



Gladstone Regional Council

Council Policy

Title	WORKING WITH CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE (BLUE CARD) STRATEGIC POSITION
Policy Number	P-2018-34
Business Unit/s	PEOPLE CULTURE AND SAFETY
Date of Adoption	
Resolution Number	
Review Date	
Date Repealed	

1.0 PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate Gladstone Regional Council's commitment to providing a safe, supportive, protective and healthy environment for children and young people receiving services and/or participating in activities conducted by or on behalf of the Council.

2.0 SCOPE:

All Workers and Independent Contractors regulated under the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* ('Act').

In principle, this policy also applies to parents/guardians/custodians, children and young people, and patrons/spectators/visitors/others who are present at Council venues where service or activity delivery is being provided to children and young people. Council will use its best endeavours to guide compliance by these parties where reasonably practicable.

This policy excludes:

- Council property and venues leased and/or hired by another party to deliver services and activities that are not managed, delivered or supervised by or on behalf of Council.
- Council parks and recreation areas where it is not reasonably practicable to manage or supervise general visitation or tours from members of the public.

3.0 RELATED LEGISLATION:

Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (the Act)
Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011
Child Protection Act 1999
Criminal Code Act 1899 (Qld)
Work Health and Safety Act 2011

4.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS:

- Corporate Standard – Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy
- Code of Conduct Policy
- Anti-Harassment Policy
- Anti-Discrimination Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Cultural Diversity Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy
- Corporate Standard Recruitment and Selection
- Corporate Standard Learning and Development
- Corporate Standard Allegation & Complaint Investigation
- Corporate Standard Work Experience
- Working with Children Blue Card Register
- Work Health and Safety Risk Assessment

5.0 DEFINITIONS:

"Child" or **"children"** means persons under the age of twelve (12) years.

"Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy" means documented corporate standards, frameworks, systems and processes relevant to Council that manages risks of harm to children and young people.

"Code of Conduct" means Gladstone Regional Council's specific rules pertaining to how workplace participants are to behave when conducting business as part of their employment for Council.

"Council employee" is any person performing work for Council (including contract staff) and including volunteers, work experience students, vacation employment students and/or any arrangement satisfying the requirements of an employee under the *Industrial Relations Act 2016 (Qld)*.

"Harm" or **"Harmful"** is any detrimental effect of a significant nature on a child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing by a single, series or combination of acts, omissions, or circumstances. Harm can be caused by physical, psychological, or emotional abuse or neglect; or sexual abuse or exploitation.

"Independent Contractors" means a person, business or corporation operating independently of Council and includes their employees and authorised agents, carrying out work for Council, but who are not employees of Council.

"Parents/Guardians/Custodians" means a person who has lawful care or charge of children or a young person under the age of eighteen (18) years.

"Patrons/Spectators/Visitors/Other" means persons who attend a service or activity delivered by or on behalf of Council at a Council premise and (a) may incidentally meet children and young people in the environment; or (b) may attend Council premises to observe an event where children and young people perform; or (c) may be accompanying a parent/guardian/custodian.

"Positive notice blue card" or **"Positive exemption notice"** means a current and valid positive notice or exemption notice issued by Blue Card Services, that has not been

suspended, to a person/s to confirm eligibility to provide services and activities to children and young people.

"Workers" means elected representatives (Mayor and Councillors), Executive Officers, Council employees, Management Consultants, work experience students, and volunteers.

"Young people", "young person" or "youth" means a person or people aged between twelve (12) years and less than eighteen (18) years.

6.0 POLICY STATEMENT:

6.1 Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy

Council is committed to a safe, healthy and protective environment for children and young people participating in services and activities delivered by or on behalf of Council. Council will maintain a clear and consistent Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy incorporating corporate standards and internal procedures to identify and minimise the risk of harm to children and young people, that comply with the eight minimum requirements of the Act outlined below.

1. Statement of commitment
2. Code of conduct
3. Recruitment, selection, training and management
4. Handling disclosures or suspicions of harm, including reporting guidelines
5. Managing breaches of Council's risk management strategy
6. Risk management plans for high risk activities and special events
7. Compliance with the requirements of the blue card system
8. Communication and support

These risk management strategies are monitored and reviewed annually and after any incidents to ensure that risks continue to be addressed and minimised throughout Council.

Council's Statement of Commitment forms part of the Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy. This will be displayed in all workplaces where children and young people receive services and undertake activities.

6.2 Interacting with children and young people

Council's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy provides clear guidelines and expected standards of behaviour for all Workers and Independent Contractors who interact with children and young people and the consequences for behaviour that is contrary to the code.

Under the Act, and as an organisation, it is a compulsory requirement for a person to hold a positive notice blue card or a positive notice exemption card when they provide, or are likely to provide, child and youth related services or activities where minimum frequency of contact occurs.

Workers and Independent Contractors who have responsibility for minimising risks of harm to children and young people by contributing to a safe and supportive environment, include those who:

- manage Council premises frequented by children and young people attending a service or activity delivered by or on behalf of Council

- deliver Council services and activities to children and young people
- supervise Council services and activities designed for children and young people
- are involved in Council decision-making processes directly relating to children and young people.

Council maintains a Code of Conduct that applies to all Council employees. If there is any conflict between the Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy and applicable legislation, the Council Code of Conduct and relevant legislation will prevail.

6.3 Responsibility

Council's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy will be the custody of and be maintained by the People Culture and Safety Business Unit. It is the responsibility of all Workers and Independent Contractors to ensure compliance with Council's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy.

Parents/guardians/custodians who have children and young people participating in a service or activity can request information pertaining to Council's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy by contacting Council's People Culture and Safety Business Unit.

7.0 ATTACHMENTS:

Council's Statement of Commitment.

8.0 REVIEW MECHANISM:

This policy will be reviewed when any of the following occur:

1. The related legislation or governing documents are amended or replaced; or
2. Other circumstances as determined by resolution of Council or the CEO; or
3. Three years from date of adoption.

TABLE OF AMENDMENTS			
Document History	Date	Council Resolution No.	Notes (including the prior Policy No, precise of change/s, etc)
Originally Approved			
Amendment 1			
Amendment 2			
Amendment 3			

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LEISA DOWLING
ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

Gladstone Regional Council's purpose is to serve the community and it has developed a variety of enrichment activities and offerings for children and young people that aims to assist personal development, build confidence, encourage social interaction, and explore interests.

Council supports the rights of children and young people and is committed to providing safe and supportive environments directed at ensuring protection and wellbeing when receiving services and participating in activities provided by Council or on behalf of Council.

Children and young people can participate in services and activities at one of Gladstone Regional Council's many community centres, including the Gladstone Entertainment Convention Centre, Community Engagement Centre, Parks and Gardens, the Art Gallery or one of the libraries in the Gladstone Region. Children and young people are encouraged to contribute to a positive environment, follow safe practices, and behave appropriately.

All persons attending Council premises to receive or participate in a service or activity where children and young people are present, are required to be vigilant to ensure their own behaviour and the behaviour of others is not harmful to children and young people, whether real or perceived.

Council complies with the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000* and the *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011* through our Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy.

Workers and Independent Contractors engaged in child-related services or activities are expected to understand and demonstrate commitment to Council's Child and Youth Risk Management Strategy. This includes adhering to Council's corporate standards and internal procedures and demonstrating expected standards of behaviour.

The following values reflect the culture that we are committed to promoting within Council.



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ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Date of adoption:
Date for review: