

Squiggle Kids promotes shared and group drawing as a learning and development tool for young Children, particularly for communication, language and social skills. Squiggle Kids works in community centres and kindergartens around Victoria and provides group drawing incursions, professional training and parent workshops.

Squiggle Kids Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy (Policy)

The Policy demonstrates:

- Squiggle Kids', including Management and other Squiggle Kids Team Members, commitment to Child safety and wellbeing
- how Squiggle Kids keeps Children in Squiggle Kids Events safe from harm, including Child abuse
- what Squiggle Kids does to meet the *Child Safe Standards* and the *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act (Vic) 2005*.

Commitment to Child safety

All Children who participate in a Squiggle Kids Event have a right to feel and be safe. The welfare of Children in a Squiggle Kids Event is Squiggle Kids' first priority. Squiggle Kids has a zero-tolerance approach to Child abuse and harm.

Purpose

This Policy outlines how Squiggle Kids prioritises the safety and wellbeing of Children.

Scope

This policy applies to all Squiggle Kids Team Members at Squiggle Kids Events.

Updates to this Policy

Squiggle Kids may vary, remove or replace this Policy at any time provided that:

- Squiggle Kids continues to meet its legal obligations
- Squiggle Kids notifies all Squiggle Kids Team Members
- Any varied or replaced Policy is included on the Squiggle Kids website.

Definitions

These definitions apply across all Squiggle Kids Child Safety policies, codes and records

Centre means a kindergarten, childcare, early learning centre or community house or similar.

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

A **Child Safety Complaint** is an allegation made to a Squiggle Kids Team Member, or an observation by a Squiggle Kids Team Member, that might suggest:

- Child abuse or misconduct by Squiggle Kids Team Members
- inadequate handling of a Child Safety Concern by Squiggle Kids
- risks to the safety of a Child or group of Children in a Squiggle Kids Event.

A **Child Safety Concern** is an allegation of Child abuse made to a Squiggle Kids Team Member or an

observation or observations by a Squiggle Kids Team Member of injuries or maltreatment of a Child.

Management means Lauren Gardiner and Debbie Isaac.

Squiggle Kids Event means an incursion, training or workshop or similar run by Squiggle Kids.

Squiggle Kids Team Members means Management and any employee or volunteer working at a Squiggle Kids Event.

Role of Management

Management must ensure:

- Squiggle Kids prioritises Children's safety
- appropriate action is taken on Child Safety Concerns and Child Safety Complaints.

Management will:

- champion and model a Child safe culture at Squiggle Kids
- work to create a positive culture around reporting so that everyone at Squiggle Kids feels comfortable to raise Child Safety Concerns or Child Safety Complaints
- ensure that Squiggle Kids Team Members manage risks in accordance with this Policy
- ensure Squiggle Kids Team Members complete appropriate Child safety training
- review Squiggle Kids' approach to Child safety and wellbeing at a frequency that is reasonable.

Children's empowerment and participation

Squiggle Kids' primary focus is on Children at Squiggle Kids Events. Squiggle Kids will observe, listen to and respond to Children during a Squiggle Kids Event. Squiggle Kids will also reflect on what Children say and what Children do at Squiggle Kids Events and make changes where necessary to Squiggle Kids Events.

Squiggle Kids aims to get all Children participating in Squiggle Kids Events. Where necessary, Squiggle Kids will adapt the program to achieve this. However, Squiggle Kids will also respect a Child's wish to sit out from an activity or participate in a different way.

Centre staff will take primary responsibility for ensuring that Children know their rights, including about safety, during a Squiggle Kids Event.

If an issue arises during a Squiggle Kids Event that could immediately impact negatively on the safety or wellbeing of Children, Squiggle Kids will take reasonable action to keep the Child or Children safe having regard in the first instance to the policies and procedures of the Centre and the most senior early years professional responsible for the room or Centre.

Families and communities

Squiggle Kids provides information to families and the community about our Child safe policies and practices including through publishing relevant policies and codes on our website.

Families can have a say on this Policy by emailing Squiggle Kids at hello@squigglekids.com.au.

Creating culturally safe environments for all Children

Squiggle Kids commits to:

- creating environments where Children's culture is celebrated and all Children, families and community members are welcomed and included
- the cultural safety of all Children that attend a Squiggle Kids Event
- zero tolerance of racism at Squiggle Kids Events
- acting on incidents of racism at Squiggle Kids Events.

Squiggle Kids will meet this commitment by:

- providing opportunities for all Children to share their cultural identity and express their culture
- include cultural safety as a regular item on Squiggle Kids' team meeting agendas and recommending relevant resources to Squiggle Kids Team Members for ongoing learning.

Valuing diversity

Squiggle Kids values the diversity and equity of all Children. To achieve this, Squiggle Kids will:

- welcome and support participation of all Children, including Children with disability, Children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those who are unable to live at home, LGBTIQ Children and Aboriginal Children and their families
- offer Children and professionals the opportunity to provide information about Children, including any specific needs to participate fully in Squiggle Kids Events
- have zero tolerance of racism and other forms of discrimination and take action when discrimination or exclusion is identified
- include diversity as a regular item on Squiggle Kids' team meeting agendas and regularly recommend resources for ongoing learning.

Children Safe Code of Conduct (Code of Conduct)

Squiggle Kids has a Child Safe Code of Conduct (**Code of Conduct**). All Squiggle Kids Team Members must comply with the Code of Conduct at all times. Breaches of the Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action including termination of involvement with Squiggle Kids.

Recruiting and retaining staff

Child safety and wellbeing is at the centre of Squiggle Kids':

- recruitment and screening processes
- supervision and people management.

We only recruit Squiggle Kids Team Members that are appropriate to engage with Children.

We require a Working with Children Check for all Squiggle Kids Team Members over 18 years of age.

All Squiggle Kids Team Members are required to complete any training identified by Management from time to time.

All Squiggle Kids Team Members are provided with information to help them understand their responsibilities to Children.

Complaints and reporting

Squiggle Kids has a Squiggle Kids Child Safety Complaints and Concerns Handling Policy that includes information for Squiggle Kids Team Members about when and how to report a Child Safety Complaint or Child Safety Concern and how Management will respond in those circumstances.

Record keeping

All Child Safety Complaints and Child Safety Concerns will be recorded by Management in a Child Safety Complaints and Concerns Record (**Record**).

This Record will be stored securely and kept by Squiggle Kids for at least 45 years.

Information sharing

Squiggle Kids may share relevant information to promote the safety and wellbeing of Children.

Squiggle Kids will keep information about Child Safety Complaints and Child Safety Concerns confidential within Squiggle Kids, except where it is necessary to share information to respond properly or to prioritise Child safety or if required by law.

Risk management

Squiggle Kids recognises the importance of identifying and managing risks of Child harm and abuse in the physical and online environments operated by Squiggle Kids.

At Squiggle Kids Events, Squiggle Kids Team Members will manage the risk of Child harm and abuse by:

- ensuring that at least one Centre staff member is present in the room at all times during the Squiggle Kids Event. Our intake documentation, supported by information provided in a pre-meet telephone call in advance of our visit, encourages staff to be hands-on in the activity and encourages additional staffing for this purpose
- Abiding by the general rule that there is no reason for a Squiggle Kids Team Member to touch a child at a Squiggle Kids Event. Exceptions include:
 - Gentle encouragement for grasp correction (when appropriate and with teacher input)*
 - To keep other children in the group safe and all other reasonable non-physical options have been exhausted (eg talking to the child, informing the Centre staff member)
 - Where a Child initiates physical contact (eg sits on your lap, gives a hug). In these circumstances, Squiggle Kids Team Members are expected to ask the Child to stop and redirect the Child. Squiggle Kids will make more information about possible scenarios and suggested actions that a Squiggle Kids Team Member could take available to Squiggle Kids Team Members, and will regularly discuss these things in Squiggle Kids team meetings
 - To encourage a child to participate in an activity or redirect the child by gently holding the child's hand and gently leading the child with appropriate verbal prompts.

*Teaching the Centre staff member how to provide grasp correction is preferred. This means that we are building skills in the Centre staff to apply the approach whenever necessary, not just in the circumstances that we have found grasp correction necessary. In some circumstances with staff member input, physical grasp correction by a Squiggle Kids Team Member might be appropriate.

- typically working in groups of two or more at Squiggle Kids Events that include children. Where only one Squiggle Kids Team Member is at a Squiggle Kids Event including children, the Squiggle Kids Team Member will ensure that at least one Centre staff member is present at all times
- following the rules of the Centre about sign in and photography or personal mobile phone use at the Centre. If photographs or video are allowed on personal devices, ensure that the Centre staff member authorises the photographs or videos.

Management will regularly review Child safety risks at Squiggle Kids Events and engage all Squiggle Kids Team Members in a regular discussion about risks at Squiggle Kids team meetings. Where new or varied risks are identified, Squiggle Kids will implement further measures to manage the risks.

Non-compliance with this Policy and the Code of Conduct

Squiggle Kids will enforce this Policy and the Code of Conduct.

Potential breaches will be investigated and may result in restriction of duties, suspension or termination of employment or engagement or other corrective action in accordance with relevant Squiggle Kids policies.

Review

Squiggle Kids will review all Child safe practices and policies at least every two years. We will also review relevant practices and policies in response to a Child Safety Complaint or Child Safety Concern.

Supporting legislation

- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic) (including Child Safe Standards)
- Child, Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) (including reporting to Child Protection)
- Crimes Act 1958 (Vic) (including Failure to Protect and Failure to Disclose offences)
- Wrongs Act 1958 (Vic) (including Part XIII – Organisational liability for Children abuse)

OTHER POLICIES

Squiggle Kids Team Members should read this policy in conjunction with all relevant Squiggle Kids policies.

Policy review

Responsible	
Reviewer	
Approver	

Version Control

Version	Date	Approved at
1	25 May 2026	Squiggle Kids team meeting on 25 May 2026

Squiggle Kids Child Safety Code of Conduct

Squiggle Kids is committed to the wellbeing and safety, including cultural safety, of all children and the zero tolerance of child abuse and harm.

The Squiggle Kids Child Safety Code of Conduct (**Code**) sets the standard of behaviour for all Squiggle Kids Team Members. In particular the Code sets positive child safe behaviours and unacceptable behaviours for Squiggle Kids Team Members.

Squiggle Kids may vary, remove or replace this Code at any time provided that:

- Squiggle Kids continues to meet its legal obligations
- Squiggle Kids notifies all Squiggle Kids Team Members.

Definitions

See the Squiggle Kids Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy for the definitions of Centre, Child/Children Child Safety Concern, Child Safety Complaint, Management, Squiggle Kids Event and Squiggle Kids Team Member.

Squiggle Kids Team Members must always:

- follow all Child safety requirements of the Centre they are visiting, including (without limitation):
 - surrendering or stowing their personal mobile device
 - signing in electronically or in writing as a visitor or contractor, including by accurately supplying all required information
 - presenting their Working With Children Check and any other proof of training or ID as required by the Centre
- take all reasonable steps to protect Children from abuse and harm
- follow the Squiggle Kids Child Safety Complaints and Concerns Handling Policy in relation to Child Safety Concerns
- follow the Squiggle Kids Child Safety Complaints and Child Safety Concerns Handling Policy in relation to Child Safety Complaints
- report to Management any observed breaches of this Code by other Squiggle Kids Team Members
- participate in all training and professional development required by Squiggle Kids including training on Child safety and wellbeing
- treat all Children and young people with respect, regardless of race, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, religion, political or other opinion, nationality, cultural background, financial situation, disability or other characteristics
- consider the different needs of all Children at Squiggle Kids Events and give them the opportunity to participate in Squiggle Kids Events and help their families feel included

- seek to make all Children including Aboriginal Children and families feel included and welcome at Squiggle Kids Events and support all Children to express their culture and enjoy their cultural rights
- never be racist towards anyone at a Squiggle Kids Event
- listen to Children and respond to them if they feel unsafe
- value Children and young people's ideas and opinions
- ensure at least one Centre staff member is involved and present in the Squiggle Kids Event at all times
- report to Management any conflicts of interest (such as an outside relationship with a Child) that may affect their ability to perform their role
- respect the privacy of Children and their families, including keeping all personal information confidential unless required by law to share it
- comply with all relevant Australian and Victorian legislation and child safe policies and procedures.

Squiggle Kids Team Members must never:

- condone or participate in illegal, unsafe, abusive or harmful behaviour towards Children – this includes physical violence, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, grooming, neglect or sexual misconduct
- ignore or disregard any concerns, suspicions or disclosures of Child abuse or harm
- exaggerate or trivialise Child abuse issues
- use hurtful, offensive or sexual behaviour or language with Children
- touch Children in a way that is unnecessary or unsuitable and falls outside what is reasonable in a Squiggle Kids Event
- have unauthorised contact with Children and young people online, on social media or by phone
- take photographs of Children in a Squiggle Kids Event unless consent from a Centre staff member has been granted
- be alone with a Child at a Squiggle Kids Event
- engage in babysitting, mentoring and/or tutoring a Child met at a Squiggle Kids Event out of work hours.

Breaches of this Code

In the event of a breach or suspected breach of this Code, a Squiggle Kids Team Member will:

- prioritise the best interests of the Child or Children
- promptly take reasonable action, working with the relevant Centre staff that are available, to ensure the Child or Children are safe
- as soon as possible make a report to Management by email to hello@squigglekids.com.au

- if the breach relates to a Child Safety Concern or Child Safety Complaint, follow the Squiggle Kids Child Safety Complaints Handling Policy
- maintain the privacy of those involved, following Squiggle Kids record keeping, privacy and information sharing policies as set out in the Squiggle Kids Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

A breach of this Code may:

- result in disciplinary action, including termination of employment
- need to be reported to Victoria Police or Child Protection in accordance with the Child Safety Complaints and Child Safety Concerns Policy.

OTHER POLICIES

Squiggle Kids Team Members should read this policy in conjunction with all relevant Squiggle Kids policies.

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Squiggle Kids Child Safety Complaints and Concerns Handling Policy (Policy)

This Policy outlines the steps Squiggle Kids will follow in the event of a Child Safety Complaint or a Child Safety Concern. The key principles are:

- Squiggle Kids will take any reasonable steps that put a Child or Children and their safety first
- Squiggle Kids will take all Child Safety Complaints and Child Safety Concerns seriously and review and act on any in a reasonable and timely manner.

Some acts or omissions anticipated by this Policy may also attract criminal charges and penalties.

Exclusions

This Policy does not address:

- complaints relating to Squiggle Kids staff grievances or employment matters
- complaints or concerns that are not Child Safety Complaints or Child Safety Concerns.

Updates to this Policy

Squiggle Kids may vary, remove or replace this Policy at any time provided that:

- Squiggle Kids continues to meet its legal obligations
- Squiggle Kids notifies all Squiggle Kids Team Members
- Any varied or replaced Policy is included on the Squiggle Kids website.

Definitions

See the Squiggle Kids Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy for the definitions of Centre, Child/Children Child Safety Concern, Child Safety Complaint, Management, Squiggle Kids Event and Squiggle Kids Team Member.

Child Safety Concerns

1. Immediate response to keep children safe

If a Squiggle Kids Team Member has a Child Safety Concern during a Squiggle Kids Event that could immediately impact negatively on the safety or wellbeing of Children in a Centre, they must take reasonable action to keep the Child or Children safe having regard in the first instance to the policies and procedures of the Centre and the most senior early years professional responsible for the relevant room or the Centre.

2. Reporting a Child Safety Concern

General

While Squiggle Kids Team Members are ordinarily only in a Centre for a brief time, Squiggle Kids Team Members may nevertheless have Child Safety Concerns.

Typically we would expect that a single Child Safety Concern would not be a sufficient basis on which to have formed a "reasonable belief" or "a belief on reasonable grounds" of physical or sexual abuse or neglect of a child and so give rise to a legal requirement to report it to Victoria Police or Child Protection. Accordingly, we would expect it to be rare that the obligation under the law to report the Child Safety Concern would arise.

However, additional circumstances or information such as a conversation with the Centre could give rise to a reasonable belief or reasonable grounds.

Reporting to Squiggle Kids

If a Squiggle Kids Team Member has a Child Safety Concern, they must:

- inform the person in charge of the room or the Centre manager of the Child Safety Concern before leaving for the day and follow any Centre policies and processes for reporting the information. If the staff member in charge of the room or the Centre manager is suspected to be responsible for or involved directly or indirectly in the Child Safety Concern, the Squiggle Kids Person must find another Centre staff member to inform
- on the same day, report it to Management by emailing hello@squigglekids.com.au.

Reporting to Victoria Police or Child Protection

In addition, if the Squiggle Kids Team Member has formed a reasonable belief or believes on reasonable grounds that a Child has been or is at risk of physical or sexual abuse or neglect, the Squiggle Kids Team Member will also contact Victoria Police or Child Protection on 13 12 78.

Ideally, this report would be made alongside the Centre as information not typically available to Squiggle Kids will be required from the Centre to complete the report (eg details about the child's family).

When this report is made, the Squiggle Kids Person must notify Management by emailing hello@squigglekids.com.au.

Follow up by Management

If a Squiggle Kids Person has a Child Safety Concern, Management will:

- add the relevant information to the Squiggle Kids Child Safety Complaints and Concerns Record and keep the Record updated with any developments as they arise
- in a follow up email within 1 week of the day the Child Safety Concern arose, contact the Centre and refer to the Child Safety Concern and offer any assistance needed
- in a follow up email within 3 weeks of the day the Child Safety Concern arose, contact the Centre and refer to the Child Safety Concern and offer any assistance needed.

For the avoidance of doubt, it is a Squiggle Kids Team Member's responsibility to contact Victoria Police or Child Protection and make a report if they have a reasonable belief or if they believe on reasonable grounds that a Child has been or is at risk of physical or sexual abuse or neglect even if the Centre or Squiggle Kids itself does not have the same belief, fails to act or does itself make a report.

Assisting Child Protection, the Police or the Centre with inquiries

Where a Child Safety Concern has been reported to Child Protection, the Police or the Centre, Management and the relevant Squiggle Kids Team Members will assist with all reasonable inquiries and requests.

Record Keeping

All reports of Child Safety Concerns will be included in the Squiggle Kids Child Safety Complaints and Concerns Record (**Record**) by Management.

Management will keep the Record updated with any developments.

Child Safety Complaints

In addition to the above process for Child Safety Concerns (with modifications as necessary for circumstances of a Child Safety Complaint that necessarily relates to an act or omission by a Squiggle Kids Team Member or Squiggle Kids), the following additional terms apply.

Squiggle Kids will ensure that Squiggle Kids Team Members maintain all relevant Working with Children checks and comply with any other requirements from time to time.

Investigation

Management will investigate all Child Safety Complaints in a timely and thorough manner. This may involve interviewing Squiggle Kids Team Members and Centre staff and gathering other information.

During the investigation, a Squiggle Kids Team Member may be stood down pending resolution of the Child Safety Complaint.

Resolution

At the conclusion of an investigation, Management will resolve a Child Safety Complaint in the manner it sees fit subject to its legal obligations. Management may, for example:

- terminate the Squiggle Kids Team Member’s employment or engagement with Squiggle Kids
- alter the Squiggle Kids Team Member’s duties so they do not engage with children at Squiggle Kids
- remove the Squiggle Kids Team Member’s access to the Squiggle Kids IT system and facilities.

In particular, Management will be legally obliged to make a report to Victoria Police or Child Protection if it has formed a “reasonable belief” or “a belief on reasonable grounds” of physical or sexual abuse or neglect of a child.

OTHER POLICIES

Squiggle Kids Team Members should read this policy in conjunction with all relevant Squiggle Kids policies.

Policy review

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Reviewer	
Approver	

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Squiggle Kids Discipline and Termination Policy

The Squiggle Kids Discipline and Termination Policy (**Policy**) contains guidance on the investigation process and the discipline and termination consequences that may follow from a Child Safety Complaint, a suspected breach of the Squiggle Kids Child Safety Code of Conduct or other workplace performance by Squiggle Kids Team Members that is not consistent with the standards expected of a Squiggle Kids Team Member or not consistent with the Squiggle Kids Team Member's contract of employment (**Misperformance**).

The guidance in this Policy is non-contractual and does not bind Squiggle Kids.

Squiggle Kids expects every Squiggle Kids Team Member to act at all times diligently, faithfully and honestly to perform their duties and responsibilities to the best of their knowledge and in the best interests of Squiggle Kids.

Updates to this Policy

Squiggle Kids may vary, remove or replace this Policy at any time provided that:

- Squiggle Kids continues to meet its legal obligations
- Squiggle Kids notifies all Squiggle Kids Team Members.

Definitions

See the Squiggle Kids Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy for the definitions of Centre, Child/Children, Child Safety Complaint, Management and Squiggle Kids Team Member.

Key principles of this Policy

This Policy follows these principles:

- All suspected Misperformance will be taken seriously and investigated
- All Squiggle Kids Team Members will be treated fair and consistently
- Management will thoroughly and in a timely manner investigate all suspected Misperformance, including by providing the opportunity for the Squiggle Kids Team Member the subject of the suspected Misperformance to provide information and explanation
- The Squiggle Kids Team Member the subject of the suspected Misperformance will have the right to respond to the outcome of an investigation and resolution proposed by Management.

Investigation

Management will investigate all suspected Misperformance in a timely and thorough manner. This may involve interviewing Squiggle Kids Team Members and Centre staff and gathering other information.

During the investigation and depending on the nature and severity of the suspected Misperformance, the Squiggle Kids Team Member the subject of the suspected Misperformance may be stood down or have duties restricted pending finalisation of the investigation.

Squiggle Kids will tell the Squiggle Kids Team Member the outcome of the investigation and the resolution proposed. The Squiggle Kids Team Member will have 5 days to respond to the outcome and proposed resolution.

Resolution

Depending on the nature and severity of the Misperformance, a number of disciplinary steps may be taken by Management at the conclusion of an investigation proving the Misperformance.

Such resolution may include:

- No action
- Informal counselling
- Formal counselling with a warning or warnings
- Making a report to Victoria Police or Child Protection
- Terminating the Squiggle Kids Team Member’s employment or engagement with Squiggle Kids (including with a warning or warnings or without any warning). As all Squiggle Kids staff and volunteers are engaged on a casual basis, Squiggle Kids is not obliged by contract to provide notice of termination
- Altering the Squiggle Kids Team Member’s duties so they do not engage with Children at Squiggle Kids
- Removing or restricting access to the Squiggle Kids IT system and facilities.

OTHER POLICIES

Squiggle Kids Team Members should read this policy in conjunction with all relevant Squiggle Kids policies.

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