

1. Policy Statement

Charters Towers Regional Council is dedicated to fostering a child-safe community built on the principles of integrity, respect, accountability, and transparency. We are unwavering in our commitment to ensuring that all children and young people feel safe, valued, and empowered in every interaction with Council services and representatives.

Aligned with Council's Code of Conduct, this Policy affirms our responsibility to create inclusive, culturally respectful environments where children are protected from harm, encouraged to participate in decisions that affect them, and always treated with dignity.

We embed a holistic and strengths-based approach to safety and wellbeing, ensuring that both physical and online environments support children's physical, social, spiritual, cultural, and emotional wellbeing.

This Policy reflects our adherence to the Queensland Child Safe Standards, the Universal Principle for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the *Right to Information Act 2009*, and the *Privacy Act 1988* (Cth). We recognise the critical importance of cultural safety particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and exploring opportunities to co-design services that may better honour their connection to kin, community, and culture.

Charters Towers Regional Council values diversity and strives to support the unique needs of all children. This includes children with disability, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children who are refugees or asylum seekers, children unable to live at home, and young people who identify within the LGBTQIA+ community.

Through inclusive practices and meaningful engagement, we strive to uphold the rights and wellbeing of every child in our community.

Charters Towers Regional Council will conduct regular audits of its child safety policies, procedures, and practices to evaluate effectiveness across governance, leadership, and organisational culture.

These audits will include input from children, families, staff, and community partners, and findings will inform continuous improvement efforts.

Charters Towers Regional Council also complies with the Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme, ensuring that allegations or convictions of child abuse or child-related misconduct involving Council employees, volunteers, or contractors are reported, investigated, and managed transparently and lawfully.

2. Purpose & Scope

This Policy applies to all Charters Towers Regional Council employees, elected members, volunteers, contractors, and consultants. It governs all Council-operated venues, events, programs, and services that involve direct or indirect engagement with children and young people, including digital platforms, online services, and third-party partnerships.

The Policy is relevant across all areas of Council operations where children may interact with staff, access services, or participate in community activities. It ensures that child safety principles are embedded in decision-making, service delivery, and organisational cultures supporting safe, inclusive, and culturally respectful environments for all children, especially those from diverse backgrounds and vulnerable circumstances.

This Policy also encompasses obligations under the Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme, which applies to all Council employees, elected members, volunteers, contractors, and consultants engaged in child-related work or services on behalf of Charters Towers Regional Council.

3. Commencement of Policy

This Policy will commence from 1 July 2026.

4. Responsibility

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) ensures strategic alignment, resource allocation, and oversight of child safety initiatives.

Managers and Supervisors implement child safety practices, monitor compliance, monitor external contractors, support contractor and staff development. Facilitate reflective practice and feedback sessions to assess staff and contractor understanding and reinforce child safety principles.

Staff and Volunteers demonstrate ethical conduct, uphold child safety principles, and report concerns in accordance with Council policies.

Children and Families are encouraged to participate in shaping safe environments, provide feedback to improve services, and share their experiences to help Council evaluate the effectiveness of child safety practices.

Reporting to the Executive Services Manager, the **Governance and Compliance Officer** is the designated Child Safety Officer and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme, including reporting, investigation coordination, and liaison with the Queensland Ombudsman.

5. Definitions

Term	Definition
Child	is a person under the age of 18.
Child Abuse	is any act that harms or threatens a child's physical, emotional, or psychological wellbeing.
Cultural Safety	is an environment that is spiritually, socially, and emotionally safe for children.
Child Safe Standards	is a set of ten (10) standards mandated by the Queensland Government to promote child safety across institutions.
Universal Principle	is a foundational requirement to embed cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children.
Reportable Conduct	is any allegation or conviction involving child abuse, sexual misconduct, or inappropriate behaviour toward children by a Council worker or volunteer, as defined under the Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme.

6. Policy Provisions

Council is committed to fostering a child-safe culture across all areas of its operations. In alignment with the Queensland Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle, Council will:

- 6.1. **Embed child safety into leadership, governance, and culture**
Child safety will be integrated into strategic planning, policy development, and organisational culture. Leaders will model ethical behaviour and promote child-safe values.
- 6.2. **Promote child participation and empowerment**
Children will be supported to express their views and contribute meaningfully to decisions that affect them.
- 6.3. **Engage families and communities in child safety initiatives**
Council will collaborate with families, carers, and community organisations to foster shared responsibility for child wellbeing.
- 6.4. **Uphold equity and respect for diverse needs**
All children will be treated with dignity and respect, with proactive measures to ensure inclusion and accessibility.
- 6.5. **Provide ongoing training and supervision for staff, contractors and volunteers**

Personnel will receive regular training on child safety, ethical conduct, and cultural awareness. Supervisors will monitor performance and support continuous improvement.

6.6 Maintain child-focused complaint and reporting mechanisms

Accessible and transparent processes will be in place for reporting concerns, with a focus on child-friendly communication and confidentiality.

6.7 Ensure physical and online environments are safe

Risk assessments will be conducted to identify and mitigate hazards in all environments where children engage with Council services.

6.8 Review and improve child safety practices regularly

Policies and procedures will be evaluated biennially and after any incidents, incorporating feedback from children, families, and staff.

6.9 Document all child safety procedures and commitments

Clear documentation will support accountability, transparency, and consistency in child safety practices.

6.10 Gather and respond to feedback from children, families, and communities

Council will actively seek feedback through surveys, forums, and informal conversations to assess community confidence in child safety policies and procedures. This feedback will inform continuous improvement and help ensure that children and families are aware of and trust Council's commitment to child safety.

6.11 Assess staff and leadership understanding through feedback and reflection

Council will regularly seek feedback from elected members, executives, staff, contractors and volunteers to evaluate their understanding of child safety policies, procedures, and practice requirements. This feedback will inform training needs, policy updates, and continuous improvement efforts.

6.12 Embed a holistic and strengths-based approach to safety and wellbeing

Council will ensure that all environments, physical and online, are designed to support children's physical, social, spiritual, cultural, and emotional wellbeing. This includes fostering positive relationships, promoting resilience, and recognising the strengths and identities of each child.

6.13 Comply with the Queensland Reportable Conduct Scheme

Council will ensure that all reportable conduct allegations are promptly reported to the Department of Family and Child Commission within 3 business days. See link - [Managing a report | QFCC](#)

6.14 Uphold equity and respect for diverse needs

All children will be treated with dignity and respect, with proactive measures to ensure inclusion and accessibility. Council supports the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, children with disability, children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, children who are refugees or asylum seekers, those who are unable to live at home, and young people who identify as LGBTQIA+.

Tailored strategies will be implemented to ensure these children feel safe, valued, and empowered.

7 Variations

7.1 Council reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this Policy from time to time.

Associated Documents

- *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)*
- *Information Privacy Act 2009 (Qld)*
- *Right to Information Act 2009*
- *Child Protection Act 1999*
- *Child Safe Organisations Act 2024*

- *Work, Health and Safety Act 2011*
- *Local Government Act 2009*
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Act 2000*
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) Regulation 2011*
- *Working with Children (Risk Management and Screening) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2019*
- S0014 Complaint Management Policy and Procedural Guideline
- D0035 Recruitment and Selection Directive
- S0072 Workplace Health and Safety Policy Statement Code of Conduct
- S0005 Child Protection Risk Management Policy

Document Review			
Date Adopted by Council	22 July 2026	Council Resolution	4794
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ECM No.	5173324	Document Contact	Executive Services Manager