



# Child Safety Policy

## 1. Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- a) outline AMEB Victoria's commitment to child safety;
- b) outline appropriate standards of behaviour towards children; and
- c) guide the development of systems and processes that support the prevention and management of child abuse risks.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the AMEB Victoria community, including candidates and their chaperones or accompanists, employees, visitors, and all other individuals engaged in activities reasonably connected with AMEB Victoria to the extent that their activities include dealings or contact with children.

For the purposes of this policy, a child is an individual under the age of 18 years.

## 3. Compliance

This policy supports compliance with the Victorian Child Safe Standards and the:

- a) *Commission for Children and Young People Act 2012*
- b) *Children, Youth and Families Act 2005*
- c) *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- d) *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*
- e) *Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014*
- f) *Crimes Act 1958*
- g) United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

## 4. Policy

- 4.1. AMEB Victoria is an inclusive and welcoming environment that supports the safety, participation, empowerment and wellbeing of all children. In particular, AMEB Victoria will:
  - a) promote the cultural safety of Aboriginal children and children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds; and
  - b) provide a safe environment in which children with a disability can participate equally.
- 4.2. AMEB Victoria does not tolerate child abuse in any form, and will:
  - a) take a proactive approach to the prevention of child abuse by identifying, removing and/or reducing risks early; and
  - b) treat all allegations and safety concerns relating to child abuse very seriously.
- 4.3. AMEB Victoria is committed to promoting best practices in relation to child safety.

## 5. Procedural Principles

### Child Safety Responsible Officer

- 5.1. The following procedural principles outline appropriate standards of behaviour towards children. The Child Safety Responsible Officer is responsible for implementing the following standards throughout AMEB Victoria.
- 5.2. AMEB Victoria's Child Safety Responsible Officer is the General Manager.

### General

- 5.3. All members of AMEB Victoria community are responsible for promoting the safety, participation, wellbeing and empowerment of children by:
  - a) treating children with respect;
  - b) complying with all relevant laws, regulations, policies, processes and guidelines;
  - c) reporting any instances of suspected child abuse in accordance with section 5.12; and
  - d) complying with any child safety training, registration or accreditation requirements which may be relevant to their duties or activities.

### Cultural safety

- 5.4. AMEB Victoria will recognise and adapt to the needs of children and communities, including those outlined in section 4.1.
- 5.5. Where appropriate, AMEB Victoria will ensure that information is presented in a child-friendly, culturally sensitive, relevant and accessible manner.

### Privacy, technology and social media

- 5.6. All members of AMEB Victoria community must protect the privacy of children and their families in accordance with the Privacy Policy.
- 5.7. All members of AMEB Victoria community must ensure that technology and social media are used appropriately in connection with children, including by:
  - a) obtaining all necessary approvals from parents, guardians, or otherwise in accordance with relevant processes and guidelines;
  - b) ensuring that any use of technology and social media is not detrimental to the child or harmful to the child's safety; and
  - c) presenting children in a dignified and respectful manner.
- 5.8. Any member of AMEB Victoria community who photographs or films children, or uses images of children, for study or work-related purposes must:
  - a) obtain informed consent from a parent or guardian of the child and, where appropriate, directly from the child;
  - b) ensure that the content and purpose of the photographs, film and video material are appropriate in accordance with section 5.7; and
  - c) act in accordance with all relevant processes, guidelines and operating rules, including (where applicable) AMEB Victoria's social media guidelines.

## Child abuse

- 5.9. All members of AMEB Victoria community must avoid actions or behaviours that could be construed as child abuse. In particular, members of AMEB Victoria community have a positive duty to avoid:
- a) using language or behaviour towards children that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate;
  - b) exploiting or harassing children in any way;
  - c) engaging in unauthorised personal contact with children, including through social networking sites; or
  - d) developing special relationships that could be seen as favouritism.
- 5.10. All members of AMEB Victoria community must immediately report any concerns or allegations of child abuse or non-compliance with this policy in accordance with AMEB Victoria's processes established under section 5.12.
- 5.11. A failure to comply with sections 5.9 or 5.10 may constitute a criminal offence and result in serious penalties.

## Responding to and reporting child abuse

- 5.12. AMEB Victoria's Child Safety Responsible Officer is responsible for establishing and implementing processes for responding to and reporting suspected child abuse.

## 6. Definitions

**Aboriginal child** means a person under the age of 18 years who:

- is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent
- identifies as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander; and
- is accepted as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community.

**Child** means a person who is under the age of 18 years.

**Child abuse** means any act committed against a child involving:

- physical violence (including threats of physical violence)
- sexual abuse
- serious emotional or psychological abuse; or
- serious neglect.

**Child safety**, in the context of this policy, means measures to protect children from child abuse.

**Children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds** means a child who identifies as having particular cultural or linguistic affiliations by virtue of their place of birth, ancestry or ethnic origin, religion, preferred language or language spoken at home or because of their parents' identification on a similar basis.

**Cultural safety of Aboriginal children** means the positive recognition and celebration of Aboriginal cultures. It is more than just the absence of racism or discrimination, and more than cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity.

**Cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds** means an environment which is spiritually, socially and emotionally safe, as well as physically safe for children; where there is no assault, challenge or denial of their cultural or linguistic identity, of who they are and what they need.

**Members of AMEB Victoria community means:**

- a) AMEB Victoria employees, including examiners, examination supervisors, administration/customer service personnel and managers;
- b) examination candidates, chaperones, accompanists and page-turners; and
- c) all other individuals engaged in activities reasonably connected with AMEB Victoria, including contractors, consultants, officers of the company, committee members, and visitors.

**7. Child safety resources**

- Statement of Commitment to Child Safety
- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safety Reporting Process at AMEB Victoria
- Victorian Department of Health and Human Services website
- Victorian Commission for Children and Young People's website

POLICY APPROVER	Board of Directors
POLICY STEWARD	General Manager
REVIEW	This policy is to be reviewed by 31 March 2022.