

Appendix D – Child Safe Organisations

This document is to be read in conjunction with *HSQF User Guide – Certification – Version 10.0*.

Appendix D outlines how participating organisations can demonstrate their alignment with the Queensland Child Safe Standards (CSS). This includes policy and procedural requirements organisations may use to demonstrate they meet the requirements of the Human Services Quality Standards Indicator 1.1, should they be required to do so.

Organisations that are deemed to be child safe entities are required to uphold the ten Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle.

Definitions throughout Appendix D:

- In instances where 'Child Safe Standards' or 'CSS' is referenced, the reference also encompasses the Universal Principle of cultural safety for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- The following terms are used as synonyms - 'child safe organisation/s' and 'child safe entity/ies'.

Child Safe Standards

1. Leadership and culture
Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity's organisational leadership, governance and culture.
2. Voice of children
Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.
3. Family and community
Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing.
4. Equity and diversity
Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice.
5. People
People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice.
6. Complaints management
Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused
7. Knowledge and skills
Staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training
8. Physical and online environments
Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed.
9. Continuous improvement
Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved.
10. Policy and procedures
Policies and procedures document how the entity is safe for children.

Universal Principle

Queensland child safe organisations will also be required to evidence they provide an environment that ensures the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, as outlined in the Universal Principle. The Universal Principle needs to be embedded throughout an organisation and should also be evidenced throughout the ten CSS.

While cultural safety indicators are incorporated into the Standards (cross reference to table below), evidence of consideration to the following would show engagement with the Universal Principle:

- Racism is called out and addressed properly, respectfully and completely, and there are policies in place to ensure the organisation is accountable for racism and discrimination.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples define and measure cultural safety.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – including staff and stakeholders – have a voice and decision-making powers about issues that affect them, acknowledging that First Nations peoples and communities know what is best for them and their children.
- Individuals develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes to recognise and address biases, stereotypes and tendencies towards racism and discrimination.
- Organisations and systems are transformed so they empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultural values, traditions and identities.
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families feel a sense of belonging, dignity and justice.
- There is clear leadership, governance and culture that prioritises cultural safety.
- First Nations communities, Elders and leaders are engaged regularly and meaningfully to ensure policies are culturally appropriate, responsive, and safe.
- Organisations have mechanisms in place to ensure accountability and continuous quality improvement.

Resources

- For more information on the CSS and the Universal Principle, visit the [QFCC](#) website. The QFCC have [resources available](#), including a guideline for implementing the Child Safe Standards and the Universal Principle, which can assist and support an organisation on their pathway to become a child safe organisation.
- To determine if your organisation is in scope of this legislation, review the Schedule 1 - Child safe entities, of the [Child Safe Organisation Act 2024](#).
- To find out when an organisation will need to be compliant with the Child Safe Standards, review the [QFCC Implementation in Queensland plan](#) or review Section 2 – Commencement, of the [Child Safe Organisation Act 2024](#).

Application and demonstration

Application

Application of the CSS is expected to be at an organisational level and should be incorporated into practice. This means that all staff should be able to demonstrate they understand the CSS and how they apply to the organisation.

An example of these actions being implemented would be an organisation's code of conduct being updated to include information requiring staff and volunteers to behave in a manner consistent with the CSS. Organisations will also be required to have policies and procedures that outline expectations and information for promoting a culturally safe environment, and these documents can be used to evidence alignment for the CSS.

Demonstration

It is acknowledged that different organisations and service types will have different levels of interactions with children. Some services will be directly involved with children, whereas other services will have incidental interactions only. Each organisation should consider their level of interaction with children and apply the CSS based on their unique circumstances.

The Queensland Government acknowledges that there is overlap between the existing requirements of the [Human Services Quality Framework](#) (HSQF) and the requirements of the CSS. The following table outlines where existing policies and procedures might be updated to suit both the HSQF and the CSS and can be used as a guide to help integrate the CSS into the evidence provided to achieve conformance with both where applicable. This document outlines the minimum requirements for an organisation that is providing services for or working with children, which is therefore required to be a child safe organisation.

The information below identifies documents and actions auditors may seek to evidence an organisation's alignment with the CSS. The table represents only a selection of evidence, rather than the full scope of documents and activities, which an organisation might utilise to establish themselves as a child safe organisation. Organisations need to consider the requirements of the CSS independently, ensuring actions taken to align are appropriate to their organisational and service context.

Please note, each organisation referenced in Schedule 1 - Child safe entities, of the [Child Safe Organisation Act 2024](#), is required to comply with the CSS. The QFCC website outlines the specific guidelines for achieving this and contains a comprehensive self-assessment tool. All staff and volunteers of a child safe organisation should be knowledgeable of the appropriate policies and procedures, including where they are located, how they are accessed, and what to do in the event of a concern being raised.

Child Safe Standards	Areas of overlap with the HSQF User Guide (Common requirements)	Additional information the organisation may need to integrate into existing policies, systems or processes, <u>OR</u> policies, systems or processes which could be created and implemented. The organisation will have/require;
<p>1 Leadership and culture Child safety and wellbeing is embedded in the entity's organisational leadership, governance and culture</p>	<p>1.6 - Cultural safety 4.1 - Code of conduct 4.2 - Child safe policies and procedures 4.2 - Wellbeing processes 4.2 - Wellbeing policies 4.2 - Risk management strategies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A public commitment to the safety and wellbeing of children. • A Code of Conduct – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes: expected behavioural standards and responsibilities of staff and volunteers in relation to children and cultural safety. • A Child Safety & Wellbeing Policy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes: procedures for identifying and addressing risks, with reference to the Risk Management Strategy, ○ Includes: managing concerns and responding to complaints, with reference to the Complaints Handling Policy, ○ Includes: promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paradigms and world views, ○ Includes: explicit expectations for all staff to share the responsibility for safeguarding children, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. • A Cultural Safety Policy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes: procedures for identifying and addressing risks, with reference to the Risk Management Strategy, ○ Includes: managing concerns and responding to complaints, with reference to the Complaints Handling Policy, ○ Includes: promoting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander paradigms and world views, ○ Includes: zero-tolerance to racism and associated expectations for all staff, ○ Includes: actions through which the organisation educates its staff and integrates cultural safety. • Defined accountabilities to roles and/or committees to monitor and report on children's safety and wellbeing performance. • A Recruitment, Induction or Training Policy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes: emphasising the role of leaders in modelling and enforcing policies and the organisation's role in creating a child safe and culturally safe culture. • Accountability and reporting measures – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes: children's safety and wellbeing objectives in staff performance review,

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes: defined consequences for breaches of policies or codes of conduct, ○ Includes: processes for continuous improvement and ongoing quality assurance. • A Risk Management Strategy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes: ways to identify child abuse and child related misconduct - including physical abuse, racism and structural violence as key risks within the organisation, ○ Includes: a focus on preventing harm, ○ Includes: defined controls to mitigate harm, strengthen safeguarding measures, and uphold the Child Safe Standards.
2 Voice of children Children are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously	1.5 - Feedback tools 4.2 - Child focused complaints handling processes 5.1 - Complaints process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create and distribute child-friendly resources that teach children about their rights and are age-appropriate and easy to understand. This might include brochures, posters, videos, etc. • Accessible feedback mechanisms are in place to allow children to safely share their views. This might include suggestion boxes, surveys, forms, etc. • A Recruitment, Induction or Training Policy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes: staff being trained in active listening and child-centred communication techniques, to create safe spaces for discussions to build children's confidence and skills to engage in participation activities. • Children have been consulted/involved in policy development, program planning, and evaluation. Ensuring their perspectives influence decisions. • A Complaints Handling Policy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Is: child friendly and accessible for all, ○ Includes: defined steps and timeframes on how the feedback will be used and acted on. • Families and communities are involved in educating children about their rights and how to participate in decisions affecting them.

Child Safe Standards	Areas of overlap with the HSQF User Guide (Common requirements)	Additional information the organisation may need to integrate into existing policies, systems or processes, <u>OR</u> policies, systems or processes which could be created and implemented. The organisation will have/require;
3 Family and community Families and communities are informed and involved in promoting child safety and wellbeing	1.3 - Community engagement 1.5 - Feedback tools 1.6 - Feedback processes 1.6 - Community engagement 3.4 - Community support networks 5.2 - Community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide culturally appropriate and plain-language information about children's safety and wellbeing policies through newsletters, community forums, and digital platforms. • Establish feedback channels through structured meetings, surveys, or feedback tools for families and communities to voice concerns and/or offer suggestions. • Where applicable, collaborate with local organisations and leaders to ensure culturally appropriate practices are used to protect children's safety and wellbeing and communicate in ways that are accessible to key cultural and language groups in the area. • Offer training for families and carers on recognising and responding to risks to children's safety. • Share progress on child safety and wellbeing initiatives with families and communities to maintain transparency and trust.
4 Equity and diversity Equity is upheld and diverse needs respected in policy and practice	1.6 - Culturally safe 2.2 - Cultural safety training 3.2 - Cultural safety training 3.5 - Diverse needs 4.3 - Cultural safety training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies are systematically reviewed to ensure they address the needs of children from diverse backgrounds, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, CALD, and those with disability. • A Recruitment, Induction or Training Policy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Includes: ongoing cultural safety training, cultural awareness training and training in trauma-informed care for staff, ○ Includes: recruitment policies and practices which are equitable and reflect a range of different worldviews, ○ Includes: the recruitment of staff and volunteers from under-represented groups to reflect the diversity of the children served. • Provide children with educational opportunities to learn about different cultures, peoples and communities, to ensure safety among children. • Where applicable, develop and have available, accessible and inclusive resources in multiple languages and formats, including the use of audio descriptions or AUSLAN interpretation.

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner with diverse community representatives to co-design strategies for children's safety and wellbeing.
5 People People working with children are suitable and supported to reflect child safety and wellbeing values in practice	3.2 - Recruitment 4.2 - Child Safe policies and procedures 4.3 - Staff and volunteer training 4.3 - Cultural safety training 6.2 - Pre-employment checks 6.2 - Position descriptions 6.2 - Recruitment 6.4 - Feedback/supervision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Recruitment, Induction or Training Policy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes: procedures for background checks that need to be conducted. Including reference checks and Working with Children Checks, for positions directly working with or engaging with children, Includes: requirement for position descriptions to outline children's safety and wellbeing and cultural safety responsibilities and expectations, Includes: embedded children's safety and wellbeing and cultural safety training into onboarding processes for all new staff and volunteers, Includes: routine and responsive training sessions on best practice, including cultural safety, cultural awareness and trauma-informed care. Systems in place for regular supervision, mentoring, and performance evaluation of staff and volunteers.
6 Complaints management Processes to respond to complaints and concerns are child focused	1.5 – Review complaints feedback 4.2 - Child focused complaints handling processes 4.3 - Records of reporting 4.3 - Staff and volunteer training 5.1 - Complaints handling policies 5.2 - Complaints handling policies 5.3 - Complaints handling policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Complaints Handling Policy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is: child focused, Is: written in plain language and is accessible, Includes: defined structured pathways for how complaints can be raised, including anonymous options, and ensure all staff know how to respond to and escalate concerns, Includes: transparent feedback loops that inform complainants about the outcomes and actions taken because of their feedback, Includes: systems to routinely review complaint trends to identify patterns and areas for improvement in processes. A Recruitment, Induction or Training Policy – which

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	5.4 - Complaints handling policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes: staff being trained in Trauma-Informed Training practices, addressing how to respond sensitively to disclosures, ensuring children's safety and wellbeing is prioritised.
7 Knowledge and skills Staff and volunteers of the entity are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and awareness to keep children safe through ongoing education and training	1.7 - Training registers/ database 2.2 - Cultural safety training 3.2 - Cultural safety training 4.2 - Child Safe policies and procedures 4.3 - Cultural safety training 4.3 - Staff and volunteer training 4.3 - Identifying harm/ abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A Recruitment, Induction or Training Policy – which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes: a training schedule that incorporates induction, role-specific modules, and routine refresher courses, Includes: training in cultural safety and anti-racism, Includes: a system to monitor training completion and compliance across the organisation, Includes: systems to gather feedback from staff to improve the relevance and effectiveness of training. Where applicable, interactive learning systems are in place to enhance understanding and application of the Child Safe Standards. This might include workshops, role-playing, and scenario-based training. Where applicable, provide opportunities for cultural immersion, awareness and learning.
8 Physical and online environments Physical and online environments promote safety and wellbeing and minimise the opportunity for children to be harmed	4.2 - Child Safe policies and procedures 4.2 - Wellbeing policies 4.2 - Risk Assessment 4.3 - Identifying harm/ abuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Audits are routinely conducted of the physical spaces to identify and mitigate risks. These areas might include playgrounds, communal areas, etc. Guidelines for safe online interactions, including social media. This might include monitoring tools and data security measures. Established protocols for supervising children in both the physical and online spaces. Processes and systems to respond to incidents in physical and digital environments, such as cyberbullying or accidents. Feedback is collected from children, carers, families, and staff about the safety of the physical and online environments and act on any concerns raised.

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<p>9 Continuous improvement Implementation of the Child Safe Standards is regularly reviewed and improved</p>	<p>1.1 - Records of updates 1.1 - Records of external audits 1.3 - Community engagement 1.5 - Feedback tools 1.5 - Continuous improvement 1.6 - Feedback processes 1.6 - Community engagement 4.2 - Child Safe policies and procedures 4.3 - Reviewing records of reporting 5.1 - Complaints handling policies 5.2 - Community engagement 5.4 - Continuous improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Periodic reviews of the child safety and wellbeing and cultural safety policies and procedures, incorporating feedback from staff, children, carers, and families. • Formal channels for staff, volunteers, children, carers, and families to provide input on the effectiveness of child safety and wellbeing and culturally safe practices. • Incident and complaint data is analysed to identify trends and areas for improvement in policies, procedures and practice. • Internal and external audits are routinely conducted to ensure alignment with the Child Safe Standards and to identify and improve any gaps. • Findings from reviews and audits are used to inform and improve upon any training programs, resources, or practices. • Action plans are created based on review findings, to assign timelines and accountability for addressing identified areas. • Routinely communicate updates and improvements to all staff and stakeholders to reinforce a culture of accountability and growth. • Organisation's action plans should institute defined self-assessment dates across the organisation, with a specific data capture program to ensure a scaled approach to improvements. • Where applicable, First Nations perspectives are integrated into governance, ensuring that implementation and decision-making reflects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways and does not replicate colonial harm. • Where applicable, implement annual independent First Nations-led reviews of the organisation's adherence to the Child Safe Standards. • Disaggregate child safety data by cultural background and ensure it informs policy updates.
<p>10 Policy and procedures Policies and procedures</p>	<p>1.5 - Continuous improvement 2.2 - Induction 5.4 - Continuous improvement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies must address the requirements of the Child Safe Standards and include defined procedures for safeguarding children.

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document how the entity is safe for children		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies are written in plain language and ensure they are easily accessible to all stakeholders, including children, families, carers, and diverse groups. • Children, families, carers, staff, and cultural advisors are consulted and engaged with the development and review of policies to ensure they are relevant and inclusive. • As part of the induction and ongoing training, all staff and volunteers are aware of the content, and application of child safety and wellbeing and cultural safety policies. • Feedback processes are developed and implemented for stakeholders to provide feedback on policies and procedures, ensuring the feedback informs updates. • Version control is implemented on policies to ensure transparency and for demonstration of continuous improvement. • Systems are implemented to monitor the consistent application of policies in practice and for deviations to be addressed promptly.

Version Control

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