

# CHILD SAFETY POLICY

**The Rainbow House (Division of Rev. Dr Ian Mavor Foundation)  
(ACN 609 160 278) ("Organisation")**

*Effective date: 1st July 2021  
(Reviewed annually)*

## **(1) PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY**

*At The Rainbow House (Division of Rev. Dr Ian Mavor Foundation) we are committed to providing an environment which is safe for children and youths, and to ensuring that this is reflected in all aspects of our business operations.*

*This Child Safety Policy (Policy) sets out the general principles that guide the management of child and youth safety at The Rainbow House (Division of Rev. Dr Ian Mavor Foundation).*

*We have developed this Policy to help our Workers understand and manage child and youth safety, and to set a framework to ensure that we provide a safe environment for children and young people, and that we meet all of our objectives and comply with all of our legal and regulatory obligations in relation to these matters.*

## **(2) STATUS OF THIS POLICY**

This Policy does not form part of any contract of employment or any other contract for work or services.

## **(3) APPLICABLE RULES**

(a) We are committed to complying with all applicable laws and regulations as well as codes of practice and other safety guidance in all jurisdictions where we operate. This includes the following legislation:

- *Family Law Act 1975 (Commonwealth)*
- *Child Protection Act 1999 (QLD)*

## **(4) NATIONAL PRINCIPLES FOR CHILD SAFE ORGANISATIONS**

(a) We support the *National Principles for Child Safe Organisations* (National Principles) and will endeavour to embrace them at our Organisation.

(b) The National Principles require that:

- 1. Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in organisational leadership, governance and culture.*
- 2. Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.*
- 3. Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.*
- 4. Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.*

*5. People working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.*

*6. Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused.*

*7. Staff and volunteers are equipped with the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children and young people safe through ongoing education and training.*

*8. Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.*

*9. Implementation of the national child safe principles is regularly reviewed and improved.*

*10. Policies and procedures document how the Organisation is safe for children and young people.*

## **(5) OUR OTHER DOCUMENTS**

In addition to this Child Safety Policy, you are required to be familiar with all other relevant documents which are aligned with this policy, including:

- \*\* Child Protection Procedures
- \*\* Information for The Rainbow House Families
- \*\* Information for The Rainbow House Volunteers

## **(6) APPLICATION OF POLICY**

(a) This Policy applies to any people who perform work for The Rainbow House (Division of Rev. Dr Ian Mavor Foundation), including all our directors, managers, board members, employees, contractors, subcontractors, employees of our contractors and subcontractors, apprentices, trainees, volunteers, interns, work experience students, labour hire employees and outworkers and any other people who perform work for or on behalf of our Organisation (Workers).

(b) We are committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all Workers and visitors to our Organisation. However, this Policy specifically addresses our commitment to the safety and wellbeing of youths and children at our Organisation. Throughout this Policy, we use the terms "youth", "young person", "child" and "children" to refer generally to people under 18 years of age.

(c) This Policy applies to all activities in our Organisation which involve children, or which result in or relate to contact with children.

(d) This Policy is intended to help manage the safety and wellbeing of any children that come into contact with our Organisation, whether they are receiving services from us, are the children of someone who is directly receiving services from us, are the children of our Workers or Volunteers, or come into contact with us in any other way.

## **(7) OUR COMMITMENT TO CHILD SAFETY**

(a) Safeguarding children from harm and abuse is an essential responsibility for our Organisation. We are committed to ensuring that any child who comes into contact with our Organisation or services is properly safeguarded, at all times. Every person under this policy must ensure that they play an active role in ensuring that children are properly safeguarded.

(b) We believe that no child or young person should experience abuse or harm and we are committed to the protection of children and young people. This policy is intended to provide guidance and overarching principles to those who represent us as volunteers or staff, to guide our approach to child protection and safeguarding.

(c) It is our intention that a child safe culture should be embedded in all levels of our Organisation, including but not limited to our leadership and governance as well as amongst all of our other Workers and Volunteers.

(d) When dealing with concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing, we are guided by a consideration of what is in the best interests of the child.

(e) We strive to:

- ensure that our Workers and Volunteers have the knowledge, skills and awareness to keep children safe
- ensure that any of our Workers and Volunteers who work with children have the necessary skills, attributes, experience and qualifications to uphold this Policy and provide the support and supervision that children require
- ensure that any children who come into contact with our Organisation and who have concerns about their safety or need assistance know where to go and who to talk to
- ensure that any children who come into contact with our Organisation and who have concerns about their safety feel comfortable seeking assistance
- maintain the safety and security of any of our facilities or environments which may be accessed by children (including any online facilities or environments, websites or platforms)
- promote a workplace which values diversity and inclusion
- where appropriate, involve children and their families in decisions that affect them
- promote a culture of child safety at all levels in our Organisation
- take any allegations or complaints in relation to child safety seriously, and respond promptly and appropriately
- report any allegations or concerns to relevant authorities whenever appropriate or necessary

## **(8) GENERAL WORKER RESPONSIBILITIES**

(a) Our Workers and Volunteers must uphold our Organisation's values in accordance with this Policy. Our Workers and Volunteers must demonstrate behaviour which is consistent with this Policy and with our Organisation's values. Our Workers and Volunteers must be proactive about upholding and promoting our values and this Policy, including by doing the following:

- remaining alert and aware of possible safeguarding risks to children
- guarding children against harmful environments with appropriate actions (for example, adequate and ongoing supervision or ensuring safe environments)

- taking positive steps to maintain the safety and wellbeing of children engaging with our Organisation
- reporting concerns expeditiously and appropriately, in line with child protection procedures
- understanding the duty to report specific concerns (and understanding how this interplays with confidentiality)
- challenging any inappropriate or harmful behaviour of any other adult and reporting this accordingly
- acting appropriately in the presence of children
- not taking any inappropriate risks
- not smoking, drinking or taking any form of illicit substances in the presence of children
- ensuring that any children who come into contact with our Organisation or access our services understand their rights and responsibilities
- communicating with children clearly and respectfully and using language which they can understand and which is appropriate for their age and level of development
- ensuring that any children who come into contact with our Organisation or access our services are supported and get any necessary assistance with exercising their rights and responsibilities

(b) Our Workers and Volunteers are responsible for ensuring that they personally comply with all applicable laws in the state or territory where they are based (QLD) including any applicable Commonwealth laws.

## **(9) RESPONSIBLE PERSON**

Any question, report or concern in relation to the safeguarding of children should be shared with the following person (Responsible Person):

Name: DEIRDRE HANNA

Email: Hello@rainbowhouse.education

Telephone: 0412 455 176

## **(10) THE RISKS TO CHILDREN**

(a) Children can be vulnerable to different forms of abuse and harm. It is important to recognise that abuse and harm of children can cover a wide range of circumstances and behaviours. For example, children can be at risk of:

- physical or emotional abuse
- neglect
- sexual abuse
- female genital mutilation (FGM)

- grooming and exploitation
- trafficking and modern slavery
- exposure to or infliction of domestic abuse
- bullying or cyber bullying
- exposure to other inappropriate content or behaviour, such as violence or criminal behaviour
- self-harm
- physical harm when engaging with activities without adequate supervision

(b) The causal factors of any such harm and/or abuse can also be wide-ranging. For example, children can be placed at risk by family members or by members of the community.

### **(11) TAKING CHILD PARTICIPATION SERIOUSLY**

We strive to ensure that children who come into contact with our Organisation or our services are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them, and are taken seriously.

### **(12) ENGAGING WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES**

(a) We encourage our Workers and Volunteers, when engaging with children, to involve the families of those children whenever it is appropriate, and provided that doing so will not compromise the safety of the child.

(b) When doing this, our Workers and Volunteers should keep in mind that in some cases, children can be placed at risk by family members or by members of the community, so involving the child's family could expose the child to additional risk.

(c) We use the following measures to ensure that we have effective communication and participation strategies for engaging with and responding to the diverse needs of families and communities:

Parents/Guardians of children and teens enrolled in our programs are directed to access this policy on our website.

Parents/Guardians of children and teens enrolled in our programs are encouraged to communicate with our lead facilitators regularly, to de-brief, share feedback, queries and concerns.

### **(13) RESPECTING EQUITY AND DIVERSITY**

We strive to create an environment where children and young people's diverse needs and circumstances are recognised and all children feel safe, welcome and included. We do this by using the following measures:

Volunteers from diverse backgrounds, ages and experiences are trained and engage as buddies in our programs.

### **(14) ENSURING STAFF ARE SUITABLE AND SUPPORTED**

We strive to ensure that Workers and Volunteers at our Organisation who are working with children and young people are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice. We do this by using the following measures:

All Workers and Volunteers must provide an up to date Working With Children check, prior to engaging with our programs or supporting any children.

## **(15) CONFIDENTIALITY AND DATA PROTECTION**

All personal information we may process relating to children, shall be processed and stored in accordance with our data protection privacy policy.

## **(16) RESPONDING TO A CHILD SAFETY CONCERN**

(a) We aim to provide accessible and responsive complaints management processes that are focused on the needs of children and young people.

(b) Where a child is at immediate risk of serious harm, any adult present should call 000. Thereafter, the Responsible Person should be contacted as soon as is reasonably practicable.

(c) Where there is a safeguarding concern but no immediate risk of serious harm, the adult who has heard or witnessed this concern should consult with the Responsible Person as soon as practicable and by no later than the end of that same day.

(d) Where any child makes a disclosure relating to harm or abuse to an adult, it is important for that adult to:

- listen calmly and carefully, showing that their views are taken seriously
- provide an appropriate and honest level of reassurance
- avoid interrogating children and asking probing, intrusive and/or leading questions
- avoid making false promises regarding secrets and confidentiality with the child (because any concern of abuse/harm must be shared with the Responsible Person and any subsequent safeguarding referral)
- make a confidential *written* record of the discussion either during the discussion or immediately afterwards. The record should include the key details of the disclosure together with any relevant times, dates, places and people concerned. Audio and video recordings of children making disclosures should be avoided
- refer all relevant information to the Responsible Person as soon as practicable afterwards, and by no later than the end of the day

(e) Upon receipt of any safeguarding concern, the Responsible Person shall consult with any other relevant persons and will make any appropriate referrals to the relevant authorities.

## **(17) REPORTING CONCERNS ABOUT OTHER ADULTS**

(a) Where any person has a concern regarding the conduct of an adult connected to the Organisation, which poses or may pose a safeguarding risk to children such as:

- harming a child either physically or emotionally
- exposing a child to behaviour which may cause physical or emotional harm

- engaging in criminal activity concerning a child

this must be raised in the first instance with the Responsible Person (or where this is not appropriate, a different senior member of the Organisation) so that the next appropriate steps may be agreed and actioned. We recognise that there could be circumstances where a person may need to report a matter that has taken place in a setting outside of the person's engagement with the Organisation.

(b) Usually, any appropriate steps following a safeguarding referral in respect of an individual connected to the Organisation will include either:

- further initial enquiries
- escalation to the applicable authority for assessment and/or the police for investigation
- instigation of any appropriate disciplinary, formal investigation processes and suspension of any person concerned within the Organisation
- a referral to any relevant regulatory bodies

(c) Any person within the Organisation who has allegations made against them shall be informed properly in a formal meeting of the particulars of the allegations and the relevant next steps which shall be taken. Such a meeting should ordinarily be held by the Responsible Person. On certain occasions, such a meeting may not be convened until this has been approved by any authorities involved (such as the police or the relevant local authority).

(d) Any person from within the Organisation who has allegations made against them shall be treated fairly. All enquires, investigations and decisions taken shall be just and fair, with the safety of any child concerned at the heart of the process.

(e) Any person from within the Organisation who makes an allegation against another person from within the Organisation shall be listened to, taken seriously and shall be treated fairly and justly throughout the process of enquiries, investigations and decision making.

## **(18) MANAGING RISKS POSED BY OTHER CHILDREN**

(a) It is important for all adults engaged by us to recognise that children can face harm from their peers. This can commonly take the form of bullying. Bullying can be defined as any behaviour which is:

- repeated; and
- has the intention of hurting somebody either physically or emotionally.

(b) Bullying can sometimes be motivated by prejudices based on certain groups, for example gender, race, religion or sexual orientation. Bullying can often include:

- physical harm perpetrated against another child
- name calling and threats
- cyberbullying (threats and abusive comments made via technology)

(c) Any instance of bullying or concern relating to possible bullying between children at any event or activities arranged by us will usually be dealt with by us in the first instance as follows:

All children, relevant staff, volunteers, parents and/or guardians shall be spoken to individually to ascertain facts. Where appropriate, relevant support/education and conflict resolution strategies will be provided.

(d) Where any behaviour amounting to bullying continues following this, the following steps will be taken:

The child or children who are responsible for persistent behaviour which amounts to bullying of another child shall be asked to no longer attend our program/s and/or events..

(e) All steps in relation to the prevention or management of bullying should be taken in consultation with the Responsible Person.

## **(19) STAFF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND AWARENESS**

We use a variety of measures to ensure that staff and volunteers are provided with relevant knowledge, skills and awareness on an ongoing basis to keep children safe, including ongoing education and training as follows:

All staff and active volunteers undergo training every 6 months with a focus on industry relevant and up to date childrens rights, safety and wellbeing.

## **(20) SAFE PHYSICAL AND ONLINE ENVIRONMENTS**

We believe in promoting child safety and wellbeing in physical and online environments in order to reduce the risk of harm. We use a variety of measures to ensure that our physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing while minimising the opportunity for children and young people to be harmed.

## **(21) EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

### **Responsibilities and Planning**

(a) Typically, we may arrange the following types of events and/or activities which could involve children:

Grief Explorers Program - Runs for 5 weeks of each school term (4 x annually) on Tuesday afternoons.

Masterful Creators Program - Runs for 5 or 6 weeks each school term (4 x annually) on Wednesday afternoons.

Grief education or creative expression workshops - afternoons or Saturdays, as scheduled; invitations to attend issued to The Rainbow House families.

(b) The Responsible Person shall hold ultimate responsibility for the safety and appropriateness of the event. They may however appoint a delegate for some responsibilities the purpose of a specific event.



(c) Although the Responsible Person and any appointed delegates will hold ultimate responsibility for overseeing the safety for events and activities, all individuals under this policy must also play an active role in ensuring the safety of children at all times.

(d) For certain types of events or activities, we may issue an additional code of conduct, policy, or some specific other requirements which is specific to that occasion. Any such additional documentation will be made available to all those concerned (staff members, parents, guardians etc.) in advance. They should be read carefully and adhered to.

### **Venues**

(a) The location for any events or activities which are held by us shall be risk assessed properly in reference to the suitability and safety for children. Fire and safety procedures and precautions shall be made clear to all those involved.

### **First Aid**

(a) If an ambulance is required, call 000. Please notify a manager or supervisor if an ambulance has been called.

(b) Any accident or injury concerning a child should be brought to the attention of the nearest first aider and should thereafter be formally reported to the Responsible Person.

### **Consent Forms**

(a) We shall always obtain written consent from a parent or guardian for any event which takes place with children in attendance without their responsible parent or guardian present. Consent will be obtained via:

Masterful Creators - via an online consent form on the website (upon enrolment).

(b) Consent forms will include emergency contact details and will set out any specific safety needs/requirements for children.

(c) All consent forms will be kept secure and shall be stored in accordance with our data protection privacy policy.

### **Supervision**

(a) For most activities and events, our procedure for supervision of children is as follows:

For groups of children aged 7 - 11 years old; 10 adults are present at all times for every 10 children

For groups of children aged 12 - 18 years old; 2 - 4 adults are present at all times for every 10 children.

(b) Where we hold any events or activities whereby a child attends alongside their parent or guardian, parents and guardians should ensure that children are properly supervised.

## **(22) MANAGING BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN GENERALLY**

(a) Whenever any adult engaged by us is faced with challenging or inappropriate behaviour from a child or with conflict between children, they must:

- treat each child fairly and equally

- approach the situation in a calm and neutral manner
- only ever use physical restraint/intervention in order to protect the immediate safety of a person, for example to prevent an injury or harm either to the child or others
- wherever it is justified to physically restrain a child or to physically intervene, the amount of force used should be kept to the absolute minimum taking into account the risk posed
- make a written record of the incident and ensure this is reported appropriately to the Responsible Person

## **(23) PHOTOGRAPHY**

### **Our Photographs**

(a) On some occasions, we may take photographs featuring children. We recognise that photography of children carries risks, such as:

- the potential for images to be re-used, shared or adapted in a damaging or inappropriate manner
- the general risk of sharing images and the impact this could have on child's public image as they grow older

(b) In view of these risks, we will:

- always ask for written permission from a child and their parent/guardian before taking and sharing any image of them
- always ensure that a child and their parent/guardian are properly informed how an image will be used and shared
- always ensure that a child's identity is protected as far as is possible within any published material
- ask that parents, guardians, children and any other person connected to them who may wish to share any of our published images which features other children to refrain from doing so unless they have the permission of the other children and their parent/guardian
- always store photos in accordance with our data protection policy.

### **Members of the Public**

(a) We do also recognise that members of the public may take photographs when they are attending our premises, events or activities.

(b) We ask that any parents, guardians and other members of the public take the following into consideration when taking photos at our premises, events or activities:

- photos are not to be taken, of group activity or other children, unless explicit permission is provided by each parent and guardian present
- images of other children should not be shared on social media without the permission of any children who feature in the images (where ascertainable), together with the permission of the children's parent/guardian

- images which are shared on social media should be shared cautiously, with the appropriate privacy and security settings in place.

#### **(24) REVIEWING OUR CHILD SAFE POLICIES AND PRACTICES**

We regularly review our child safe policies and practices so that we can continue to improve them. In particular, we do the following:

Any complaints, feedback and suggestions are logged and taken in to account during the annual review of our policies.

#### **(25) MAKING OUR POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AVAILABLE**

(a) Our child safe policies and procedures (including this Policy) are available to view at any time.

(b) We strive to ensure that our child safe policies and procedures are understood by all Workers, Volunteers and relevant stakeholders.

(c) We strive to ensure that children who engage with our Organisation, as well as their families and relevant community members, are aware of and have confidence in our child safety policies and procedures.

(d) Please contact us for assistance with understanding or implementing any of the matters addressed in this Policy.

#### **(26) ADMINISTRATION OF THIS POLICY**

(a) This Policy was approved by: Deirdre Hanna

(b) This Policy came into effect on: 1st July 2021 (reviewed and amended annually)

(c) This Policy is due to be reviewed on: 1st July 2023

(d) The following person is responsible for leading the review process for this Policy: Lisa Potter

#### **(27) FURTHER INFORMATION**

We thank you for the time you have taken to review and consider this Policy. If you have further questions or want to discuss any matters in connection with this Policy, please direct all such communication to:

Lisa Potter  
Grief Program Co-ordinator  
Hello@rainbowhouse.education