PERTH FESTIVAL

Child Safety and Vulnerable Persons Policy and Procedure

Policy Owner	Approver	Approval Date	Effective Date
P&C Director	P&C Director	15 October 2026	19 October 2026

1. Purpose

1.1. This policy establishes Perth Festival's commitment to protecting children and vulnerable persons from abuse, neglect and harm. It sets out the responsibilities of all workers, the conduct standards required when working with children, the mandatory reporting obligations that apply to designated reporters, and the procedures to follow when a concern arises.

2. Scope

2.1. This policy applies to all employees, contractors, volunteers, artists and board members of Perth Festival, particularly those engaged in child-related work or work with vulnerable persons. It applies at all organisation premises, at client and community sites, and during any activity conducted on behalf of Perth Festival.

3. Policy Statement

3.1. Perth Festival is a child safe organisation. The safety and wellbeing of children and vulnerable persons is paramount. Perth Festival has zero tolerance for child abuse, neglect or exploitation in any form. All workers share responsibility for the safety of children and vulnerable persons and are required to comply with this policy, Perth Festival's code of conduct, and all applicable legislative requirements.

4. Definitions

Term	Definition
Child	A person under 18 years of age.
Vulnerable person	A person who, due to age, disability, illness or other circumstances, may be at increased risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation.
Parent	Includes parents, carers and legal guardians of a child.
Child abuse	Includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional or psychological abuse, neglect, grooming and exposure to family violence.
Mandatory reporter	A person required by law to report a suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Communities.
Designated reporter	As defined in s.124B of the Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA), includes teachers, doctors, nurses, midwives, social workers, police, and certain child care workers.
WWC Check	A Working with Children Check conducted under the Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA), resulting in the issue of a card indicating the holder is suitable to work with children.
Reportable concern	Any information or belief that a child has been or is at risk of being abused or neglected.

Child safe organisation	An organisation that implements the National Principles for Child Safe Organisations and embeds a culture in which children's safety and wellbeing are prioritised.
Child-related work	Work or activity as defined in section 6 of the Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA), being work that usually involves contact with children, including artistic, cultural, educational, recreational and community activities delivered by or on behalf of Perth Festival.
Child-Related Personnel	Any employee, contractor, volunteer, artist or board member who undertakes child-related work as part of their role with Perth Festival.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1. All workers are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy and procedure. This includes reporting incidents where there a reasonable person would suspect a breach of this policy.

5.2. Managers are responsible for taking all reports seriously and promoting a workplace free from child abuse.

5.3. People & Culture is responsible for maintaining this Policy and Procedure, managing breach processes, and providing guidance to managers and senior leaders as appropriate.

5.4. The CEO and executive are responsible to ensure Perth Festival meets its child safe obligations and embeds a child safe culture.

6. Commitment to Child Safety

6.1. Child safety is everyone's responsibility, not only those with formal safeguarding roles. Perth Festival actively works to prevent harm to children and vulnerable persons.

6.2. Workers are empowered and encouraged to raise concerns without fear of reprisal. Children and vulnerable persons are treated with dignity, respect and cultural sensitivity. The voices and experiences of children and vulnerable persons are listened to and taken seriously.

6.3. Perth Festival will ensure there is a lost child and vulnerable person plan for each Festival period.

7. Supporting Children's Participation and Wellbeing

7.1. Perth Festival supports, enables and promotes the active participation of children in its activities by:

7.1.1. Encouraging expression of, and respecting, the views of children and parents with dignity and fairness;

7.1.2. Encouraging and empowering children and parents to raise any concerns or complaints;

7.1.3. Listening to and acting upon any concerns raised by children, parents, carers or legal guardians;

7.1.4. Providing a complaints process that children can use directly, explained to them in age-appropriate and accessible language, with feedback given to the child on the outcome where appropriate;

7.1.5. Seeking the input of children when making decisions about matters that concern them;

7.1.6. Ensuring children understand their rights and the behaviour expected of both adults and children;

7.1.7. Always maintaining professional boundaries.

7.1.8. Teaching children what they can do and who they can turn to if they feel unsafe;

7.1.9. Ensuring employees who work with children are skilled in facilitating their participation; and

7.1.10. Valuing diversity and not tolerating any discriminatory practices.

7.2. Perth Festival aims to create an environment where children gain satisfaction from their involvement with our organisation, whether as employees or as participants in a class, program, workshop or other activity, by:

7.2.1. Supporting children to feel respected and in control of their behaviour and work;

7.2.2. Ensuring children enjoy the overall experience of being engaged with a production or other organisational activity;

7.2.3. Encouraging children to support each other in fulfilling their obligations and developing a positive sense of pride in their work;

7.2.4. Offering opportunities for children to gain personal satisfaction and a sense of achievement through their experience and relationships; and

7.2.5. Encouraging children to develop self-discipline in balancing their commitment to their arts practice, education, and social and family activities.

8. Valuing Diversity

8.1. Perth Festival values diversity and does not tolerate discriminatory practices. In all activities involving children, Perth Festival promotes:

8.1.1. Cultural safety of Aboriginal children;

8.1.2. Cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds;

8.1.3. Safety of children with a disability;

8.1.4. Safety of LGBTI children and young people; and

8.1.5. Safety of children who live in out-of-home care.

9. Prohibited Conduct

9.1. The following conduct is strictly prohibited:

9.1.1. Any form of abuse, neglect or exploitation of a child or vulnerable person;

9.1.2. The use of language that is degrading, shaming, discriminatory or intimidating.

9.1.3. Using physical punishment of any kind;

9.1.4. Exchange of personal gifts;

9.1.5. Sharing personal contact details with a child (phone numbers, social media, email);

9.1.6. Communicating with a child through personal devices or personal social media accounts;

9.1.7. Photographing or filming children without the written consent of a parent or guardian;

9.1.8. Being alone with a child in a closed space where neither can be observed by another adult; and

9.1.9. Developing a relationship with a child or their family that is outside the scope of the professional role.

10. Working with Children Check Requirements

10.1. All workers engaged in child-related work must hold a current Working with Children (WWC) card and provide Perth Festival with a copy of their assessment notice issued under the Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA) before commencing any work with children. Perth Festival will:

10.1.1. Verify each worker's current WWC card before engagement or commencement of child-related duties.

10.1.2. Maintain a register of WWC card details including expiry dates.

10.1.3. Arrange re-verification upon expiry.

10.1.4. Immediately restrict any worker who receives a negative WWC notice from child-related work.

10.2. Perth Festival will also:

10.2.1. Develop clear duty statements and job descriptions for roles involving work with children that state Perth Festival's commitment to providing safe environments for children; and

10.2.2. Ensure workshop facilitators, supervisors and chaperones are suitably experienced and qualified to care for the safety and wellbeing of children in accordance with their age and needs.

10.3. A worker who has received a negative notice must not perform child-related work under any circumstances.

10.4. Employees will be mindful to never be alone with a child in a space where they cannot be seen by another adult, maintain professional boundaries at all times and report all concerns about a child's safety or wellbeing.

11. Support for Employees

11.1. Perth Festival supports employees who work with children by:

11.1.1. Providing all new employees with an induction to Perth Festival's safety systems and relevant policies and procedures;

11.1.2. Inducting all employees who will be working with children into this Policy and Procedure;

11.1.3. Ensuring workshop facilitators, supervisors and chaperones who are new to the role work alongside staff experienced in the role before working unsupervised on productions or programs;

11.1.4. Providing a People and Culture team to give advice and support to employees on the safety and wellbeing of children engaged with the organisation; and

11.1.5. Ensuring employees feel encouraged and empowered to report any complaints, concerns or perceived risks to child safety to their manager.

12. Support for Parents

12.1. Parents of children employed by Perth Festival will be provided with at least one contact who is available to speak with them, or to facilitate speaking with their children, at any time during periods of work.

12.2. Perth Festival will provide parents and child employees with information on:

12.2.1. The child's expected role, activities, responsibilities and actions during their engagement;

12.2.2. The child's progress and timely notice of schedules;

12.2.3. The rights of parents and children regarding supervision and workplace conditions, as determined by relevant state regulation; and

12.2.4. This Policy and Procedure and any other relevant policies and procedures.

12.3. Children and parents are encouraged to communicate and ask questions regarding their employment or participation.

13. Using Images of Children

13.1. This policy sets out Perth Festival’s protocols for taking and publishing, in print or online, images of children and young people up to 18 years of age, to protect their safety and privacy.

13.2. Perth Festival protects the safety and privacy of child performers by:

13.2.1. Obtaining informed consent from a parent/carer and the child for the use of images of child performers. Consent will be sought before images are taken or published, using signed consent forms from parents/carers and the child. Perth Festival will provide details on how and where images will be published, and whether images will contain identifying or personal information about the child (e.g. school uniform, name, hobbies); images containing identifying or personal information will be avoided where possible.

13.2.2. Informing parents/carers if Perth Festival wants to film or take photos of children for analysis purposes or to improve performances.

13.2.3. Ensuring that if photography or filming of child performers is to take place at a venue different from the usual workplace venue, a parent/carer has agreed to be present, or their consent has been provided for the supervisor to be present instead.

13.2.4. Making sure professional photographers are aware that any images taken remain the property of Perth Festival and cannot be used or sold for other purposes – any digital files must also be destroyed or handed over to Perth Festival.

13.2.5. Making sure photographers are not left unsupervised with children or given individual access to children.

13.2.6. Avoiding the use of images of children in minimal clothing (e.g. revealing costumes – both intentional and accidental).

13.2.7. Providing details to parents/carers about who to contact if they have concerns or complaints about the use of inappropriate images or inappropriate behaviour in taking or publishing images.

13.3. Perth Festival protects the safety and privacy of child audience members and education program participants by:

13.3.1. Using the Terms and Conditions of purchase, and a notice in a prominent position at the venue, to make ticket holders aware that professional photographers may be engaged for official and marketing use.

13.3.2. Making parents/carers of education program participants aware that professional photographers may be engaged for official and marketing use.

13.3.3. Only publishing images that do not contain identifying information about children (e.g. school uniform, name, a clear view of their face) unless consent from parents/carers has been obtained.

13.3.4. Making sure professional photographers are aware that any images taken remain the property of Perth Festival and cannot be used or sold for other purposes – any digital files must also be destroyed or handed over to Perth Festival.

13.3.5. Making sure photographers are not left unsupervised with children or given individual access to children.

13.3.6. Providing details to parents/carers about who to contact if they have concerns or complaints about the use of inappropriate images or inappropriate behaviour in taking or publishing images.

14. Digital Engagement and Online Safety

14.1. Perth Festival recognises that child safety obligations extend to digital environments.

14.2. When engaging with children online:

14.2.1. Communications must occur only through approved organisational platforms.

14.2.2. Personal social media accounts must not be used.

14.2.3. Online sessions will, where practicable, include more than one responsible adult.

14.2.4. Parents/carers must be informed of online participation requirements.

14.2.5. Recording must only occur with appropriate consent.

14.2.6. Personal information must be handled in accordance with privacy requirements.

14.3. Any inappropriate online conduct or communication must be reported immediately.

15. Mandatory Reporting Obligations

15.1. Some employees are required by law to report to the Department of Communities (DoC) if they form a belief on reasonable grounds that a child has been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected. Reports must be made by phoning the Child Protection Helpline. Employees are responsible for knowing if they hold a legal obligation to report.

15.2. All other workers who hold a reportable concern are strongly encouraged to report and must notify their manager and the People and Culture team immediately.

15.3. Workers will not be disadvantaged for making a report in good faith.

16. Responding to Disclosures

16.1. When a child or vulnerable person discloses abuse or a concern is raised employees will follow simple principles to ensure they meet their obligations whilst also providing appropriate support. These principles include, but are not limited to:

16.1.1. Listening carefully and calmly without expressing shock or disbelief;

16.1.2. Not promising confidentiality, instead explain this may need to be shared to keep them safe;

16.1.3. Not investigating, ask leading questions, or pressing for details;

16.1.4. Reassuring the child that they have done the right thing by speaking up;

16.1.5. Recording what was said as soon as possible using the child's own words; and

16.1.6. Report the concern to the People and Culture team and, if you are a designated reporter, to the Department of Communities within 24 hours.

17. Record Keeping

17.1. Records of all concerns, disclosures, reports and actions taken must be recorded in writing, stored securely with restricted access, retained in accordance with Perth Festival's record management policy and not shared unless required by law.

18. Procedure

18.1. Where a worker observes behaviour of concern, receives a disclosure from a child or vulnerable person, or forms a belief that abuse or neglect may be occurring or at risk of occurring they will document this as soon as possible and notify their manager and People and Culture.

18.2. Concerns may also be raised with Perth Festival's on-site representative, such as the Artist Liaison, Producer or Event Manager, and lodged as an incident report through Perth Festival's Workplace Health and Safety reporting system. Where Perth Festival determines an incident is serious, it may be managed under the Grievance and Complaints Policy and Procedure, which may include an investigation.

18.3. If the worker is a designated reporter and forms a belief on reasonable grounds that a child has been, is being or is at risk of being abused or neglected, they must report to the Department of Communities by phoning the Child Protection Helpline on 1800 273 889. This step occurs in parallel with internal reporting, not after it.

18.4. The affected child or vulnerable person will be supported appropriately and in an age-appropriate manner. Where the perpetrator is not an employee Perth Festival will not confront them but rather seek advice from appropriate agencies.

18.5. Where the alleged perpetrator is an employee, Perth Festival has an obligation to take action. This would be managed in accordance with the Discipline and Termination Policy and Procedure.

18.6. In addition to the Discipline and Termination Policy and Procedure Perth Festival will take the following into consideration as immediate safeguarding responses:

18.6.1. Temporary suspension from child-related duties or supervised duties pending further assessment;

18.6.2. Confirmation of appropriate investigation measures and decision-making process;

18.6.3. Review of obligations regarding mandatory reporting; and

18.6.4. Any other measures to protect the affected child or vulnerable person during the investigation

18.7. The People and Culture team will ensure that a full written record of the concern, disclosure, actions taken and outcomes is completed and stored securely.

18.8. Following any incident involving a child safety concern, the People and Culture team may conduct a debrief with relevant staff and reviews Perth Festival's policies and procedures to identify any improvements needed and provide a report to the CEO.

19. Risk Assessment and Safeguarding Planning

19.1. Perth Festival will complete and update, at least annually, a risk assessment to identify its level of responsibility for children and the level of risk of harm or abuse to children across its activities, in line with its funding and grant obligations.

19.2. Following each risk assessment, Perth Festival will put in place and update, at least annually, an appropriate risk management strategy to manage the risks identified, including any actions, timeframes and responsible owners.

19.3. Where Perth Festival receives Western Australian Government funding for activities involving child-related work, it will complete the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries (DLGSC) Child Safeguarding Self-Assessment and will develop and implement a Child Safeguarding Improvement Plan to build capability in any areas identified through that self-assessment.

19.4. Perth Festival will consider the safety of physical and online environments as part of its risk assessment, including venue and event risk assessments, appropriate supervision arrangements, and safeguards for any online or digital engagement with children.

19.5. If requested by a funding body, Perth Festival will provide a statement of compliance confirming it has met its child safety obligations under the relevant funding agreement. This statement will normally form part of Perth Festival's grant acquittal.

20. Supervision of Children and Vulnerable People

20.1. Supervisors and/or chaperones are required to comply with the Perth Festival Code of Conduct and the following principles:

20.1.1. Supervision will be compliant with all relevant state regulations on the provision of adequate employment and workplace conditions for children;

20.1.2. Supervisors will always be with children whilst they are in the care of Perth Festival. Children will not be left without direct supervision by a designated supervisor at any time;

20.1.3. No employees, other than designated supervisors, will be alone with children at any time;

20.1.4. At no time will non-designated employees be placed in a circumstance where they are required to chaperone or supervise children;

20.1.5. If any children are found unsupervised, employees will direct and accompany children to their supervisor or relevant management immediately;

20.1.6. A supervisor's only responsibility will be the safety and wellbeing of the children they have been assigned to supervise;

20.1.7. Supervisors should check periodically the emotions and wellbeing of children in their care to ensure their comfort and competence for the tasks assigned then respond accordingly;

20.1.8. Supervisors will appropriately guide children towards positive and responsible behaviour;

20.1.9. Children will be made clearly aware of the guidelines and rules established on appropriate behaviour in order for them to act accordingly, and supervisors will monitor adherence and appropriately reinforce limit setting; and

20.1.10. Supervisors will report inappropriate behaviour by any child to relevant management if the child does not respond to appropriate requests to improve behaviour. Parents/carers should be involved if behaviour continues.

21. Training and Compliance

21.1. In addition to induction, Perth Festival will provide regular, at least annual, training to all Child-Related Personnel to ensure they are aware of, and comply with:

21.1.1. The National Principles for Child Safe Organisations;

21.1.2. Perth Festival's risk management strategy and Child Safeguarding Improvement Plan;

21.1.3. Relevant legislation relating to working with children, including mandatory reporting obligations and Working with Children Check requirements; and

21.1.4. This Policy and Procedure and how to recognise and respond to concerns.

21.2. People & Culture will maintain a record of training completed by Child-Related Personnel and will follow up with any worker whose training has lapsed. Compliance with this training requirement will be reviewed as part of Perth Festival's annual risk assessment.

22. Compliance and Review

22.1. This Policy and Procedure will be reviewed periodically to ensure ongoing compliance with legislative requirements and alignment with organisational needs.

22.2. Perth Festival may amend, vary or replace this Policy and Procedure at any time.

23. Breach of Policy

23.1. Where an employee is found to have breached this Policy and Procedure it may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

24. Associated Legislation

24.1. Children and Community Services Act 2004 (WA)

24.2. Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004 (WA)

24.3. Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)

24.4. Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2006 (WA)

24.5. Criminal Code Act Compilation Act 1913 (WA)

24.6. Disability Services Act 1993 (WA)

24.7. Mental Health Act 2014 (WA)

24.8. National Principles for Child Safe Organisations

24.9. Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

24.10. Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA)

25. Related Policies and Procedures

25.1. Code of Conduct

25.2. Work Health and Safety Policy

25.3. Grievance and Complaints Policy and Procedure

25.4. Discipline and Misconduct Policy and Procedure

25.5. Incident Report Form

25.6. Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

25.7. LPA Code of Practice for Child Employment in Live Entertainment

26. External Resources and Support Services

26.1. WA Equal Opportunity Commission – wa.gov.au/organisation/equal-opportunity-commission

26.2. Australian Human Rights Commission – humanrights.gov.au

26.3. Commissioner for Children and Young People WA – ccyp.wa.gov.au

26.4. National Principles for Child Safe Organisations – humanrights.gov.au/our-work/childrens-rights/national-principles-child-safe-organisations

26.5. DLGSC Child Safeguarding Self-Assessment tool – dlgsc.wa.gov.au (Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries)

26.6. Sexual assault support services – humanrights.gov.au/our-work/sex-discrimination/list-sexual-assault-services

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