

Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy

Version – April 2026

The information contained in this policy was updated in April 2026. The policy may be amended or updated from time to time.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Activity	A sporting contest, match, competition, event, or any activity (including training), whether on a one-off basis or as part of a series, league, or competition, which is sanctioned or organised by the VIS and which involves Children/Young People
Adult	A person aged 18 years or over
Affiliate Organisation	Any organisation that is affiliated with the VIS in the capacity that its athletes train with and/or use the VIS as a training facility, such as National or State Sporting Organisations.
Approved Person	A family member such as mother, father, sister, brother, grandparent, aunt, uncle or cousin, a guardian, carer, or a person who has been approved by the parent/carer and has an established relationship with the Child/Young Person and/or their family.
Athlete	A person who is registered with or entitled to participate in an Activity and includes all VIS-contracted athletes.
Bullying	A person or group of people repeatedly and intentionally using words or actions, or the inappropriate use of power, against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing, whether in-person or online.
Child/ Young Person	A person who is under the age of 18 years.
Child Abuse	Includes any of the following types of abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and exposure to Family and Domestic Violence.
Child Protection Legislation	All Commonwealth, Victorian and other State/territory Child/Young Person protection legislation as amended from time to time.
Child/ Young Person Safe Practices	The Child/ Young Person’s safety requirements and practices adopted and implemented by relevant Organisations to help ensure the safety of Children/ Young People and participating in a VIS Activity as outlined in Appendix C.

Child/ Young Person Safe Commitment	A Relevant Organisations' commitment to Child/ Young Person safety in the VIS, The VIS Child/ Young Person Safe Commitment is provided at Appendix D of this Policy.
Contractor	Any person or organisation engaged to provide services for, or on behalf of, the VIS. This includes agents, advisers and subcontractors of the VIS and Employees, officers, Volunteers, and agents of the Contractor or subcontractor.
Discrimination	Includes both direct and indirect discrimination (either on person or online).
Direct Discrimination	Occurs where people are treated or perceived to be treated, less favourably due to a protected personal attribute (that is an attribute protected by law such as age, sex, gender identity, race or disability).
Elite Youth Athletes	VIS athletes who are categorised within the National Athlete Categorisation Framework and who is under the age of 18 years.
Elite Youth Athlete Guidelines	The guidelines produced by the Australian Institute of Sport for supporting the wellbeing, development and performance of under 18 individuals across high performance sport in Australia and available HERE .
Emotional Abuse	Occurs when a Child/Young Person does not receive the love, affection, or attention they need for healthy emotional, psychological, and social development or are exposed to violence/abuse against other Children/Young People or Adults. Such abuse may involve: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeated rejection or threats to a Child/Young Person (either in-person or online). • Constant criticism, teasing, ignoring, threatening, yelling, scapegoating, ridicule, intentional exclusion, continual coldness, and rejection (either in-person or online). • Bullying and Harassment (either in-person or online). • Threats to physically harm or hurt a Child/Young Person (either in-person or online); and • Harmful training methods or overtraining where there is the potential to result in damage to a Child/Young Person's physical, intellectual, or emotional wellbeing and development.
Employee	A person employed by the VIS.
Exposure to family and domestic violence	Refers to abusive behaviour in any personal relationship that allows one person to intimidate, or to gain power and control over the other. This is often thought of to occur between married spouses or in other intimate relationships, but refers to any family relationship, or persons living in the same home.
Grooming	Behaviours that manipulate or control a Child/Young Person, their family, guardian and carers or other support networks, or organisations, with the intention to gain access to the Child/Young Person, obtain the Child/Young Person's compliance, maintain the Child/Young Person's silence, and avoid discovery of sexual abuse.
Harassment	Any type of behaviour towards a Child/ Young Person that they do not want and that is offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening and is reasonable likely to cause

	harm to the Child/ Young Person who is the subject of harassment, whether in-person or online.
Harmful Behaviour towards a Child/ Young Person	<p>Any behaviour involving a Child/Young Person that is objectively age inappropriate and/or places the Child/Young Person at risk of harm. This includes but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Child Abuse. (b) Harmful training methods including physical punishment or overtraining which may cause harm to a Child/Young Person. (c) Excessive or unnecessary emphasis on appearance, weight requirements or muscularity (either in-person or online) that may include practices such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Encouraging or enforcing excessive dieting or restrictive eating; ii. Excessive weigh-ins or focus on weight goals, body composition testing that is a sport requirement that carries punishment for the outcome (for example repeated bouts of exercises as punishment for weight gain); or iii. Unsafe practices that could put health at risk in order to reach weight or appearance requirements without adequate medical support (for example dehydration or restrictive eating). (d) Forcing a Child/Young Person to train or compete when ill or injured; (e) Threatening or humiliating a Child/Young Person (either in-person or online); (f) Using disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating; (g) Making sexual comments to a Child/Young Person or engaging in open discussions of a sexual or Adult nature with (either on person or online), or in the presence a Child/Young Person; (h) Taking inappropriate photos or footage of a Child/Young Person; or (i) Inappropriate and/or intimate physical contact with a Child/Young Person which is sexual in nature or causes them to feel uncomfortable, or feel pain or distress.
Health Professional	A formally qualified professional who provides healthcare services to VIS Athletes, including (but not limited to) nurses, psychologists and allied health professionals such as physiotherapists and dietitians.
Indirect Discrimination	Indirect discrimination occurs where a practice, rule, requirement or condition that applies to everyone disadvantages people with a Protected Characteristic and the practice rule, requirement or condition is not reasonable in the circumstances.
Medical Practitioner	A qualified doctor with the authority to practice in Australia and who is registered with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency.
Neglect	Being the persistent failure or deliberate failure or denial to meet a Child/Young Person's basic needs. Neglect includes the failure to provide adequate food, clothing, shelter, adequate supervision, clean water, medical attention, or

	supervision to the extent that the Child/Young Person's health and development is or is likely to be harmed. Types of Neglect include physical, medical, emotional, educational neglect and abandonment.
Participant	<p>Any of the following persons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Athletes; (b) coaches appointed to train an Athlete or team in an Activity; (c) administrators who have a role in the administration or operation or Activity of the VIS, including directors, committee members or other persons; (d) officials including referees, umpires, technical officials, or other officials appointed by the VIS, or any competition or Team sanctioned by the VIS; or (e) support personnel who are appointed in a professional or voluntary capacity by the VIS or any competition or Team sanctioned by the VIS, including sports science sports medicine personnel, Team managers, agents, selectors, and team staff members; or (f) any other person who participates in or is involved in running an Activity.
Person in Position of Authority	A person, regardless of age, who through their position or involvement in the VIS can exercise power, control, or influence over a Child/Young Person.
Physical Abuse	<p>Being when a person subjects a Child/Young Person to application of physical force which may cause injury intentionally or inadvertently as a result of physical punishment or the aggressive treatment of a Child/Young Person. Physically abusive behaviour includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) shoving, hitting, slapping, shaking, throwing, punching, biting, burning, kicking; and b) harmful training methods or overtraining where there is the potential to result in damage to a Child/Young Person's physical development.
Policy	This Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, including annexures and appendices.
Prohibited Conduct	The conduct prescribed at clause 4 of this Policy.
Protected Characteristics	<p>Means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Age; (b) Disability; (c) Race or ethnicity; (d) Sex or gender identity; (e) Sexual orientation; or (f) Religion.

Recruitment, Screening & Training	The Child/Young Person safety recruitment, screening and training strategies adopted and implemented by Relevant Organisations to help ensure the safety of Children/Young People participating in VIS activities as outlined Attachment 1: Recruitment, Screening & Training Recommendations of Appendix E
Relevant Organisation	Means any of the following organisations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) The VIS; (b) Any organisation that participates in or is involved in the administration of an Activity (including an Affiliate Organisation) in connection with that Activity; or (c) Any other organisation that has agreed to be bound by the policies of the VIS, to the extent that they have agreed to be bound.
Relevant Person	Means any of the following persons: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Participant; (b) Employee; (c) Contractor; (d) Volunteer; or (e) Any other individual who has agreed to be bound by the policies of the VIS.
Sexual Abuse	Occurs when an Adult, or a person in authority (i.e. older, or younger but more physically or intellectually developed) involves a Child/ Young Person in any sexual activity. Perpetrators of sexual abuse take advantage of their power, authority, or position over the Child/ Young Person for their own benefit. Sexual Abuse can include making sexual comments to a Child/ Young Person, kissing, touching a Child/ Young Person's genitals or breasts, oral sex, or intercourse with a Child/ Young Person.
Team	A collection or squad of Athletes, registered with or supervised by the VIS or entitled to participate in an Activity.
Victimisation	Subjecting a person, or threatening to subject a person, either in-person or online, to any unfair treatment because the person has made, or intends to pursue their right to make, a complaint, report or lawful disclosure, including under applicable legislation or this Policy, or for supporting another person to take such action.
Vilification	Any person engaged by the VIS or a Relevant Organisation (to the extent of their involvement in an Activity only) in any capacity who is not otherwise an Employee or Contractor, including directors and office holders, coaches, officials, administrators and team and support personnel.
VIS	Victorian Institute of Sport
Volunteer	Any person engaged by the VIS or a Relevant Organisation (to the extent of their involvement in an Activity only) in any capacity who is not otherwise an Employee

	or Contractor, including directors and office holders, coaches, officials, administrators and team and support personnel.
WWCC	'Working with Children Check' (however named) under the applicable legislation of a State or territory, a summary of which is available here .

Table of Contents

Version – April 2026	1
Definitions	1
Scope	8
Objective	8
Policy	9
1. Policy Intent	9
1.1. Structure of this Policy	9
1.2. Obligations and responsibilities of Relevant Organisations	9
1.3. Obligations and responsibilities of Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons	10
2. Jurisdiction	10
2.1 Who does this Policy apply to?	10
2.2 When does this Policy apply?	10
3. Prohibited Conduct	10
3.1 Prohibited Conduct of Relevant Persons.....	10
3.2 Prohibited Conduct of Persons in a Position of Authority.....	11
3.3 Prohibited Conduct of Relevant Organisations	11
4. Reporting and complaints	11
4.1 Reporting and Complaints.....	11
5. Other matters	12
Appendix A Responding to Risk of Abuse and Harm to Children & Young People	14
Appendix B Reporting Child/ Young Person Safeguarding Concerns	15
Appendix C Child/ Young Person Safe Practices	20
Appendix D VIS Child/ Young Person Safe Commitment Statement	26
Appendix E Best Practice Guidance	29
Attachment 1: Recruitment, Screening & Training Recommendations	30
Attachment 2: Child-Related Position Assessment Recommendations	33
Attachment 3: Interview Recommendations & Sample Questions	34
Attachment 4: Reference Check Recommendations & Sample Questions	36

Scope

1. This policy applies to all employees, contractors and the Board of the Victorian Institute of Sport.
2. This policy applies to all activities of the VIS which involve, result in, or relate to contact with children.

Objective

1. The VIS has a zero-tolerance policy to harm, abuse and/or neglect of a Child/Young Person in any form.
2. All Children/Young People have the right to feel safe and protected from all forms of abuse, harm, and neglect. Children/Young People have the right to take part in sport in a safe, positive, and enjoyable environment.
3. The VIS is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Children/Young People who engage with our organisation by providing a safe and inclusive environment and by ensuring that everyone involved with the VIS is aware of their rights and responsibilities in relation to Children/Young People.
4. The VIS supports the active participation of all Children/Young People and the wellbeing and development of Elite Youth Athletes. It listens to their views, respects their views and involves them when making decisions, where appropriate, especially about matters that will directly affect them, including their safety.
5. The VIS is also committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal Children/Young People, and those from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for Children/Young People living with a disability.
6. The VIS will respond to the needs of all Children/Young People, with a particular focus on those experiencing vulnerability or disadvantage. It will uphold equity for all Children and Young People and will act to prevent Child Abuse and Harm resulting from discrimination based on disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation.
7. The VIS considers that the health, safety and well-being of Children/Young People take priority over all other competing considerations.
8. Child safeguarding is a shared responsibility between the VIS, its employees, contractors, associates, parents/guardians, coaches, spectators, volunteers and members of the VIS community. Everyone that participates in VIS Activities is responsible for the care and protection of Children/Young People, and reporting information about Child Abuse and/or harm to Children/Young People.
9. Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations should familiarise themselves with their or any relevant State/territory reporting requirements. Failure to comply with these requirements could result in criminal proceedings and/or further action by the VIS.

If you have reason to believe that a Child/Young Person is at immediate risk of significant harm, you must follow the procedures set out in Appendix A Responding to Risk of Abuse and Harm to Children & Young People and report to the VIS and the appropriate law enforcement and/or child protection agency. In Victoria, this is the Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, linked [HERE](#).

Policy

This Policy is part of the VIS' proactive and preventative approach to upholding its commitment to the safety, wellbeing, participation, and empowerment of all Children/Young People who access the VIS. It should be read in conjunction with:

1. the laws of the Commonwealth and Victoria as they relate to the safety, care and wellbeing of Children/Young People and as updated and/or amended from time to time;
2. relevant VIS policies and procedures; and
3. The National Child Safe Principles.

1. Policy Intent

1.1. Structure of this Policy

This Policy is separated into six sections:

- The main body of the Policy;
- Appendix A, which sets out the process for reporting an immediate risk of harm to a Child or Young Person (regardless of whether the harm occurs at or within the VIS or otherwise);
- Appendix B, which sets out the VIS reporting procedures for Child Safe concerns more generally;
- Appendix C, which sets out the Child Safe Practices or behaviours that constitute Prohibited Conduct and which may be subject to sanctions;
- Appendix D, which is the VIS' Child/Young Person Safe Commitment Statement; and
- Appendix E and its attachments, which provide best practice guidance regarding the standards of behaviour expected of those involved in the VIS. Appendix E and its attachments do not establish any Prohibited Conduct which is sanctionable under this Policy or the VIS reporting procedures in Appendix B, but compliance with some or all of this guidance may be required under state or territory laws.

1.2. Obligations and responsibilities of Relevant Organisations

To provide a Child/Young Person-safe environment, Relevant Organisations:

- must comply with the process in Appendix A when responding to allegations of child abuse, to the extent required by any applicable state/territory law;
- must understand and comply with relevant safety standards relating to Children/Young People within their respective jurisdiction;
- should adopt and implement a Child/Young Person Safe Commitment Statement (The VIS' Child/Young Person Safe Commitment Statement is provided at Appendix C) and appropriate recruitment, screening and training requirements for employees and volunteers working in child-related positions (see examples provided in Attachments 1 – 4 of Appendix D); and
- should use best efforts to assist Relevant Persons to fulfil their responsibilities under this Policy.

1.3. Obligations and responsibilities of Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons

In addition to complying with the requirements of this Policy, Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons should:

- comply with all obligations that they are subject to under Victorian and/or any other relevant state/territory Child Protection Legislation;
- comply with all legislative obligations that they are subject to in relation to reporting of suspected Child Abuse and harm and holding a WWCC¹;
- report any concerns or allegations of Prohibited Conduct involving any Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation; and
- provide true and accurate information during recruitment and screening processes.

2. Jurisdiction

2.1 Who does this Policy apply to?

This Policy applies to:

- a) Relevant Persons; and
- b) Relevant Organisations.

2.2 When does this Policy apply?

- a) All Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations to which this Policy applies must comply with this Policy (at all times whilst they are a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation), including:
 - i. in relation to any dealings they have with a Child/Young Person arising from the Relevant Person's, Relevant Organisation's, or the Child/Young Person's involvement in any capacity with the VIS;
 - ii. in relation to any dealings relating to a Child/Young Person that they might have with a Relevant Organisation or their staff, contractors, and representatives;
 - iii. when dealing with a Child/Young Person or other Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation in their capacity as a Relevant Person or Relevant Organisation; and
 - iv. Participation or other involvement in Activities in general.
- b) This Policy does not apply to interactions involving a Relevant Person and a Child/Young Person where there is no direct or indirect link to the VIS.

3. Prohibited Conduct

3.1 Prohibited Conduct of Relevant Persons

A Relevant Person commits a breach of this Policy when they:

- (a) are found guilty of any breach of a relevant state or territory or Commonwealth law relating to or involving Child Abuse or Grooming;
- (b) either alone or in conjunction with another or others, engage in any of the following conduct, either in-person, online or via any other form of telecommunication, against, or in relation to, a Child/Young Person in the circumstances outlined in clause Error! Reference source not found.:
 - (i) Harmful Behaviours Towards a Child/Young Person;
 - (ii) Bullying;
 - (iii) Discrimination;

- (iv) Harassment;
 - (v) Victimisation;
 - (vi) Vilification;
 - (vii) request or infer that the Child/Young Person keep any communication secret from their parents/carer, or other Relevant Person such as a coach or administrator, or Relevant Organisation²;
 - (viii) supply alcohol, or drugs (including tobacco, vapes and/or nicotine patches) to a Child/Young Person; or
 - (ix) supply medicine to a Child/Young Person, except for:
 - (a) where the Relevant Person reasonably believes that the medicine is necessary for lifesaving medical treatment;
 - (b) when permitted by law; or
 - (c) with the written consent of the parent, guardian, or carer of the Child/Young Person and under a valid prescription for that Child/Young Person and at the prescribed dosage; or
- c) do not comply with the Child/Young Person Safe Practices as set out in Appendix C that are applicable to all Relevant Persons.

3.2 Prohibited Conduct of Persons in a Position of Authority

In addition to Prohibited Conduct outlined in 4.1, a Person in a Position of Authority commits a breach of this Policy when they, either alone or in conjunction with another or others, engage in any of the following conduct against, or in relation to, a Child/Young Person in the circumstances outlined in clause 3.2:

- i. continue in a Child/Young Person-related position³ if they have been charged or convicted of a crime that would make them ineligible to be granted a WWCC; or
- ii. do not comply with the Child Safe Practices that are applicable to Persons in a Position of Authority as set out in Appendix C.

3.3 Prohibited Conduct of Relevant Organisations

A Relevant Organisation commits a breach of this Policy when it, in respect of the VIS or an Activity:

- iii. engages a person who does not have a satisfactory WWCC in the relevant jurisdiction(s)⁴;
- iv. does not confirm that a Relevant Person's WWCC is current and valid;
- v. does not undertake any screening measures when appointing a person to a child-related position;
- vi. does not obtain adequate informed consent from Approved Person/s prior to any sport sanctioned transportation or overnight accommodation of Children/Young People; or
- vii. has knowledge of and does not report a breach of clause 4.1 of the VIS in accordance with Appendix B.

4. Reporting and complaints

4.1 Reporting and Complaints

- a) Reports or complaints of alleged Prohibited Conduct under this Policy may be submitted to the VIS in accordance with Appendix B of this Policy and will be managed under this Policy.

- b) Reports or complaints of alleged Prohibited Conduct under a similar Child Safe policy of an Affiliate Organisation when involved in the Affiliate Organisation's activities should be reported in line with the Affiliate Organisation's Child Safe and/ or Complaints Policy.
- c) Where a Relevant Organisation or Person becomes aware of a potential breach of this Policy and the information known about that potential breach is such that it would cause a reasonable person to suspect that a Child Young Person is, or is at risk of, harm or being abused and/ or neglected:
 - i. The Relevant Organisation or Person must comply with the requirements of Responding to Risk of Abuse and Harm in Appendix A and Reporting Child/ Young Person Safeguarding Concerns in Appendix B of this Policy. This includes waiting until statutory agencies have confirmed that they are either not responding to an allegation or have finalised any intervention they deem appropriate;
 - ii. No further action under Appendix B of this Policy in relation to that potential breach should occur until the obligations in clause 5.1 (b)(i) are complied with; and
 - iii. The Relevant Organisation or Person must apply appropriate risk mitigation strategies to keep all Children/ Young People safe while an allegation or complaint is being assessed/ investigated. This may include interventions such as supervision, suspension, restriction of duties or temporary redeployment, or suspension or restriction of rights, privileges of benefits.

5. Other matters

5.1 Commencement, application and amendment

- a) This Policy commences from the date specified on the front cover as the Commencement Date.
- b) From the Commencement Date, this Policy is binding on all Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations.
- c) Any amendment to this Policy will take effect from the date specified by the Board.

5.2 Education

- a) A relevant Organisation may, from time to time, direct certain Participants to undertake education, which will be relevant and proportionate to their level of participation in VIS Activities and the associated integrity risks.
- b) Sport Integrity Australia has developed a range of safeguarding education resources and training material for different audiences (e.g. Children/ Young People, coaches, clubs etc.) which can be found [here](#).

5.3 State/ territory specific child safe standards

This Policy is underpinned by the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and the Victorian Child Safe Standards. Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons are responsible for familiarising themselves with the legislative requirements in their State or territory and taking steps to ensure that they are meeting any additional compliance requirements, including by adopting additional procedures, policies or standards where necessary.

5.4 Interpretation

The following rules of interpretation apply to this Policy:

- a) Headings are for convenience only and shall not be deemed part of the substance of the document or to affect in any way the language of the provisions to which they refer.

- b) Words in the singular include the plural and vice versa.
- c) Reference to 'including' and similar words are not words of limitation.
- d) Words importing a gender include any other gender, unless clearly intended otherwise.
- e) Where a word or phrase is given a particular meaning, other parts of speech and grammatical forms of that word or phrase have corresponding meanings.
- f) If any provision of this Policy is determined invalid or unenforceable, the remaining provisions shall not be affected, and the document shall not fail because of any part of it is held invalid.
- g) Except as otherwise stated herein, failure to exercise or enforce any right conferred by this policy shall not be deemed to be a waiver of any such right nor operate to bar the exercise or enforcement thereof or of any other right on any other occasion.
- h) The summary of this Policy at clause 1 (Policy Intent) is not intended to be and should not be construed in any way as a complete and comprehensive overview or this Policy. To the extent of any inconsistency, the operative provisions of this Policy prevail.

Appendix A Responding to Risk of Abuse and Harm to Children & Young People

Under certain state/ territory laws, failure to report any reasonable suspicion or knowledge that a Child/ Young Person is or is likely to be at risk of harm could result in criminal proceedings. This Appendix provides examples of the main actions that must be followed, however knowledge of the relevant state/ territory reporting obligations is critical.

You **must** ACT.

As a person involved with the VIS, you play a crucial role in protecting Children/Young People. You **must** follow the four actions set out below when responding to any Child Abuse allegations.

Action 1 – Responding

If a Child/Young Person is at risk of immediate harm, you must ensure their safety by:

- Calling 000 for medical and/or police assistance to respond to urgent health or safety concerns.
- Administering first aid, if required:
- Separating at-risk Child/Young Person and others involved from the immediate risk of harm.
- Identifying an appropriate contact person for any on-going liaison with the Police.

If there is no immediate harm, go to Action 2 below.

Action 2 – Reporting

If you suspect, on reasonable grounds that a Child/Young Person was, is, or is at risk of being abused, harmed and/or neglected, you must report it to the police and/or the Victorian [Department of Families, Fairness and Housing \(Victoria\)](#).

If occurring in or as a result of VIS Activities, the alleged Child Abuse should also be documented and reported to the VIS via its Child Safe Contact (see below) or to a more senior member of the VIS team.

Action 3 – Contact

You must contact the police and/or the Victorian [Department of Families, Fairness and Housing](#) to determine the information that may be shared with parents/carers, and who should lead this contact (i.e., police, Child Protection department or VIS representative). This could include advice:

- not to contact the parents or carers in circumstances where they are alleged to have engaged in the abuse.
- to contact the parents/carers and provide agreed information as soon as possible.

Action 4 – Support

- Support should be provided to any Child/Young Person that has experienced abuse.
- It is important that the person providing support to the Child/Young Person does not attempt to provide support which is outside of the scope of their role.
- Support should include maintaining a calm open manner when listening to any allegations and disclosures, while avoiding seeking detailed information or asking leading questions.
- Information regarding allegations of Abuse need to be well documented and shared with the VIS' designated contact.
- Further support for the Child/Young Person, relevant Adults and others involved may be required, including a referral to wellbeing or healthcare professionals and or the development of a safety plan.

Child Safe Contact at the VIS:

Dan Simons - Director, People and Community- daniel.simons@vis.org.au

Rebekah Webster - Director, High Performance - Rebekah.webster@vis.org.au

Appendix B Reporting Child/ Young Person Safeguarding Concerns

1. Introduction

The VIS requires all VIS team members to identify, appropriately respond to and report to the VIS and relevant authorities any concerns about actual or potential risk of harm to Children/Young People in the Activities.

If any Child/Young Person participating in Activities is at immediate risk of actual or potential significant harm or are in imminent danger, you MUST:

- **call Police on 000 and report the concern or incident; and**
- **contact the VIS Child Safe Contact or a more senior VIS team member.**

The safety and wellbeing of Children and Young People is paramount and should be prioritised in situations in which competing interests or priorities exist.

Responding to and reporting any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of Children/Young People in Activities should be done respectfully, discretely (where possible) and making all attempts to protect the privacy and confidentiality of those persons involved, unless required by law, VIS policies, or if necessary to appropriately manage or respond to a concern or complaint regarding the safety or wellbeing of Children/Young People.

You MUST appropriately respond to and report (to the VIS Child Safe Contact or a more senior VIS team member and external authorities if necessary) any concerns or complaints that constitute a **reasonable belief** that a Child or Young Person has suffered or is at risk of suffering actual or potential harm in or as a result of VIS Activities.

A **reasonable belief** means that another person in the same or similar position would hold the same or similar concerns that harm to a Child/Young Person has - or could - occur. It is not the same as having proof, but is more than mere rumour or speculation. You may have reasonable grounds to notify if, without limitation:

- a child states that they have been physically or sexually abused;
- a child states that they know someone who has been physically or sexually abused (sometimes the child may be talking about themselves);
- someone who knows a child states that the child has been physically or sexually abused;
- professional observations of the child's behaviour or development leads a professional to form a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused or is likely to be abused; or
- signs of abuse lead to a belief that the child has been physically or sexually abused.

2. What should be reported to the VIS?

- Any behaviour or conduct that doesn't seem or feel right or appropriate towards or for Children/Young People, regardless of how minor or trivial the behaviours or conduct appears. That's because you may not know what else other people may have noticed or felt uncomfortable about, so all pieces of information help us to keep Children/Young People safe.
- Any breach of the Child Safe Practices, regardless of how minor or trivial a breach may appear, including their own breaches or those of others.
- Any reasonable belief that you or others have of suspected Grooming behaviours;
- Any reasonable belief as to actual or suspected Child Abuse of a Child/Young Person that has – or has the potential to cause harm to Children/Young People, including Sexual Abuse, Physical Abuse,

Emotional Abuse or psychological Child Abuse, Exposure to Family and Domestic Violence and Neglect, including where this is occurring outside of Activities. This includes if:

- i. You have a reasonable belief or suspicion of actual or suspected risk of Child Abuse or Neglect of Children/Young People;
- ii. A Child or Young Person tells you either that they – or other Child/Young Person - have been Child Abused or are concerned about being Child Abused or Neglected;
- iii. Someone else tells you about their concerns as to their reasonable belief(s) of actual or suspected risk of Child Abuse of a Child/Young Person.

3. Mandatory Reporters

In Victoria, select classes of people in the community (including teachers, nurses and doctors) are required by law to report to the [Department of Families, Fairness and Housing](#) (linked) where they have formed a belief, on reasonable grounds that a child is in need of protection because they have suffered (or are likely to suffer) significant harm. This report must be made as soon as practicable, and after each occasion where he/she or they become aware of further reasonable grounds for the belief.

4. How do I respond and/or report?

The VIS will provide guidance and training on what to do if you have concerns about a Child/Young Person at risk of, or who has suffered, harm as a result of Child Abuse. Our guidance is to trust your instincts and:

- a) Take reasonable steps to protect Children/Young People and others at risk of harm.
- b) Tell a more senior VIS team member about your concern. Please do so as discretely as possible, respecting the privacy and confidentiality of those involved.
- c) Call Police on 000 if any Child/Young Person is in immediate danger or at risk of imminent harm.
- d) Try to remain calm and non-judgmental.
- e) Disregard factors such as the authority or position of the person(s) involved and any pre-existing views as to their character or otherwise.
- f) Listen to any person disclosing concerns to you and ensure that you are in as private a place as possible, subject to the Child Safe Practices supervision requirements for interacting with Children/Young People.
- g) If appropriate, gather information and/or ask questions of those persons involved and/or disclosing concerns or complaints (eg, who, what, when, where, how, why and what do they want to happen next). Gather contact details and consent to disclose to the VIS Child Safe Contact and/or more senior VIS team members if you can.
- h) If mandatory reporting obligations apply (depending on your profession and the jurisdiction in which you are in), call the [Victorian Department of Families, Fairness and Housing](#) or the appropriate authorities in your jurisdiction. This may be done in consultation with the VIS Child Safe Contact or more senior VIS team member.
- i) If a Child/Young Person is disclosing something of concern to you, please:
 - Believe and support the Child/Young Person;
 - Reassure them that they have done the right thing by talking to you;
 - Don't promise secrecy or other promises you can't keep, particularly when concerns of Child Abuse or Neglect must be reported in line with legislation and VIS policies;
 - Don't push the Child/Young Person to give more details of the alleged Child Abuse or Neglect than they are able to provide;
 - Note or record what the Child/Young Person said in their own words as much as possible; and
 - Explain what might need to happen next (ie, telling another trusted adult to help them).

5. Who should I report concerns or incidents to?

The VIS has a Child Safe Contact for all Activities that involve Children/Young People. You will be notified as to who the VIS Child Safe Contact is during the VIS induction and prior to undertaking any VIS events, programs and/or activities that involve Children/Young People.

6. What happens after concerns or complaints are reported?

The VIS Child Safe Contact or more senior VIS team member will discretely and appropriately either gather more information and/or escalate the matter to appropriate senior VIS team member, which may include the CEO and of the VIS.

Appropriate next steps will be determined by the VIS and taken, depending on the circumstances of the concern or incident involved. This may include undertaking an investigation (see Section 10 below), reporting the matter to Police and/or other relevant authorities.

If you have any questions or concerns, please ask the VIS Child Safe Contact or the relevant senior VIS team member. They may not be able to provide further details depending on the circumstances involved. However, they will always be very appreciative of assistance from any VIS team members to keep Children/Young People safe.

7. Confidentiality

Information relating to any actual or suspected Child Abuse of a Child or Young Person must be treated as confidential. The VIS will only inform those persons internally who are either involved in the matter such as the VIS Child Safe Contact, CEO and the VIS Board, unless appropriate disclosure is:

- a) required by law;
- b) necessary to conduct further inquiries and assess risk to Children/Young People; and/or
- c) appropriate to protect the safety and wellbeing of Children/Young People.

8. Failure to Report

Failure to report concerns or allegations of actual or suspected harm or Child Abuse to Children/Young People:

- could result in criminal charges; and/or
- is viewed as serious misconduct and may result in disciplinary action or termination of employment or engagement with the VIS.

9. Vexatious Complaints or Reports

Vexatious, frivolous or baseless reports or complaints about persons involving Children/Young People will not be tolerated by the VIS. The VIS reserves the right to take disciplinary or other appropriate action against any person making a vexatious, frivolous or baseless report or complaint. This may include, but is not limited to, termination of employment or engagement, sending someone home from an Activity or removing someone from a particular duty or situation.

10. VIS Investigations

- 10.1 Upon receiving any complaint or concern regarding the safety and wellbeing of Children/Young People, the VIS CEO may determine that it is appropriate for the VIS to conduct an investigation to

understand more about the matter and make further inquiries. This may be necessary to assess the risk to Children/Young People and/or other persons and make a determination as to appropriate interim or disciplinary measures.

- 10.2 The VIS will seek and act on legal and/or other expert advice when conducting its own investigation.
- 10.3 If a criminal investigation is in progress, the VIS will consult with Police and/or authorities to check the appropriateness of commencing or continuing an investigation and act in accordance with directions and/or advice from authorities and/or VIS legal advice.
- 10.4 In circumstances in which Police have investigated a serious allegation of Child Abuse involving Child/Young Person but the matter has been discontinued, the VIS may conduct their own investigation of the concern in any event. This is because the criminal standard of proof (eg, “beyond reasonable doubt”) is higher than the general or civil standard of proof that should be applied to investigations, that is whether an allegation is substantiated, not substantiated, inconclusive or vexatious “on the balance of probabilities”.
- 10.5 When conducting an investigation, the VIS will, as appropriate:
 - a) consider whether it is appropriate to appoint an external or internal investigator to lead an investigation to provide input and/or recommendations to the VIS concerning the concern or complaint. An investigator should not have a conflict of interest and should have appropriate qualifications, training or experience to investigate the allegations raised in the concern or complaint;
 - b) inform the respondent to the concern or complaint in writing and/or face to face, that:
 - i. a concern or complaint has been received;
 - ii. the allegations made and the information relied on to support the allegation(s);
 - iii. the next steps in the investigation process;
 - iv. as applicable, interim safety measures will be or have been put in place (eg, standing down an employee, contractor or volunteer from their position); and
 - v. the matter must remain confidential.
 - c) interview the complainant(s) or reporter(s) and make record of interviews – preferably an audio recording - for the purposes of the investigation only, where appropriate consent has been provided;
 - d) interview the respondent(s) to the concern or complaint and make record of the interview – preferably an audio recording - for the purposes of the investigation only, where appropriate consent has been provided;
 - e) afford the respondent(s) an opportunity to respond to the allegation(s) within a reasonable timeframe in line with the principle of natural justice or procedural fairness;
 - f) seek out and interview other witnesses or involved persons in the complaint or concern to gather further information where appropriate and/or there is conflicting information;
 - g) communicate and provide updates about any complaint or concern made to relevant and appropriate people/groups;
 - h) seek to offer guidance to obtain support and/or arrange support for those involved in the concern or complaint; and
 - i) communicate the finding and/or outcome of any investigation (in summary form) to appropriate persons involved in the concern or complaint, including any disciplinary measures

that the VIS has determined are appropriate in the circumstances. The finding should be either that the complaint or concern is:

- i. substantiated - there is sufficient evidence to support the complaint;
- ii. inconclusive - there is insufficient evidence either way;
- iii. unsubstantiated - there is sufficient evidence to show that the complaint is unfounded; and/or
- iv. mischievous, vexatious or knowingly untrue.

10.6 The outcome of an investigation may include appropriate disciplinary action, no further action or other outcomes at the discretion of the VIS CEO and in accordance with VIS legal and/or other expert advice.

11. Storage of Child/Young Person Safeguarding Concern Documentation

Any documentation associated with an allegation of actual or potential Child Abuse will be stored securely by the VIS, with access to those records limited to the VIS CEO, Child Safe Contact and the minimum number of VIS employees as deemed necessary and appropriate by the VIS CEO.

12. Support for Persons Involved in a Child/Young Person Safeguarding Concern

Where possible, the VIS will endeavour to refer persons to support services and/or make arrangements to support persons involved in a safeguarding concern involving Children/Young People.

All persons involved in any Child/Young Person safeguarding concern should also consider calling any of the following helplines at any stage, if that would be of benefit to them or others involved:

LIFELINE – 13 11 44

KIDS HELPLINE – 1800 55 1800

1800 RESPECT – 1800 737 732

Appendix C Child/ Young Person Safe Practices

The VIS is committed to safeguarding everyone involved in our organisation, including Children/Young People in our care and those participating in our Activities as Elite Youth Athletes, so that they feel safe and are safe. The VIS Child/Young Person Safe Practices have been developed to identify and prevent behaviour that may be harmful to the Children/Young People at the VIS.

There are exceptions where the Child/Young Person Safe Practices do not apply:

- when a Relevant Person/Person in a Position of Authority is also an Approved Person in respect to that Child/Young Person.
- in an emergency and where the action is protective of a Child/Young Person, when prior authorisation is not possible.

These Child/Young Person Safe Practices set out requirements for how Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons must behave with and around Children/Young People, which includes Elite Youth Athletes. A failure to comply with the Child/Young Person Safe Practices will be a breach of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and constitute Prohibited Conduct as set out in clause 4 of the Policy.

The VIS recognises that Elite Youth Athletes are adolescents still developing physically, emotionally and socially. Their involvement in high performance sport requires additional safeguards and tailored support to ensure their wellbeing, safety and positive development.

VIS team members involved with the coaching, care and development of Elite Youth Athletes should also reference the [Elite Youth Athlete Guidelines](#) for specific guidance as to how best to support the wellbeing and performance of Elite Youth Athletes.

VIS team members are also reminded that from 10 December 2025 in Australia, Children/Young Persons under the age of 16 will no longer be allowed to have their own social media accounts on platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Tik Tok, X, Snapchat, and similar online services as captured by the legislative changes. For further information about these requirements, contact the E-Safety Commission at <https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

VIS team members should be conscious that these changes may have an impact on the well-being of Elite Youth Athletes. Where support is required, VIS team members are requested to connect Elite Youth Athletes with support services, whether via the VIS or external support services.

1. Professional boundaries

- (a) A Person in a Position of Authority must establish and maintain professional boundaries (both in-person and online) when working with Children/Young People at the VIS. Professional boundaries ensure that the nature of the relationship between a Person in a Position of Authority and Child/Young Person does not move from a professional one to a personal one and becomes harmful or exploitative of the Child/Young Person and/or family.
- (b) A Person in a Position of Authority, unless they are also an Approved Person, must not:
 - (i) provide any form of support to a child or their family unrelated to the scope of their role (e.g., financial assistance, babysitting, provide accommodation);
 - (ii) use a personal phone, camera, or video camera to take images or video footage of Children/Young People where possible unless prior written authorisation from the VIS is provided. If personal devices are used by a Person in a Position of Authority to take images and/or video footage of Children/Young People involved in VIS Activities, such images/footage must be uploaded to a VIS device and then deleted from the Person in a Position of Authority's device under supervision of another Person in a Position of Authority as soon as possible;
 - (iii) exhibit any type of favouritism towards a Child/Young Person;
 - (iv) transport Children/Young People other than in accordance with Child Safe Practices clause 12 - Transporting Children/Young People;

- (v) give gifts/presents to Children/Young People other than the provision of official awards; or
- (vi) have one on one contact with a Child/Young Person outside of authorised Activities (includes direct contact such as in-person as well as indirect, such as by phone, or online); or attend any private social function at the request of a Child/Young Person or their family.
- (c) If Relevant Persons become aware of a situation in which a Child/Young Person requires assistance that is beyond the scope of that person's role, they must undertake any or all of the following at the earliest opportunity:
 - (i) refer the matter to an appropriate support agency;
 - (ii) refer the Child/Young Person to an appropriate support agency;
 - (iii) contact the Child/Young Person's parent or carer; and/or
 - (iv) seek advice from the VIS.

2. Use of language and tone of voice

- (a) Language and tone of voice used in the presence of Children/Young People must:
 - (i) provide clear direction, boost their confidence, encourage, or affirm them.
 - (ii) not be harmful to Children/Young People.
- (b) Relevant Persons must not use language towards or in the presence of Children/Young People that is:
 - (i) discriminatory, racist, or sexist;
 - (ii) derogatory, belittling, or negative, for example, by calling a Child/Young Person a 'loser' or telling them they are 'too fat';
 - (iii) unreasonably or unnecessarily threatening or frightening; or profane or sexual.

3. Positive guidance (discipline)

- (a) Children participating VIS Activities must be made aware of the acceptable limits of their behaviour so that we can provide a positive experience for all participants.
- (b) Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations must use appropriate techniques and behaviour management strategies to ensure:
 - (i) an effective and positive environment; and
 - (ii) the safety and/or wellbeing of Children/Young People and personnel participating in VIS Activities.
- (c) Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations must use strategies that are fair, respectful, and appropriate to the developmental stage of the Children/Young People involved.
- (d) Children/Young People must be provided with clear directions and given an opportunity to redirect their behaviour in a positive manner.
- (e) Relevant Persons or Relevant Organisations must not, under any circumstances, take disciplinary action involving physical punishment or any form of treatment that could reasonably be considered as degrading, cruel, frightening or humiliating.

4. Supervision

- (a) Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons must ensure that Children/Young People participating in our sport programs and services are adequately supervised.
- (b) Supervision must be constant, active, and diligent, prioritising the safety and wellbeing of Children/Young People, and where possible, a Relevant Person must be able to observe each Child/Young Person.
- (c) Where direct supervision is not possible, a Relevant Person must know the location of each Child/Young Person and ensure that they can respond to individual needs and immediately intervene if necessary.
- (d) Any incident of one-to-one unsupervised contact for which prior parental or carer consent has not been provided must be immediately reported to VIS management within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

- (e) Professional consultations occurring between Children and Young People and VIS Medical Practitioners or Health Professionals (ie, physiotherapy, dietician, strength and conditioning, psychologist, etc) should, where appropriate, be carried out in consultation rooms with clear glass walls so that those involved in the professional consultation are visible to others. Where this is not possible, then either:
 - (i) prior written parental or carer consent for consultation(s) to occur in private must be obtained;
 - (ii) A parent/carer attends the consultation(s); or
 - (iii) another VIS team member that the Child/Young Person is comfortable with attends the consultation(s).

5. Use of electronic or online communications

A Person in a Position of Authority unless they are also an Approved Person (in respect to the relevant Child/Young Person), Medical Practitioner or Health Professional, must not communicate directly (one to one) with a Child/Young Person either electronically or online (including phone calls) without the inclusion of a representative from the VIS and/or the Child/Young Person's parent or carer. Communication by Medical Practitioners and Health Professionals must only relate to appropriate and required medical care in this context.

- (a) When communicating with Children/Young People, a Person in a Position of Authority must ensure content is:
 - (i) directly associated with delivering VIS services, such as advising that a scheduled Activity is cancelled;
 - (ii) concise with personal or social content limited only to convey the message in a polite and friendly manner;
 - (iii) devoid of any sexualised language; and
 - (iv) not promoting unauthorised social activity or contact.

6. Photographs or video (including livestreaming) of Children/Young People

- (a) An Approved Person may photograph or film their Child/Young Person when participating in Activities.
- (b) When arranging official photography/videography of Children/Young People involved in Activities, Relevant Organisations and Persons must:
 - (i) obtain prior written consent from the Child/Young Person's parent or carer. Where appropriate and possible, consent should also be sought from the Child/Young Person. Written approval could include electronic messaging formats such as email or SMS;
 - (ii) give due consideration to Children/Young People who are protected by a court order;
 - (iii) appoint a photographer/videographer who holds a current WWCC;
 - (iv) ensure the photographer/videographer is supervised at all times;
 - (v) ensure the context is directly related to participation in Activities;
 - (vi) ensure the Child/Young Person is appropriately dressed and posed; and
 - (vii) not distribute images or videos (including as an attachment to an email) to anyone outside the VIS without parent/carer knowledge and approval.
- (c) Relevant Organisations and Persons must store images (digital or hard copy) in a manner that prevents unauthorised access by others and must be destroyed or deleted as soon as they are no longer required.
- (d) Relevant Organisations and Persons must not publish images or footage of a Child/Young Person or identify the Child/Young Person pictured, whether online or in print, without written consent from the Child/Young Person's parent or carer. Where appropriate and possible, consent should also be sought from the Child/Young Person.
- (e) Relevant Organisations and Persons must ensure any Employee, Volunteer or Contractor (such as an event photographer) comply with the above requirements whilst working at an Activity.

7. Physical contact with Children/Young People

- (a) Any physical contact with Children/Young People must be necessary and appropriate to the delivery of Activities and based on the needs of the Child/Young Person (including adjustments based on any additional needs due to impairment or disability) such as assisting with the use of equipment technique assistance or correction, treatment by a health practitioner or administering first aid.
- (b) Relevant Persons must not have contact with Children/Young People participating in Activities that:
 - (i) involves touching of genitals, buttocks, or the breast area other than as part of delivering necessary medical or allied health services to those specific areas of the body;
 - (ii) would appear to a reasonable observer to have a sexual connotation;
 - (iii) is intended to cause pain or distress to the Child/Young Person (e.g., corporal punishment);
 - (iv) is overly physical (e.g. tickling or other roughhousing), except where this contact is consistent with the rules of any relevant sport and accepted and reasonable behaviour within the Activity when undertaking that Activity;
 - (v) is unnecessary (e.g., assisting with toileting when a Child/Young Person does not require assistance); or
 - (vi) is initiated against the wishes of the Child/Young Person, except if such contact may be necessary to prevent injury to the Child/Young Person or to others, in which case:
 - (A) physical restraint must be a last resort;
 - (B) the level of force used must be appropriate to the specific circumstances, and aimed solely at restraining the Child/Young Person to prevent harm to themselves or others; and
 - (C) the incident must be reported to management as soon as possible.
- (c) Relevant Persons and Relevant Organisations must report to the VIS any physical contact initiated by a Child/Young Person that is sexualised and/or inappropriate, for example, acts of physical aggression, as soon as possible, to enable the situation to be managed in the interests of the safety of the Child/Young Person, Relevant Persons, and any other participants.

8. Overnight stays and sleeping arrangements

- (a) Overnight stays involving Children/Young People must be approved and managed by the VIS and/or the Affiliate Organisation in which the Child/Young Person participates.
- (b) Written parent/carer consent must be obtained prior to the overnight stay. Written approval could include electronic messaging formats such as email or SMS. Where appropriate and possible, consent should also be sought from the Child/Young Person.
- (c) Practices and behaviour by Relevant Persons involved during an overnight stay must be consistent with the practices and behaviour expected during delivery of Activities at all other times.
- (d) Standards of conduct that must be observed by Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons involved during an overnight stay include:
 - (i) Children/Young People must be provided with privacy when bathing, toileting and dressing;
 - (ii) appropriate dress standards must be observed when Children/Young People are present – such as no exposure to nudity;
 - (iii) Children/Young People must not be exposed to pornographic material, for example, through movies, television, the internet, or magazines;
 - (iv) Children/Young People must not be left under the supervision of unauthorised persons such as accommodation staff, or peers;
 - (v) sleeping arrangements must not compromise the safety of Children/Young People, including:
 - (A) an Adult must not sleep alone in the same room as Children/Young People unless they are the parent or have parental responsibility for those Children/Young People; and
 - (B) Children/Young People must not share a bed with an Adult or another Child/Young Person.

- (vi) Children/Young People must have the right to contact their parents, or an Approved Person, if they feel unsafe, uncomfortable, or distressed during the stay.
- (vii) Parents/carers must be permitted to contact their Child/Young Person if required.

9. Change room arrangements

- (a) Children/Young People must be supervised in any change room that is in official use by a Relevant Organisation whilst ensuring their right to privacy.
- (b) A Person in a Position of Authority must not:
 - (i) shower or change at the same time as supervising groups of Children/Young People; or
 - (ii) enter a change room where they will be alone with a Child/Young Person in that change room.
- (c) If a Person in a Position of Authority is in a VIS change room alone and a Child/Young Person enters the change room, they must take steps to avoid being one on one in the change room with that Child/Young Person (eg, asking the Child/Young Person to leave the change room until they are changed and leaving).
- (d) Relevant Persons must not use any camera or other recording device in a change room.
- (e) Persons in a Position of Authority must ensure adequate supervision in public change rooms when they are used, providing the level of supervision required for preventing abuse by members of the public, adult users, or general misbehaviour, while also respecting a Child/Young Person's privacy.

See also the AIS [Elite Youth Athlete Guidelines](#) and the Sport Integrity Australia "[Keeping Change Room Facilities Safe for Children and Young People](#)" guide.

10. Use, possession or supply of alcohol or drugs to Children/Young People

Persons in a Position of Authority must not:

- (a) use, possess or be under the influence of an illicit drug in the presence of a Child/Young Person;
- (b) use or be under the influence of alcohol while supervising a Child/Young Person during an Activity;
- (c) be impaired by any other legal drug such as prescription or over-the-counter drugs while in the presence of a Child/Young Person;
- (d) supply alcohol or drugs (including tobacco, vapes or nicotine patches) to any Child/Young Person; or
- (e) supply or administer medicines, except when permitted by law or with the consent of the Child/Young Person's parent or carer and under a valid prescription for that Child/Young Person and at the prescribed dosage.

11. Parent/Carer involvement

Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons must:

- (a) ensure that a parent/carers is involved in any significant decision, including the signing of any documentation in relation to their Child/Young Person's involvement in Activities;
- (b) not prevent parents/carers from accessing their Child/Young Person when required; and
- (c) make parents/carers aware of the standard of behaviour required when watching their Child/Young Person and/or any siblings and/or related Children/Young People of their Child/Young Person during an Activity. Parents/carers displaying inappropriate conduct may be asked to leave, however may not be denied access for an undetermined amount of time.

12. Transporting Children/Young People

- (a) Children/Young People must only be transported in circumstances that are directly related to the delivery of Activities.
- (b) Other than in an emergency, a Person in a Position of Authority must not transport Children/Young People without prior written approval from their parent or carer unless they are an Approved Person.
- (c) When transporting Children/Young People, the Person in a Position of Authority must drive responsibly, not be impaired by alcohol or any other mind-altering substances, have an

unrestricted drivers' licence and to the extent practicable, not be alone in the car with a Child/Young Person.

- (d) Children/Young People must only be transported in a roadworthy vehicle when the manufacturer stated capacity is adhered to and seatbelts and child restraints are fitted as required.

13. Drop off and pick up of Children/Young People

Relevant Organisations and Persons must:

- (a) have an accessible register of parent and carer emergency contact numbers and an operational phone; and
- (b) ensure that if a parent or carer is late, they make reasonable attempts to contact them. It is not the responsibility of a Person in a Position of Authority to transport Children/Young People home if their parent or carer is late for pick up.

Appendix D VIS Child/ Young Person Safe Commitment Statement

The VIS is committed to ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all Children/Young People that are involved in our Activities, including the wellbeing and development of Elite Youth Athletes in our Activities. Our policies and procedures seek to address risks to Child safety and to establish Child safe culture and practices.

1. **We will keep Children/Young People safe**
 - (a) Through our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, we document our clear commitment to keeping Children/Young People safe from harm, risk of harm, abuse and neglect.
 - (b) We communicate our commitment to all our staff, volunteers and Elite Youth Athletes and give them access to this commitment statement.

2. **We promote inclusion, respect, diversity and developmentally-informed practices**
 - (a) We consider the needs of all Children/Young People. We use inclusive program design to support them to participate safely in our sport, particularly Children/Young People with increased vulnerabilities, such as:
 - (i) Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Children/Young People;
 - (ii) Children/Young People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds;
 - (iii) Children/Young People with disability;
 - (iv) Children/Young People living in out of home care;
 - (v) Children/Young People with diverse genders and/or sexualities.
 - (b) We recognise the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex Children/Young People to be recognised for their gender identity, sexual orientation or intersex status, and to feel safe and respected when participating in our Activities.

3. **We create a culturally safe sporting environment**
 - (a) We uphold the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children/Young People to;
 - (i) identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander with pride and without fear of retribution or questioning;
 - (ii) to express their Culture as they deem appropriate;
 - (iii) receive an education that strengthens their Culture and identity;
 - (iv) maintain connection to their land and Country;
 - (v) maintain their strong kinship ties and social obligations;
 - (vi) be taught their cultural heritage by their Elders and community;
 - (vii) receive information in a culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner; and
 - (viii) be involved in services that are culturally respectful.
 - (b) We will take action to grow inclusiveness for all cultural identities and to establish equitable, respectful and empowering engagement with culturally and linguistically diverse communities.

4. **Our employees, contractors and volunteers know the behaviour we expect**
 - (a) We ensure that each person involved in our delivery of services to Children/Young People understands their role and the behaviour we expect in relation to keeping Children/Young People safe from abuse and neglect through application of our Child/Young Person Safe Practices.
 - (b) We utilise clear position descriptions which clearly state relevant Child/Young Person safe requirements.
 - (c) We have Child/Young Person Safe Practices, which are approved and endorsed by the VIS Board and outline our expectations for behaviour towards Children/Young People.
 - (d) Our employees, contractors and volunteers are given a copy of and have access to the Child/Young Person Safe Practices.
 - (e) Our employees, contractors and volunteers indicate, in writing, that they have read and are committed to the Child/Young Person Safe Practices.

5. **We minimise the likelihood of appointing or accrediting a person who is unsuitable**
 - (a) We have appropriate measures in place to minimise the likelihood that we will recruit employees, contractors or volunteers who are unsuitable to work/volunteer with Children/Young People.
 - (b) We will meet the requirements of Victorian Working with Children Check regulations.

6. **Induction and training are part of our commitment**
 - (a) We will provide all new employees, contractors, volunteers and participants with information about our commitment to Child/Young Person Safety including our Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, Child Safe Practices and Responding to Child Abuse Allegations.
 - (b) We support ongoing education and training for our staff and volunteers to ensure Child/Young Person safety information is provided and updated as required.
 - (c) We ensure that our employees, contractors and volunteers have up-to-date information relevant to Victorian child safe legislation or where they may travel to as a part of their duties.

7. **We encourage the involvement of Children/Young People and their parents**
 - (a) We involve and communicate with Children/Young People and their families and/or support networks in developing a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment. We will provide information to Children/Young People and their parents/carers (such as brochures, posters, handbooks, guidelines) about:
 - (i) our commitment to keeping Children/Young People safe and communicating their rights;
 - (ii) the behaviour we expect of our staff and volunteers and of themselves;
 - (iii) our policy about responding to Child Abuse.
 - (b) We have processes for two-way communication with Children/Young People and their families.
 - (c) We seek feedback from Children/Young People and have a process for responding.
 - (d) We empower Children and Young People.
 - (e) We respect diversity and seek to facilitate effective communication with, and empowerment and involvement of Children/Young People.

8. **Our staff and volunteers understand their responsibility for reporting Child Abuse**
 - (a) Our policy for responding to Child Abuse is approved and endorsed by VIS Board and applies to all VIS employees, contractors and volunteers, who must:
 - (i) immediately report abuse or neglect and any concerns with policies, practices or the behaviour of employees, contractors and volunteers;
 - (ii) meet any legislated mandatory or other jurisdictional reporting requirements;
 - (iii) follow a specified process when reporting abuse or neglect.
 - (b) Our employees, contractors and volunteers are given a copy of and have access to this Policy and understand the implications of the policy for their role.
 - (c) We document any allegation, disclosure or concern regarding Child Abuse and take action and monitor responses to all allegations, disclosures, or concerns.

9. **We maintain and improve our policies and practices**
 - (a) We are committed to maintaining and improving our policies, procedures, and practices to keep Children/Young People safe from neglect and abuse.
 - (b) We have assigned responsibility for regularly maintaining and improving our policies and procedures to **Daniel Simons, Director of People and Community**.
 - (c) We monitor our employees, contractors, volunteers, and external providers and take action to ensure appropriate practice, behaviour and policies are followed.
 - (d) We require our employees, contractors and volunteers to disclose guilty findings or charges affecting their suitability to work with Children/Young People. We review police record and WWCC checks regularly.
 - (e) We have formally reviewed our service delivery to identify and document potential risks to Children/Young People.

- (f) We undertake formal reviews, at least annually, to identify and document potential risks to Children/Young People associated with our service delivery.

Appendix E Best Practice Guidance

The VIS is committed to safeguarding everyone involved in our organisation including Children/Young People who participate in our Activities, ensuring that they feel safe and are safe. This includes Elite Youth Athletes. This Best Practice Guidance identifies steps that Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons should be taking to create a safe and positive environment for Children/Young People in our organisation and its Activities. Where applicable, the [Elite Youth Athlete Guidelines](#) should also be referenced to guide the wellbeing, development and performance of Elite Youth Athletes.

This Appendix E and its appendices are provided as guidance only. Failure to comply with a requirement set out in this Appendix or one of its Attachments will not be considered Prohibited Conduct for the purposes of this Policy, however, aspects of the Best Practice Guidance may be a mandatory requirement under relevant state or territory legislation.

It is the responsibility of all Relevant Organisations and Relevant Persons to ensure that they are aware of and comply with any obligations they may be subject to in Victoria or under other relevant State or territory legislation.

Relevant Organisations should:

1. adopt and implement a Child/Young Person Safe Commitment Statement (The VIS' Child/Young Person Safe Commitment Statement is provided at D);
2. adopt and implement appropriate recruitment, screening and training requirements for all employees and volunteers who will be working in child-related positions (see example at Attachment 1 to this E);
3. establish a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of Aboriginal and or Torres Strait Islander Children/Young People are respected and valued;
4. ensure that Children/Young People are empowered about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously, including by:
 - (a) providing Children/Young People with information about their participation in Activities and information about their rights and responsibilities;
 - (b) seeking informed consent from Children/Young People prior to participation in Activities; and
 - (c) Respecting and understanding the diverse and potentially complex needs of Children/Young People with increased vulnerabilities.

Attachment 1: Recruitment, Screening & Training Recommendations

These recruitment, screening and training requirements have been developed to provide a fair, safe, consistent, and comprehensive process to engage personnel in the VIS. The VIS takes Child/Young Person protection seriously and ensures that the organisation recruits personnel (employees, contractors and volunteers), that are suitably qualified and committed to providing professional, safe, and enjoyable programs and services to Children/Young People.

1. Child-Related Positions

- (a) All roles within the VIS (employees, contractors and volunteers) both new and existing should be assessed using Attachment 2: Child-Related Position Assessment Recommendations.
- (b) A child-related position means a position that involves or may involve contact with Children/Young People, either under the position description or due to the nature of the role.
- (c) Positions assessed as 'child-related' should be appointed using the recruitment and screening process outlined in this Attachment 1.

2. Position Descriptions

- (a) Developing appropriate selection criteria for a position is a valuable first step to reducing the risk of appointing someone who poses a Child/Young Person safety risk.
- (b) Examples of appropriate selection criteria may include: 'Must have experience working with Children/Young People.' 'Must be able to demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behaviours when engaging with Children/Young People.'

3. Advertising

All positions identified as child-related should include the following statement in the position description and any advertising: *The VIS is committed to protecting Children/Young People from harm. We require all applicants that will work with Children/Young People to undergo an extensive screening process prior to appointment.*

4. Interviews

- (a) The VIS should conduct at least one interview when appointing a person to a child-related position, preferably in-person or on a videoconference (e.g., Zoom etc.).
- (b) During the interview, questions regarding the applicant's suitability to work with Children/Young People should be included. Refer to example questions in Attachment 3: Interview Recommendations & Sample Questions.

5. Working with Children Checks

- (a) Working with Children Check (WWCC) laws aim to help prevent people who pose a known unacceptable risk from working with Children/Young People as paid employees or volunteers. WWCC laws are currently in place in all Australian states and territories.
- (b) These laws require certain individuals involved in areas such as sport and recreation to undertake a check to determine their suitability to work (in a paid or volunteer capacity) with Children/Young People. Whether a particular individual is required to undertake a check depends on the WWCC laws of the relevant state or territory. Relevant Organisations must meet the requirements of the relevant state or territory WWCC laws. Specific state and territory requirements can be found [here](#).
- (c) All personnel that require a WWCC will supply a copy of it to, and/or authorise the VIS to verify the currency of the WWCC.
- (d) Relevant Organisations must not engage a person who does not have a satisfactory WWCC in the relevant jurisdiction(s).
- (e) Regardless of whether an individual is required or otherwise eligible to obtain a WWCC in the relevant jurisdiction(s), it would be a breach of the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy if an individual:
 - (i) who has guilty findings that would make them ineligible to be granted a WWCC is appointed to a child-related position in the VIS; or

- (ii) continues in a child-related position if they have been charged or convicted of a crime that would make them ineligible to be granted a WWCC.
- (f) Relevant Persons are required to report to the VIS any criminal guilty findings or charge that indicates that they may present a potential risk to the Children/Young People to whom they help deliver programs or services, such as illegal drug possession or use, gun crimes and assault, including adult sexual assault.

6. National Criminal History Record Checks

- (a) The VIS may require the preferred candidates to have completed a 'national criminal history record check' (also known as a 'police check') where the candidate does not otherwise meet the jurisdictional threshold to apply for and obtain a WWCC.
- (b) A criminal history does not automatically preclude an applicant from being appointed unless their criminal history suggests that they may pose a risk to Children/Young People. If there is information relevant to the employment or engagement decision, the applicant will be provided with an opportunity to respond to the contents of their police check (if they wish to do so).
- (c) The decision to appoint or not appoint an applicant because of a police check result, along with the rationale for that decision, will be communicated to the applicant by the VIS.
- (d) A copy of the police check must not be retained. The original must either be returned to the applicant if requested or be destroyed in a secure manner on completion of the recruitment process. If the applicant is appointed, a record of the date and certificate number of the police check should be recorded in their personnel file.

7. International Criminal History Record Checks

- (a) Any applicant who has resided overseas for 12 months or more in the last ten years should obtain an international criminal check.
- (b) Some countries will not release information regarding an individual for personal or third-party purposes. Where police records checks cannot be made, reference checks should be conducted with at least two referees that personally knew the individual whilst they were residing in the other country.
- (c) The VIS should inform the applicant that referees will be asked whether they have knowledge or information concerning the applicant that would adversely affect the applicant from performing the job, including any relevant criminal offences. The credentials of persons acting as referees should be verified and can include previous employers.
- (d) Overseas applicants should not commence until this process is satisfactorily completed.

8. Monitoring compliance

The VIS will ensure that all personnel in child-related positions have a current WWCC and or relevant probity checks, as specified in State and territory legislation, a summary of which can be found [here](#). Where volunteers or other personnel for an Activity are engaged by a Relevant Organisation or an Affiliate Organisation, the VIS will confirm that the Relevant Organisation or Affiliate Organisation has appropriate WWCC and/or relevant screening requirements in place.

9. Reference checks

- (a) The VIS should conduct a minimum of two reference checks for the preferred applicant to gather additional information about the applicant's suitability to work in the role for which they have applied.
- (b) The selected referees should:
 - (i) be able to provide information relating to the applicant's suitability to work with Children/Young People;
 - (ii) have known the applicant for at least 12 months;
 - (iii) not be related to the applicant;
 - (iv) be able to vouch for the applicant's reputation and character.

Please note: Written character references are not sufficient unless also followed up and verified through direct contact.

- (c) Referees should be asked directly about any concerns they may have about the applicant working with Children/Young People (refer to Attachment 4 for example questions)

10. Qualification and registration checks

Educational or vocational qualifications, or professional registration should be verified for the preferred applicant for the position, if applicable.

11. Engagement of Children/Young People

If a person under the age of 18 is appointed to a child-related position, the VIS should:

- (a) comply with the relevant WWCC legislation;
- (b) undertake appropriate screening (interviews and referee checks);
- (c) ensure that they are aware that they are bound by the Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy, Child/Young Person Safe Practices and the obligations associated with WWCC; and
- (d) obtain information about any pre-existing relationships, especially where the Child/Young Person-applicant interacts personally with another Child/Young Person participant.

12. Training

- (a) Persons appointed to a child-related position should complete the Sport Integrity Australia Child Safeguarding in Sport Induction online course at [Sport Integrity Australia eLearning](#) within 12 months of their appointment.
- (b) The VIS should ensure that all involved with the VIS and its Activities have access to information regarding their Child/Young Person safe obligations – see [Safeguarding | Sport Integrity Australia](#).

Attachment 2: Child-Related Position Assessment Recommendations

Note: State and territory jurisdictions have different requirements regarding screening and WWCC. This child-related position assessment aims to assist in identifying child-related positions. However, **it should not be used to determine if a Relevant Person legally requires a WWCC.**

Specific state and territory requirements can be found [here](#).

Question – Does the position/activity (paid/unpaid or volunteer):	Yes	No
Involve supervising Children/Young People?		
Involve being alone with Children/Young People or engaging with Children/Young People in a way that is not observed or monitored?		
Involve activities with Children/Young People away from the organisation’s usual location?		
Involve direct one-on-one or group contact with Children/Young People via phone, letter, email, online or social media?		
Involve supervising Child/Young Person-to-Child/Young Person online contact?		
Have access (online or paper based) to a Child/Young Person’s personal and/or confidential information?		
Involve the need for physical contact/touching Children/Young People?		
Involve any of the following: transporting Children/Young People; over-night supervision; and/or out-of-town activities?		
Have a perceived or actual level of authority (including from a Child/Young Person’s perspective)?		
Involve any other type of contact with Children/Young People?		

If you answered YES to one or more of the above questions, the position **is a child-related position.**

The VIS is required to undertake the recruitment and screening process as outlined in Attachment 1, including conducting interviews and reference checks.

Relevant Organisations must also meet the requirements of the relevant state or territory WWCC laws.

Attachment 3: Interview Recommendations & Sample Questions

- The interview process is a very important step in selecting the right people for your organisation and in identifying any people that may pose a risk of harm to Children/Young People.
- An open-ended style of behavioural-based questioning will give insights into the applicant's values, attitudes and understanding of professional boundaries and accountability.
- All applicants should be informed during the interview that referees will be contacted as part of any final selection process.

Questions that should be asked

- Would you please tell us about your beliefs and values in relation to working with Children/Young People/Elite Youth Athletes?
- Would you please tell us about your awareness and understanding of child protection?
- Would you please tell us about your professional experience, competencies, and qualifications in relation to working with Children/Young People/Elite Youth Athletes?
- What boundaries are important when working with Children/Young People/Elite Youth Athletes?
- Have you ever had any disciplinary action taken against you in relation to you working with Children/Young People/Elite Youth Athletes?

Additional Questions (for positions that work predominately with Children/Young People) that MAY be asked

- What do you find most rewarding about working with Children/Young People/Elite Youth Athletes?
- What do you find most challenging about working with Children/Young People/Elite Youth Athletes?
- How would you handle a Child/Young Person/Elite Youth Athlete that is behaving in a manner that is disruptive in a group setting?
- How do you think your peers, supervisors and referees would describe the way you work with Children/Young People//Elite Youth Athletes?
- Are there any Children/Young People/Elite Youth Athletes whom you would not wish to work with and, if so, why?
- How would you deal with a Child/Young Person/Elite Youth Athlete who is acting aggressively?
- Have you ever lost your temper working with Children/Young People/Elite Youth Athletes? What was the trigger for this? What was the outcome?
- How would you respond to a Child/Young Person/Elite Youth Athlete who disclosed they were being subjected to abuse?
- A parent of a Child/Young Person/Elite Youth Athlete attending your service wants someone from the organisation to care for their Child/Young Person//Elite Youth Athlete out of hours. How would you respond to this request?
- What would you do if you thought another staff member or volunteer had harmed or was harming a Child/Young Person//Elite Youth Athlete?
- What would you do if you thought a Child/Young Person/Elite Youth Athlete was being abused at home?
- Can you tell us about Children/Young People/Elite Youth Athletes you have found challenging to work with? What strategies do you use to handle challenging behaviour?

Additional Questions (for positions that work predominately with Children/Young People) that MAY be asked

- How would you handle a Child/Young Person/Elite Youth Athlete that appears sad and refuses to participate in activities?

Take notice of your own thoughts and feelings when interacting with the applicant. Ask for more information if the applicant does not provide sufficient information in their responses.

Red Flags include, but are not limited to:

- unexplained lengthy gaps in employment history;
- strange or inappropriate questions / statements about Children/Young People;
- expresses an interest in spending time alone with Children/Young People or in working with Children/Young People of a particular age or gender;
- excessive interest in Child/Young Person photography;
- being evasive or inconsistent in responding to questions.

Attachment 4: Reference Check Recommendations & Sample Questions

- The purpose of seeking references is to obtain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.
- Ask the same questions of each referee.
- When contacting the referee, identify yourself and your position, give the name of the candidate and the reason for your call.
- Before asking questions, describe the job and the competencies that you are seeking.

Questions that should be asked

- Are you related to the applicant? (Please note, if the person answers yes, you cannot proceed with this referee check and another referee needs to be obtained from the applicant).
- In what capacity have you known the applicant and for what length of time? (Please note, if less than 12 months another referee should be obtained from the applicant)
- How would you describe the personal character of the applicant?
- Would you have any concerns about this applicant working with or being in contact with Children/Young People?
- How does the person respond to supervision/oversight?
- In your time working with the applicant, was there anything that led you to believe that this applicant is not suitable to work with or be in contact with Children/Young People?
- To your knowledge, has this person ever been involved with the abuse or neglect of Children/Young People?

The panel should consider the validity of the referees by reflecting on the following questions:

- What is the relationship between the referee and the applicant?
- Has the referee known the applicant in a professional capacity and if so when and for how long?
- Is the referee able to provide relevant information about the applicant's work history and performance?
- Has the referee observed the applicant demonstrating the skills and knowledge required for the position?

Red Flags include, but are not limited to:

- A reluctant referee
- A referee who does not know (or appear to know) the applicant well
- Information that the referee will not provide
- Information that differs from the applicant's account
- Evasive or convoluted responses
- Referees that would not re-hire the applicant
- Referees that cannot be contacted
- Referees that were not informed they would be used