

Child Safety Policy

1. Introduction

North Sydney Community Centre (NSCC) is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and empowering environment for all children. This Policy outlines our child safety policies and practices in line with the *NSW Child Safe Standards, Education and Care Services National Regulations*, and relevant legislation.

2. Our Commitment to Child Safety

- We value and respect all children.
- We promote inclusion, cultural safety, and equity.
- We actively prevent harm and respond to concerns with transparency and care.

3. Child Safe Standards (NSW)

We uphold the 10 Child Safe Standards, including:

- Embedding child safety in leadership and culture.
- Empowering children to participate and be heard.
- Involving families and communities.
- Managing risks and responding to concerns appropriately.

4. Code of Conduct

All staff, volunteers, and contractors must:

- Treat children with respect and dignity.
- Use positive guidance; never use physical or emotional punishment.
- Never use personal devices to photograph or record children.
- Report any concerns or breaches immediately.

North Sydney Community Centre

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5. Recruitment & Screening

- All staff must hold a valid Working With Children Check (WWCC).
- We have introduced mandatory new recruitment practices including Police Checks for all new employees.
- Recruitment includes two reference checks and child safety screening.
- Induction includes mandatory child protection training through ChildSafe Australia-Keeping Children and Young People Safe.

6. Supervision & Ratios

- NSCC maintains supervision ratios that meet or exceed regulatory standards.
- For After School Care, our ratio is **1 educator to 10 children**, exceeding the standard **1:15** ratio.
- Staff are trained to monitor, engage, and respond to children's needs.

7. Photography, Video & Media Use

- Written parental consent is required before any image or video is taken or used.
- Consent forms clearly outline usage, storage, and access.
- Parents may opt in or out via enrolment forms and can withdraw consent at any time.
- Staff must only use centre-issued devices.
- Images will not be used in ways that identify or locate children (e.g. full names, uniforms, geotags).

8. Responding to Concerns or Disclosures

- All concerns or disclosures are taken seriously.
- Staff must follow mandatory reporting obligations under NSW law.
- Reports are made to the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) or Child Protection Helpline as required.

9. Inclusion & Equity

- We embrace diversity and cultural safety.
- We aim to include all children, but where support needs exceed our capacity, we work with families to find the most appropriate pathway.
- We consult with families and professionals to ensure safe participation.

10. Online Safety & Digital Practices

- Staff follow strict digital safety protocols.
- Children are supported to develop safe and respectful digital habits.
- No personal devices are used for communication or documentation involving children.

11. Family Engagement

- Families are partners in child safety.
- We provide clear communication, access to policies, and opportunities for feedback.
- Families are encouraged to raise concerns and participate in safety planning.

12. Review & Continuous Improvement

- This policy is reviewed annually or following any incident or regulatory change.