including the provision of adequate and appropriate food, clothing, shelter or physical hygiene needs, failure to ensure that a child's formal education needs are being met and failure to provide adequate nurturing, affection encouragement and support to a child
- **Physical abuse/assault:** The intentional use of physical force against a child that results in, or has a high likelihood of resulting in, a serious injury to the child. This includes hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, pinching, spitting, scratching, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning, suffocating, physically restraining a child with unreasonable force (this may include forcefully holding or pinning a child, pinning a child's arms down/back, tying up or sitting on a child, physically forcing a child to sleep or rest) and making threats to physically harm a child through words or gestures regardless of whether the person actually intended to apply any force.
- **Restraint:** The application of physical force for the purpose of restraining a child's body. Restraint does not include holding a child without force in order to comfort the child or holding a child's hand to safely escort them from one area to another. Occasionally, there may be circumstances where a child becomes an imminent risk to themselves and may need to be removed from the situation or physically restrained to prevent harm to themselves. Children should be physically restrained only in emergency situations when a child is in a clearly unsafe situation such as attempting to scale a fence or run onto a road, behaving in ways that are destructive to themselves. Any force used must be reasonable in all of the circumstances and no more force should be used than is absolutely necessary. If the force used is unreasonable, or is more than is needed, the act could be physical assault.
- **Sexual abuse:** Sexual abuse is any sexual activity or behaviour that is imposed on a child or young person by someone else. Sexual abuse occurs when someone in a position of power uses that power to involve the child or young person in sexual activity.
- **Sexual misconduct:** There are three categories of sexual misconduct:
 - **Crossing professional boundaries** - behaviour that can be construed as involving an inappropriate and overly personal or intimate relationship with and/or conduct towards and/or focus on a child or group of children. This includes intimate relationships with children, staff members taking children to their house or in a personal vehicle, seeing children outside of work when no family connection exists (including foster care arrangements), engaging with children through personal social media accounts, phone, email or other electronic communication. It also includes inappropriate kissing and being overly affectionate toward children.
 - **Sexually explicit comments and other overtly sexual behaviour** - behaviour which includes, but is not limited to: sexualised behaviour and sexual behaviour towards children, inappropriate conversations of a sexual nature, unwarranted and inappropriate touching involving a child, personal correspondence and communications with a child in relation to the adult's romantic or sexual feelings for a child, watching children undress in circumstances where supervision is not required or is clearly inappropriate.

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- **Grooming behaviour** - a behaviour or pattern of behaviour that demonstrate that the staff member is grooming the child for sexual activity and where there is no other reasonable explanation for the behaviour. Grooming behaviour can include, but is not limited to: persuading a child or group of children they have a 'special' relationship by spending inappropriate special time with the child, showing special favours, inappropriately giving gifts or asking the child to keep the relationship to themselves as well as grooming the adults that have contact with that child in order to avoid detection.
- **Sexual offence:** Criminal offences involving a sexual element that are 'committed against, with or in the presence of a child'. This includes, indecent assault, sexual assault, sexual intercourse and attempted sexual intercourse, possession/dissemination/production of a child pornography or child abuse material, using children to produce pornography, grooming or procuring children under the age of 16 years for unlawful sexual activity and non-consensual sexual activity.
- **Supervisory neglect:** an intentional or reckless failure to adequately supervise a child that results in the death or harm to a child or involves a gross breach of professional standards and has the potential to result in death or harm to a child.
- **Statutory child protection:** Offering/accepting emergency placements of children at the request of statutory child protection without due diligence and consideration given to the risks associated.
- **Supervision of family contact:** Offering/accepting the supervision of family contact to occur at the service at the request of statutory child protection.
- **Supervisory neglect:** an intentional or reckless failure to adequately supervise a child that results in the death or harm to a child or involves a gross breach of professional standards and has the potential to result in death or harm to a child
- **Private babysitting, private tutoring, or similar:** Offering/accepting an offer (paid or voluntary) to provide informal services such as private babysitting, private tutoring, or similar, to children or families where no family connection exists is actively discouraged. Goodstart Representatives are reminded that if they are found to have engaged in conduct which breaches the Code of Conduct or Child-Safe Behaviour Standard while providing care in out of centre environments they may be subject to disciplinary action, up to an including termination (with or without notice).
- **Photographs, images or videos:** Taking, transmitting, or saving photographs, images or videos of children or families on personal cameras, electronic devices, or computers.

Related documents

NQS2 Safeguarding Children Requirement, NQS2 Protecting Children from Abuse, Neglect and Harm Procedure; NQS2 Visitors to the Centre Procedure; NQS2 Visitors to the Centre – Digital Visitor Management Procedure; NQS2 Managing Allegations of Child Abuse, Neglect and Harm involving Staff and Volunteers Procedure; NQS2 Child Safe Environment Requirement; BM6 Disciplinary Management Requirement; BM6 Investigation Requirement;

Related policies

BM1 Code of Conduct Policy

Responsibilities

This requirement is to be implemented by: All employees (permanent, temporary and casual), independent contractors (i.e non- employees), volunteers, directors and others acting on behalf of Goodstart.

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