

Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy

The Little Sanctuary Support Services PTY LTD

The Little Sanctuary Support Services Pty Ltd (“the Organisation”) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all participants, families, carers, staff, and volunteers.

The purpose of this policy is to affirm The Little Sanctuary Support Services’ commitment to providing a safe, inclusive, and nurturing environment for all children and young people we support.

This policy ensures compliance with:

- The **Queensland Child Safe Framework** (effective October 2025)
- The **National Principles for Child Safe Organisations**
- The **NDIS Code of Conduct** and relevant allied health professional standards

This policy is directly linked to our Code of Conduct and reflects our values of respect, integrity, empowerment, and empathy.

1. Scope and applicability

This policy applies to:

- The Director
- All staff
- Contractors (including allied health professionals engaged by us)
- Volunteers and students (if any in the future)

It covers **all activities** of The Little Sanctuary Support Services that involve or may involve contact with children and young people.

2. Responsibilities

☐ **Director:**

- Holds overall accountability for child safety and wellbeing.
- Ensures compliance with Queensland child safe laws, NDIS Practice Standards, and this policy.
- Leads annual review and reporting.

☐ **Staff:**

- Maintain current Working with Children Check (Blue Card).
- Maintain current Yellow Card
- Complete mandatory training in child safety and safeguarding.
- Act in line with the Child Safe Code of Conduct.
- Report concerns, disclosures, or incidents immediately.

☐ **Contractors:**

- Must comply with this policy, the Code of Conduct, Yellow and Blue Card requirements.
- Are included in staff induction and ongoing supervision.

3. Definitions

- **Child/Children:** Anyone under the age of 18 years.
- **Child Harm or Abuse:** Includes physical, emotional, sexual abuse, neglect, exposure to family violence, and online exploitation.
- **Mandatory Reporting:** Legal requirement to report suspicions of child abuse or neglect to appropriate authorities.
- **Cultural Safety:** An environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds feel respected, safe, and valued.

4. Relevant Legislation

- Child Protection Reform and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2024 (Qld) (commencing October 2025)
- Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000 (Qld)
- Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)
- NDIS Code of Conduct and Practice Standards
- National Principles for Child Safe Organisations
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

5. Related Policies and Procedures

- Child Safe Code of Conduct (June 2025)
- Charter of Commitment TLS Version 1 (August 2025)
- Complaint Handling Policy (September 2025)
- Risk Management Strategy (including child harm prevention) (September 2025)
- Privacy and Confidentiality Policy (Reviewed in September 2025)
- Staff Induction and Training Procedures (September 2025)

6. Commitment to Child Safety and Wellbeing

The Little Sanctuary Support Services has **zero tolerance for child abuse**. We are committed to:

- Upholding children's rights to be safe, respected, and heard.
- Embedding child safety into all organisational practices.
- Building a culture where concerns are taken seriously, reported, and acted on promptly.

7. Taking Child Participation Seriously

- Children and young people are informed of their rights in simple, accessible formats.
- Their views are sought in matters that affect them (e.g., therapy decisions, support planning).
- Age-appropriate tools are used to enable expression (verbal, written, visual).

8. Involving Families and Communities

- Families are informed of our child safety policies and complaints process.
- We seek family input in service planning and policy reviews.
- Parental/guardian consent is obtained for all services involving children.

11. Respecting Equity and Diversity

- We actively respect and support children with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, and children from culturally and linguistically diverse communities.
- Staff are trained in inclusive practice and trauma-informed approaches.
- Discrimination, bullying, or exclusion is not tolerated.

12. Ensuring Staff are Suitable and Supported

- All staff and contractors must hold a current Blue Card and Yellow Card.
- Pre-employment screening and reference checks are conducted.
- Induction includes child safety, NDIS Code of Conduct, and mandatory reporting.
- Ongoing supervision and professional development are provided.

13. Child Focused Complaints System

- Children and families are encouraged to raise concerns without fear of retaliation.
- Complaints can be made in multiple ways (verbal, written, anonymous).
- Allegations of harm are reported to **Child Safety Services** or **Queensland Police** as required.
- Confidentiality is respected while ensuring safety.

14. Ensuring Staff are Suitable and Supported

- All staff and contractors must hold a current Blue Card.
- Pre-employment screening and reference checks are conducted.
- Induction includes child safety, NDIS Code of Conduct, and mandatory reporting.
- Ongoing supervision and professional development are provided.

15. Staff Knowledge, Skills and Awareness

- All staff complete annual child safety refresher training.
- Training covers: recognising harm, responding to disclosures, cultural safety, and online risks.
- Staff are supported through supervision and debriefing after incidents.

16. Safe Physical and Online Environments

- Physical spaces are monitored and designed to reduce risks of harm.
- Online communication with children follows strict professional protocols.
- Risk assessments are conducted for all child-related activities.
- Children and families are educated on safe online practices.

This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by legislative or regulatory changes. Feedback from participants, families, staff, and children will be sought to improve the process.

This policy will be:

- Displayed on our website and available within our service environments.
- Provided to all staff, participants, families, and carers via our website.
- Incorporated into staff induction and ongoing training.

I have read this Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy and agree to abide by it and its terms.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Last reviewed: 6th September 2025

Next review date: 6th September 2026

Responsible officer: Elizabeth Spash

(TLS Director)