

CHILD SAFETY AND WELLBEING POLICY

Adoption Date:	1 October 2025
Policy Number:	GRC 095
Policy Type:	Statutory
Responsible Officer:	Director Community & Corporate Services
Department:	Community & Corporate Services

Version	Decision Number or CEO Approval	Decision Date	History
1.	GRC 095	2 October 2025	Approved by Directors
2.	Amended OM-066/26	17 June 2026	Review June 2027

1. BACKGROUND

Goondiwindi Regional Council (“Council”) is committed to creating and maintaining safe and welcoming spaces for children and young people. This policy ensures compliance with the *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (QLD)* and implementation of Queensland’s 10 Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle. This policy also supports Council’s obligations under Queensland’s Reportable Conduct Scheme.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- All Goondiwindi Regional Council facilities and services
- All staff members, volunteers, contractors, and third-party service providers
- All children and young people aged 0-17 years who access Council services
- All programs, events, and activities conducted by or on behalf of Council
- Digital and online services accessed by children

Parents and caregivers retain primary responsibility for their children. However, Council recognises its duty of care and responsibility to implement child safe practices and take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children while accessing Council services, facilities, programs and activities.

3. DEFINITIONS / REFERENCES

Council	Goondiwindi Regional Council
Policy	Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Act	<i>Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (QLD)</i>
QFCC	Queensland Family & Child Commission

4. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

The purpose of this policy is to outline Council’s commitment to creating and maintaining a child-safe environment that promotes the safety, wellbeing, and cultural safety of all children and young people who access our services, facilities, and programs. Council services are inclusive and culturally safe for children of all backgrounds, abilities, and identities.

5. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Council's leadership is responsible for promoting a child safe culture and ensuring systems are in place to prevent, identify and respond to risks to children.

This includes ensuring compliance with the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme, including appropriate reporting, investigation and recordkeeping processes.

6. CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERMENT

Children's perspectives are respected and encouraged in designing children's programs and services. Where practical, safe and accessible channels enable children to raise questions or concerns. This Policy is related to child safety and wellbeing and is accessible to children, where needed translation services are available. Participation approaches must be age appropriate and must not expose children to harm or coercion.

7. FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Where necessary, families and communities are engaged in child safe discussions. Age appropriate and tailored messaging ensures clarity and inclusion.

8. RECRUITMENT AND SUPPORT

All staff, contractors and volunteers working in areas relating to children undergo Blue Card/Working with Children checks and reference checks. Inductions and code of conduct training include child safety information. Cultural awareness and diversity training is available to staff to assist in meeting community and Council's expectations and obligations.

9. COMPLAINTS AND REPORT HANDLING

Council maintains accessible and child focused reporting process to enable concerns about child safety to be raised by staff, volunteers, contractors, children and members of the public.

All concerns or allegations involving children must be reported immediately to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in accordance with Council's Reportable Conduct Procedure.

Council staff must report suspected abuse or risk of harm to appropriate external authorities in accordance with applicable legislation. Staff may do so directly where there is an immediate risk or where internal reporting is not practicable.

Where an allegation meets the definition of reportable conduct, Council will:

- assess and manage risks to children as a priority
- notify the Queensland Family and Child Commission (QFCC) within required timeframes
- undertake or commission an appropriate investigation

Reporting pathways are clearly communicated and include options for confidential or anonymous reporting where appropriate whilst recognising that anonymous reports may limit the ability to investigate fully.

10. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Staff and volunteers receive ongoing training and refresher training in child safety awareness, reporting, and cultural safety.

11. SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

Council applies a child safety risk management approach across its services and facilities. This includes conducting risk assessments for activities involving children, implementing appropriate supervision arrangements and undertaking regular environmental checks to reduce risks to children.

Physical spaces are designed to support children, parents and caregivers accessing a safe and child friendly environment, where they are able to supervise children. Online environments such as Wi-Fi and computers are available per Council's Internet Public Use Policy, where it remains the responsibility of the parents and caregivers to supervise use by children.

12. REVIEW AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Regular self-assessment and reviews are undertaken using QFCC tools, in line with industry standards. Feedback from children, families, and staff informs updates.

13. MONITORING AND COMPLIANCE

The QFCC monitors compliance with the Child Safe Standards and the Reportable Conduct Scheme and may undertake audits, reviews or compliance action where required.

14. REVIEW DATE

June 2027

15. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Child Safe Organisations Act 2024 (QLD)
- Working With Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (QLD)
- Human Rights Act 2019 (QLD)
- Information Privacy Act 2009 (QLD)
- Local Government Act 2009 (QLD)
- GRC 023 Internet Public Use Policy
- GRC 034 Code of Conduct
- GRC 017 Administrative Action Complaints Management Policy
- GRC Reportable Conduct Procedure

16. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Translation and Interpreting Services (TIS) - 131 450